

Who is a CHRISTIAN?

Christianity is not a religion. It is not a set of creeds or having your sins forgiven, or a set of laws as code of conduct, but the reality of man's redemption from sin and union with God through partaking with Him of divine nature.

This book is written to give quick understanding to the reader, of the Law of Moses as a shadow of good things to come, and the true facts of Christianity as the very things it sought to establish.

It would enable you know the danger of putting religious and traditional practices into Christianity even as Christ warned in his parable of putting new wine into old bottle (Luke 5:36-39).

This book will remove your previous confusion, it will establish you as a true Christian quite different from the denominational and traditional ones. You will understand why many have missed the way.

THE AUTHOR

Bro. Awudese Azibalua is the teacher of the word of God and Pastor of Gospel Deliverance Mission. He got his understanding from the teachings and revelations of Bro. Morris Kofi Odubo, a true Christian Prophet between 1985-1997. Though his teachings are the exact truth of the bible, many saw him as one fighting against Pastors and fellow men of God, so he was hated by many Nigerian men of God because of his resistance to the new type of American Christianity.

The author holds the view that only righteous people will enter into the Kingdom of God. His desire is to make people understand that Christ had come to take away sin, and that God's righteousness had been made available to man through Christ.

All references are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

Who is a Christian?

Religion
vs
Christianity
In a Confused World

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NO SINNER IS A CHRISTIAN

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PREFACE

In the world and in Nigeria in particular, if one is not a devil worshipper then he is a Christian or a member of one of the religions that call on God for protection. Everyone that acknowledges that Jesus is son of God is a Christian, so many gather in Churches daily to call on his name.

From the revelation knowledge of the word of God in the Bible we know that only those who walk in the spirit of the word are children of God. Transformation or regeneration is not the outward change of going to church or changing from one church to the other but to be truly born of the spirit. The body is not born again but to be ruled by a recreated spirit. It is a change from fleshly life to a spiritual life with the complete overthrow of human reasons and logic to faith in God. The new birth begins with the death of the old man (self) with his pride, lust and desires to a new man with new thoughts and new desires, and new life.

Christianity is God making us repent to a new life through faith in Jesus. A promise fulfilled of we partaking with God of His eternal life and fellowship with His family in heaven and having the office of ambassadors of God's new creation on earth. The church is the family of righteousness as the light of truth in the world. Children of God are the image of the righteous God in the world.

God saved us by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and gave us His life through him. We are born again of the spirit by the word of his love. The life of God is available to us without carnal

ordinances but the liberty to reproduce the fruits of a renewed conscience. The New creation man by nature is like God, the mark is righteousness through love. Christianity is not a religion but the reality of God and man becoming Father and Son.

Awudese Azibalua

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1

INTRODUCTION

Man is Created As The Image Of God

Man is not of the same rank with God, but was created into the class of God, in the image and likeness of God. God is a Spirit, so is man a spirit but living in a body that is earthy. God has great delight in man because of his position in the world. He was given the power to rule creation on behalf of God. Adam had power and dominion over all creation before his fall (Gen. 1:26-28, Ps. 8:6). He was called the offspring of God. The life God gave him was to achieve God's purpose. When the world was under him, he saw all things as God sees (Col. 1:17). He belonged to all things and they all belonged to him, and was accountable to God who gave him His dominion. He was to keep them, rule them, care for them, to replenish and harness them to please the heart of the creator who gave him all things. God was his delight and centre of life, his duty was to walk in love to be perfect as a model of God, to unite creation to himself so as to achieve the eternal purpose of God.

God's plan in the universe is peace, joy and harmony. Man's position as a caretaker is to fulfill this dream. His love nature and being is to bring out the attributes that will make him reveal God in his actions. Eternal life, is the foundation of divine nature, the source of fellowship between God and man.

So man was created with love as son of God and as companion to make His will manifest everywhere.

God is a spirit, but we know Him through His life. His righteousness, counsel and judgment. The word is the life, the nature, and the mind of God. The word is God (John 1:1), God is love (1John 4:8), the word is love. Man was the image and likeness of His love, and as a love product he could unite creation with the Father God. The new creation man is God in action to reconcile the world to Himself (2Cor. 5:19).

The fall of Man

Adam was not deceived but Eve was deceived (1Tim. 2:14). Adam walked contrary to God and fell out of the principle that made him the same with God. He ignored love and obedience and desired to rule himself. His sin was not mere disobedience but *high treason*. He did what the creator had said, "Thou shall not" so it was a rebellion because he refused obedience. He sinned and was alienated from the love of God. He lost the first and essential principle of life, love, the essence of the spirit of God. His nature changed, and his heart became darkened with ignorance. He was blind to all things and to the things he was to rule, he saw himself alone, self-centered, the very opposite of God. He had no legal approach to his creator anymore, and by being blind, and ignorant of his position in the world, he is no longer responsible to any. This fallen condition and new consciousness is passed to all including the unborn children. Man is now alone in his thoughts and reasoning (Eph. 4:18).

Satan taking advantage of the fall had worked more to add to the problem of man. He has made man exceedingly sinful. He

transferred his cursed nature to man to stir up hatred, lying, revenge, deceit, strife, covetousness, pride, fornication etc. Man by nature is unrighteous and evil (Eph. 2:3). The fallen man is not only a sinner but sin itself, an enemy of God and a prisoner of death, the devil. Spiritual death is the interpretation of his true position. (Rom. 5:12). For man to be reconciled with God, this spiritual death must be removed from him and divine nature be given back to him to transform him to his former being as the image God.

The natural man

The natural man is the unsaved man, the spiritually dead man. He is carnal, sense ruled, ignorant of things of the spirit of God (1Cor 2:14). He walks in the flesh, in the wisdom, knowledge and understanding of the corrupt world. He is blind to the realities of God, always in enmity with his maker (John 12:40, Rom.8: 7).

Characteristics of the Natural man (Rom. 3:10-18)

He is evil by nature, spiritually dead, and alienated from the life of God. The natural man is corrupt in all his ways. He cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God because he is in the fleshly realm (1 Cor.2: 14). Lying and deceit are his natural language (John 8:44). Hatred, revenge and murder is his being. His mouth is full of cursing. Bitterness, pride, boastfulness etc. are his daily expressions. He is full of envy, covetousness, wickedness, pride, lust, filthy physical habits, fornication (adultery) etc. He does not know the way of peace.

Man inherited this nature from the fall of Adam. Adam was as perfect as God, but he sinned and became rejected of God. So

Satan took him and made him partaker of his corrupt nature. This cursed nature of devil in man is called spiritual death. It is the source of all that is evil in man. The fallen man is called natural man (1Cor. 2:14).

The fallen man has the same condemnation with devil except he is delivered from spiritual death (John 3:18). He is in union with the devil through partaking with him of spiritual death and has the same fate. He is hell doomed. Because of his fall, the natural things of his world are condemned also, and shall all pass away. The world shall be destroyed by God and only the new creation shall live forever. The uncreated will also live forever but under different condition.

Redemption plan

For man to be restored to his lost glory, spiritual death must be removed from his spirit, and sin consciousness destroyed or eradicated. Divine nature must be given back to him. This comes through the power of God's Word and the Holy Spirit. But man is blind and carnal (sense ruled) and cannot understand God and things of the spirit of God (1Cor. 2:14). Redemption is through the word and the spirit, so God needed preliminary measures designed to give man the understanding of his condition, and future destruction and to reveal to him of his future deliverance and salvation. This would make man know of his doom to enable him accepts God's word (Christ) (1Cor. 2:14).

The things that were done by Moses to prepare man for the coming of Christ, is what is generally referred to as the **Law**. They include the laws, statues, ordinances, religious

observances, ceremonies, etc., which form the tradition of the covenant children of Israel. It was also known as **Judaism**, called **the law** or the law of Moses. It was established to govern or to rule the spiritually death, abnormal and evil man (1Tim. 1:9-10), as a tutor or schoolmaster to give man understanding about God and to bring him to Christ (Gal. 3:24-25, 4:1-7), it was to make man become guilty before God so that he would cry for salvation (Rom. 3:19, Rom. 7:8-24), and not to make any man perfect (Heb. 7:19, Rom. 3:19-20). Love was imposed on man who by nature is wicked to make him realize that he cannot please God because something is wrong with him. The practices of the law and of all the ordinances are called religion.

The legal aspect of redemption

God's Council is made of the Godhead, and the penalty for sin is death. The real death is not of the body but of the spirit, the real man (Rom. 6:23).

Death is a spiritual thing, it is the absence of divine nature (the essence of life) in man's spirit. Death is separation from God and union with Satan through partaking of satanic nature. Spiritual death produces all manner of sins, sicknesses, diseases, want and physical death. It is the root of evil and failure in man. God's own nature is love. Through sin, this love nature is destroyed and fellowship between God and man is broken (Rom. 3:10-20).

Since Adam was the owner and ruler of the world, his spiritual death and eventual rejection by God changed the entire hope of creation. He lost contact with God and became subject to devil,

(death). So death reigned over the entire world including the animals, fishes, birds and vegetation (Rom. 5:12, Rom. 8:20-23).

Since death comes through sin, the problem of death cannot be solved except the sin issue is resolved. Sin can be forgiven by the shedding of blood as sacrifice for atonement (Heb. 9:22). So what we need is precious blood, not only for the forgiveness of sin but for the removal of death, so that we can be made alive in spirit (Heb. 9:14-15).

The sacrifices done under the law (religion) for the forgiveness of sins was a shadow of the actual sacrifice that was to be made by the saviour to come. The blood offered could not resolve the issue of death because it came from animals that needed redemption also. The animals used were under condemnation and could not be used to purify things condemned in heaven. They were to purify the flesh and not the spirit (Heb. 9:13, Heb. 10:1-4).

The true sacrifice needed for man's redemption is of pure blood. This blood cannot be found among the natural things under curse, it must be supernatural. Angels will not do it. When the angels sinned there was no forgiveness, so it is unjust for them to bear the sin of man, after all, angels have no flesh and blood.

It is man that sinned and he should offer the sacrifice. And there was no man qualified to do it, so God became responsible for the blood, and redemption of his son, man (Isa. 43:11, Isa. 53:1-12).

Jesus had been with God from time everlasting in heaven (Micah 5:2). He was sent by God to do what was required for the redemption of man. So he came with flesh and blood in the womb of a virgin as man to provide the blood of atonement and cleansing.

The coming of Jesus Christ on earth was designed to meet the claims of justice on man's salvation.

- (a) His blood is from heaven without blemish and it is precious enough to remove sin and death from man's spirits.
- (b) The blood cannot be shed except he dies, and he cannot die except he is overtaken by sin. And he himself cannot sin because he was the perfect image of God. He had to bear the sin of the world on substitutional ground. He became sin by the curse of the law when he was hanged on the cross. The Law says, "Cursed is the man that is hanged on a tree". And when he received the curse, he died as a sinner.
- (c) Christ humbled himself and died to please the Father, he was justified. His obedience was complete and his obedience is man's obedience, therefore by his obedience man has satisfied the obedience required for God to accept him back (Rom. 5:19).

Jesus became sin for us, and suffered and died, but he resurrected because he satisfied the justice needed to make us have legal standing with God if we accept him as Saviour (Rom. 4:25, 2Cor. 5:21, Rom. 5: 17-19).

The work of redemption was complete when the following things happened.

- (a) Christ came from heaven and revealed the image in which man was created so that we can know and get it back to our being to be legal children of God. He came as a model of our being and righteousness.
- (b) He shed his blood by his death on the cross for the deliverance of every man's spirit from spiritual death (sin).
- (c) He went to hell on behalf of those that would accept him as saviour (Eph. 4:8-10), because he went to where we would have gone as sinners.
- (d) He resurrected and ascended and is seated in heaven as a High Priest. He has the precious blood to save all that come to him as a high priest. He is in the position of Lord and Saviour (Act 2:3,5:30-31, Heb. 8:1).
- (e) The Holy Spirit had been poured down to earth as a result of the redemption work to assist those that would accept Christ to transform them to the image of Christ.

2 RELIGION: THE GREAT SCHOOL MASTER

Introduction:-

(1) *Why did God Introduced the Law of Moses?*

Before Moses, every man worshiped God in his own way – But the building of alters and sacrifices were common. Washing with water and anointing with oil was already the tradition of honouring guest and of showing devotion to God so oil and water became religious instruments. Job 1:5, Gen. 18:2-5 John 13:4-10.

The law of Moses was God's formal introduction of laws to be obeyed and order of worship. The Law of God is spiritual but the ordinances of Moses were carnal i.e. God's life is spiritual but the ordinances given to attain it was carnal because man is carnal and sinful with the nature of devil (spiritual death) and cannot keep the law of the spirit of God. So God instituted an elementary way of making man learn to honour Him. This became the foundation of religious worship.

(2) *Reasons for the Religious Ordinances*

- a. Man is unclean so he must bath the body with water before he should approach Him.
- b. Man is a sinner and unholy so he must anoint himself with holy oil to be holy.

- c. Man's sins all have records of death so he must sacrifice animal blood to be free from them. Blood sacrifice means atonement i.e. the covering of the sinner with life.
- d. The temple of fellowship is filthy and stinks, so the priest should burn incense to make it sweet smelling. Once the incense ceases the stink comes out.
- e. Man walks by sight so the priest must wear an exalted priesthood garment for others to see him and fear.
- f. Man is evil and has no rest for his evil works so he must hallow the Sabbath and rest from every manner of work. i.e. compelling man to cease from evil on the last day of the week
- g. Etc.

(3) *The Purpose It Seek To Achieve*

- a. To create room for an elementary way for man to contact God (Gal. 3:24-25, 4:1-7).
- b. To convince man that he is sinful and not worthy to see God (Rom. 3:19-20).
- c. To create the desire for freedom from sin and therefore the cry for salvation. (Rom. 7:12,13,23,24, Rom. 5:13,20, Gal.3:19).
- d. To let the world know God's future plan for redemption and of true reconciliation (Ga¹ 3:8-9, Jer. 31:31-34, Ezek. 36:26-27, Heb. 8:10-13). ¹¹

(4) *What Salvation Seeks to Achieve*

Salvation is not only deliverance from sin but making the righteousness of God available to man to enable him live the life of his Father God on earth to be free from condemnation.

Man is not free from hell as long as he is a sinner. To save man from sin is to make him righteous to enable him rise above the weaknesses of the law and overcome the wrath and judgment of God (1John 4:16-17, John 3:5-8).

Forgiveness and remission of sin is for the sins that are past, not the ones in the future from the day one accepts Jesus as Lord and Saviour. We shall be judge by our works from the day we know him. Without repentance and eternal life there is no freedom and no justification (Rom. 3:25, Rom. 6:1-2). Salvation makes us to be free from sin and from the daily sacrifices of the law.

The problem of the world is the inability to differentiate between Christianity and religion, so we mix up the two and put new wine into old bottles, so it breaks and spills over as an unclean thing. The grace of God towards man has been misconstrued. The bible is misinterpreted. Rom. 4:4-5 is good example, that Jesus Christ is righteous on our behalf, and that every one that goes to Church will go to heaven. This is not true.

Salvation brings three-fold deliverance to you; it delivers you mentally, spiritually and physically. Mentally because it destroys your fleshly desires and thoughts and ~~reasoning~~ and brings in God's own Soul (life) into your be ¹² spiritually because your redemption and deliverance will achieve the desired spiritual results. It makes you clean and spiritually pure; physically because it brings healing to your body.

What is Religion?

Religion is man's acknowledgement of God's presence, and his outward expression of spiritual devotion. It is everything done in the physical to symbolize spiritual devotion to God. Judaism is a good example of Religion, and almost everything in this lesson shall be taken from it.

- a. The sacrifices of blood, burnt offerings, feasts, ceremonies, and other kinds of rituals.
- b. The use of holy anointing oils, water, perfume, ashes of heifer, etc. for sanctification.
- c. The building of alters, temples and holy places the burning of incense, the use of effigies and symbol of power. etc
- d. The ordination of priesthood dynasty, the priesthood garments, etc.
- e. The observances of times, the new moon, holy days and jubilees, days of atonement, the blowing of trumpets, etc.
- f. The holiness of not eating unclean meats, not touching a menstruous woman, dead bodies and carcasses of animals, the human with issue or discharge. Etc.

Characteristics of Religion

- a. Walking by sight. It demands for physical evidence before one can believe. Even the laws are written in tables of stones (John 6:30, 1Cor. 1:22).
- b. The worshippers are under sin, so they observe daily rites to symbolized devotion to God (Heb. 10:1).
- c. Relationship with God is that of master and servant, not that of father and son (Lev. 25:55).

- d. It gives room for war against enemies. If the scripture says kill, then you kill without questioning, no interpretation except dreams and prophecies.
- e. It is a blind way to God, the elementary and rudiments of man's relationship with God (Gal. 4:3, Col. 2:20).
- f. It is abolished (Heb. 7:12, Eph. 2:15, Heb. 13:9, Heb. 8:6-13).

Characteristics of Religious People

- a. They are under sin, imperfect without eternal life, so one could sin and offer the sacrifice of atonement to be free. Spiritual death compels them to sin every day thereby necessitating the daily sacrifices for sin (2Cor. 3:13-16, Gal. 3:19, Rom. 3:19-20).
- b. Religious people are jealous, rude and hostile. They can kill suspected enemies (John 3:25 Mark 11:28).
- c. There is high esteem for rank and position. Leaders demand for honour, praises and human worship (Matt. 23:2-7).
- d. Outward holiness of daily washings with water and use of perfumes etc. (Mark 7:4, Heb. 9:10, Heb. 7:19).
- e. They are irrational and blinded by the old covenant, and cannot accept change. The new covenant has no place in them.

The Sense Ruled Man

Adam committed a high treason against God and was dethroned and alienated into darkness (Matt. 6:22-23). Man is turned flesh and ignorant of the things of the spirit of God, and spiritually dead. The spiritually dead man is the natural man. He walks through the senses only. He does not understand

things of the spirit of God (Gen. 6:3) except it is demonstrated physically (Matt. 13:10-17, 1Cor. 2:14). Since the body is mortal and subject to devil, the spiritually dead man has no proper rule of himself (John 8:38, 44, Gal. 5:16).

He does not know what to do to please God in Spirit. He approaches Him in the senses through symbolic events and it becomes easy for Satan to impersonate as God to deceive him. The effect of this ignorance is the emergence of diversities religions and modes of worship in the world. Lightening, thunder, the sun, land, water, the moon, trees, animals, birds etc. are seen as God when mysterious events occur in them. So He offers sacrifices to show devotion to unknown gods (Acts 17:22-23). Man worships whatever he sees as a result of lack of knowledge of the true God e.g. Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Hare Krishna, Eckankar, African Juju religion, Judaism, Spiritualism, Occultism, World traditional Christianity etc. are among the religions that claim to worship God the creator but have significant differences in belief and mode of worship. One God means one faith and one life, and there is no significant difference among different people. This spectrum is evidence of different gods in action.

Cain and Abel acknowledged God and tried to please Him through sacrifices. God called Abraham, and received his sacrifices by fire; He called Moses in the burning bush and made his rod to turn to snake. They are rudimentary ways of manifesting the glory of God. The devil himself can do it, so Pharaoh's magicians made their rods turned to snakes also. The unbelieving Israelites worshipped Baal and offered their children as sacrifice. These were cases of spiritual powers

manifesting themselves to blind man for his obedience. Think of God and Noah, and the flood that destroyed the world. It was the spirit of God manifesting His power in the physical.

God is spirit, Satan is spirit and man was created as spirit but is now flesh, walking in the flesh alone, so God cannot walk with him in the spirit. He is ruled by the laws of death, subject to external control besides God. His environment and nature of devil in him decide his behaviour (Gen. 6:3). God came down in the sense realm and contacted man in the flesh too and through his acknowledgement of God in the body his spirit would be reawakened. God's physical manifestations to man through signs is the foundation of religious worship. And because this is carnal Satan has taken advantage of it to manifest himself to man as a world power. The coming of Jesus Christ to earth is the greatest manifestation of God in the sense realm (1Tim. 3:16), this is to break the limitations man had in knowing and appreciating the beauty and glory of God.

Redemption Plan Foretold

The plan was made from the day Adam sinned, and was sealed. The redeemer was seed of woman who would bruise the head of serpent (Gen. 3:15). He would come at the end of the world (Heb. 9:26). God would come to man in the flesh to prepare him for salvation.

The call of Abraham as shadow of the call of Man in Christ

Abraham was chosen by God and called to separate from his country, and from his people to a land He would give for his inheritance. This was a call in the flesh as a shadow of the spiritual call that should be revealed. The call required

separation from one's own land or home to a land that should be provided by God, and would be received through obedience and faith (Heb. 11:8-10). Blessings and protection are promised as reward. Those who obey the call of God are called people of God, God would walk in them to reveal Himself to mankind (Gen. 12:1-3). His descendants were chosen as shadow of His people and kingdom (Gen. 15:13-14). As Abraham was called so are we called of God to leave the world and be with Him in the New Heaven and the New Earth of our inheritance.

Slavery of Israel as shadow of Man's bondage with Satan:

Pharaoh and the Egyptians were the adversary, they stood for Lucifer and the demon host. Israel represented mankind as people of God. They are in the hand of a cruel enemy who rule them without mercy, ready even to destroy and cut them off from the face of the earth. Generally this is the position of man in the hands of devil, who holds him as prisoner and rules him with every act of wickedness in the hands of demons.

The Deliverance of Israel as shadow of the deliverance of Man in Christ:

The deliverance of children of Israel in Egypt was of the flesh. This was a shadow of the spiritual deliverance of man in the future. It was made by God for our learning that we might know His power of deliverance. Pharaoh symbolized devil, and Israel the people of God on earth. Moses symbolized Christ, the redeemer. God called Moses and the people believed because of the physical signs shown by God. He met Pharaoh with convincing evidence. Though Pharaoh refused to let them go, the hand of God was so much on him that he had

no option than to surrender. The oppressor was oppressed and put to naught. It was deliverance from the Almighty God. The Passover was celebrated with blood as the seal of life. After the Passover, the journey started.

Christ came to save man on earth. He appeared with great signs and power. A virgin conceived and born Jesus. From the day He was born till he died on the cross, Jesus met the devil who wanted to destroy Him but He defeated him in all daily combat. He even resurrected from the dead. He celebrated the Passover with His disciples, and offered His blood as the seal of life, Moses in Egypt was a shadow of the miracles of Christ in His earth walk. After the Passover, Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt of both gentiles and Jews (Ex. 12:38). The resurrected and seated Christ is the Lord and Saviour of those in the journey of salvation, for those separated from the world to look on Christ to inherit the new heaven and new earth. This is the work of faith, to believe in him and do the things he has commanded; denying the works of the flesh and things of the world, and looking into the perfect law of liberty and a world where righteousness, holiness, godliness and love reign. When we become filled with this hope, we shall live the heavenly life even here on earth. The entry is repentance and we are sustained through faith in Christ. Those who do not believe belong to the world that is condemned already (John 3:18). Jesus is Lord, Saviour and Christ (John 1:14, 1John 1:1-3, John 3:14-15).

Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, and Pharaoh and his army sank and died. This is similar to the resurrection of Christ, that actually destroyed the power of death. Satan has

been defeated and a new life has come to man, with new hope and new abilities (Matt. 12:39-41, Rev. 1:18). The resurrected and seated Christ is Lord and Saviour and we are united with Him in His strength. After the Red Sea, children of Israel met difficulties, and they murmured. Those who desired to go back to Egypt all died in the desert. God gave them direction by a pillar of cloud in the day, which kept them from the hot sun, and a pillar of fire which gave them light in the night. They defeated all their enemies not by their own powers but by the mighty power of God. They had meat and drank water which God provided. Yet with many, they desired to go back to Egypt and were destroyed (1Cor. 10: 1-12).

An angel took charge of Israel in their journey in the wilderness. He had the name of God written in him, and Israel was strictly under command to obey his voice because he would not spare the disobedient. If they obey his voice, their enemies would be God's enemy and their adversaries God's adversary because the angel would go before them and cut them off before their presence (Ex .23:20-23). Jesus is resurrected as Lord and king over the people of God. He has delivered us with His blood and translated us to walk with Him in the spirit of the word. We have been drawn out from the kingdom and rulership of Satan, separated from the world to inherit the promises of God. The word of God is the light on our path and lamp under our feet, and the one over us is not an angel but the Holy Spirit of God. Our defence is absolute, because God is always with us by His spirit and He provides for our needs. But some are not satisfied, they desire to go back to the world. All those who look back shall perish with the world (Luke 9:62).

Mount Sinai and Judaism

When Israel reached Mount Sinai, the Lord gathered them and made a covenant with them (Ex. 19:3-6). God gave them Ten Commandments written in two tables of stones. If Israel should keep these laws they would be peculiar treasure unto God above all people on earth, a kingdom of priest and a holy nation. To satisfy the demands of the covenant God gave them statutes, ordinances and religious observances to enable them attain the requirements of the law. These laws that formed the constitution and tradition of Israel became what is called Judaism, a clear case of religion established by God Himself on earth.

The old covenant was a shadow of the new covenant which God would make with man in the future. Though the law of love is spiritual, the practical side to achieve the love of God was carnal so no one could attain it. God imposed the law of perfection on man who by nature is evil without removing sin from him (Heb. 9:10). The sinner was worthy of death and was killed physically, and the enemies were human who disobeyed God. The laws were called the law of sin and death, the laws designed to rule spiritually death (abnormal) people (Rom. 8:2).

The law was made for the following reasons:

- (a) To make every man become guilty before God so that those who need God might desire for His redemption and salvation (Ro. 3:19-20).
- (b) To give man understanding of God's life so that man would have a good knowledge of his fall, and what he would be in the future (Gal. 3:22-25, 4:1-7).

- (c) To give knowledge of the coming Messiah so that those who need God would accept Him and obtain salvation through their faith in Him (John 8:39).
- (d) It was also a means by which the spiritually dead man would be justified by the deeds of the law and be free from everlasting burning. Those justified were kept in Abraham's bosom at death awaiting also for the coming and deliverance of the Messiah (1Pet. 4:6. Heb. 11:13,39,40). After the finished work, Christ has taken the crowd to the heaven of God (Rev. 7:9-10).

Mount Sinai And The Day Of Pentecost.

The children of Israel gathered at Mount Sinai and God came down to them in the sense realm and they saw the glory of God with their eyes and heard Him spoke with a voice. God appeared with lightening, thundering, smoke and fire, earthquake, voices, etc. and gave them the laws, and Moses went up to the Mountain to obtain the tables of the law prepared by God Himself (Ex. 19:16-20).

The disciples were in the upper chamber of John Mark's house and the Holy Spirit descended with power on that day of Pentecost. It was the greatest remarkable event in the history of the new creation. The new covenant was established (Heb. 8:10-13, Jer. 31:31-34, Ezek. 36:26-27).

The Holy Spirit descended from heaven with a great sound and met the disciples, filled the room and entered into their human bodies. They became united with God and the transformation was remarkable, they were changed to the image of Christ (Acts 2:1-4). They received a new nature, divine nature or

eternal life (2Cor. 5:17). They were born again. The glory of God that appeared to them entered them and they were filled with spiritual understanding and new knowledge. And cloven tongues like as of fire was on them, as sign of power. They were no longer of the world as the laws of God were written in their spirits, making them partakers of God's nature. The Christian journey began. They were going to walk in the spirit by faith by forsaking the world and lust of the flesh, so their view of the world changed, their knowledge of the enemy shifted from human to Satan the devil and the demon hosts. Their weapons were no longer of the flesh but spiritual since the enemy is spirit. They walked in the spirit of the word, no longer of the flesh, as the instruments of God against the enemy, Satan. Their weapons were the Name of Jesus, the Blood of Jesus, the Water that follow the blood (1John 5:6-8), the real heavenly fire that consumes (2Kings 1:10), the Holy Spirit (1John 4:4, John 14:10-12) and the word.

The Law And The Prophets.

The Ten Commandments, and the various laws, the ordinances, statutes and religious observances as given to Israel by God, the warnings, predictions, testimonies, the preachings and teachings of the Prophets form what is called the law and the Prophets. Basically it is a summary of God's dealing with Israel on earth. The law of God is the law of Love. The first tablet demanded man to love God with all his mind, his heart, with all his strength and might, his body, his soul and spirit. The second is that, every man is a child of God, therefore we must love our neighbour as we love ourselves to reflect our genuine love of God.

This brings us to the golden rule of eternal existence (Matt. 7:12). Man is fallen, abnormal and unrighteous and needed a Schoolmaster to keep him until the time he should be delivered from his unrighteousness. The Ten Commandments states in broad terms God's moral law, our relationship with Him, the acceptable line of human conducts, and our duty to our fellow man (Gal. 3:24).

Though the law (love) is spiritual, the ordinances given for man to follow in order to attain God's perfection was carnal and it was not possible that the spiritually dead man could attain it (Rom. 7:14, 8:3, Rom. 3:20). So a limit was set to the love man would act upon, he should love those who love him only, but hate those who hate him (Matt. 5:43, Deut. 23:6). Religion gives way for enmity because of the nature of the fallen man.

Social Legislation:

Since man was inherently sinful and lawless, social life was to be regulated by a code of conduct from a higher personality. In Israel, the statutes, ordinances, and judgment, were divinely regulated by God.

The family is the most important social unit. Marriage not to be broken, and should be preceded by pre-marital chastity. Any violation of this rule was punishable by death (Matt. 19:3-9, Deut. 22:13-15, 22-29).

Children must honour and obey their parents. Act of dishonour and disobedient must be punished by death sentence (Ex. 21:15,17). Servants, slaves and strangers were part of the

family. They were to be treated with love. Any act of wickedness against them was against God and liable to face God's anger (Ex. 21:20, Ex. 22:21-24).

Any crime against Society was sin against God (Ex. 21:12). Sexual violations, immorality and perversions of the human nature were punishable by death (Ex.21: 16, 19). Right of ownership of property was to be respected. Any trespass of property right was to be restored with double or more fold restitution, otherwise the individual faced the risk of losing his human freedom. He may be sold in exchange for value (Ex .22: 5, 6, 9).

Those on Judgment throne must be righteous, never to pervert judgment, without partiality, and without respect of persons. They were not to accept gifts, neither to take reward in order not to blind their hearts. Any deviation from God's standard, the judge himself was to be condemned (Ex. 23:6-9, Lev. 19:15, 35-36). The army should not rely on their strength, they must not fear but fight in the name of the Lord.

The poor, the unfortunate, the lowly, the defenseless and needy must be treated humanely. These include the widows and the fatherless. Any act of oppression and wickedness against them, God Himself would be the avenger of their oppression (Lev. 19: 14, Ex. 22:21-24, Lev. 19:33-34). To the individual, the law of God was the law of kindness and Love. He should be kind even to the animals (Deut. 25:4). He should be a lover of friends and strangers. Lack of kindness would lead to God's condemnation (Lev. 19: 9-34, Ex. 23:1-3).

In Christianity, the attainment of moral standards and perfect social life is no longer by the threat of death penalty, or mutilation and physical torture. Jesus the Saviour did not emphasize on the statutes, and ordinances and religious observances as given by the law for the attainment of love and righteousness. They were given as schoolmaster because of the madness of man. Our attention is now focused on the essence and truth as contained in the law, upon the spirit which it wanted to establish. The new creation man is no longer to be supervised by any or his conduct be determined by a code of conduct.

The Ten Commandments are God's principles of life. Jesus came to make man attain God's standard of life. This is possible if man would voluntarily yield himself to Jesus, and take him as the model of life which the law was trying to describe. Jesus came to make us receive the righteousness of God by faith through persuasion, teachings, explanations, preaching etc. rather than imposition through the threat of the law. That man can obtain and work as the righteousness of God by grace if he takes him as a model and walk in his stead. God has endowed Christ with the power and authority to heal us of all that devil did to us, to destroy the cursed nature in us with his sacrificial blood. One would be delivered from spiritual death if he comes to Christ and acknowledge him as having the power to save. Obey his voice and cast all your trust in him and you will be saved. The believer must repent and change his attitude toward the evil world and he shall have the gift of the Holy Spirit. The goal of Christians is to conform to the image of God as manifested in the incarnate Son, Christ Jesus (Eph. 4:13). The presence of the Holy Spirit in the

believer's temple is vital in the transformation of man's nature. He convicts us of sin through the word and illuminates our hearts with the love of God (Rom. 5:5). He recreates our spirits by the word and makes us conform to the image of Christ.

The one that is transformed by the Holy Spirit is described as "born again". He is described as the righteousness of God, he is a Christian i.e. Christ-Like, with all the fulfillment of God's requirements as son. He is perfected through the entrance of divine nature. His life is a fulfillment of the demands of the law (Gal. 5:22-23). With Love, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, gentleness, long-suffering, temperance, faith, humility etc. he has attained the righteousness required of God as son (Rom. 13:10).

Religious Legislation

Man's relationship with God was predetermined before creation. He was predestinated as son of God. When man fell and became abnormal and mentally handicapped, he lost contact with God and could not know Him anymore. The law was established to enable the sense ruled man know God as his creator and to make him honour Him, and obey Him by force. He was taught how to worship God in the flesh. He made us to know that: -

There is only one God, and only Him will Men worship

Since Jehovah is the only true God, only Him will men worship, and people of God must separate themselves from the beliefs and practices of the heathen world who worship other gods. They must give God the honour, love, gratitude, the obedience and service that He needs, to be holy even as God is

holy. This is the standard required for sweet fellowship between God and his people (Ex. 20:1-5, 23:24).

All other gods are idols and must be forbidden

Worshippers of other gods should be killed. Heathen practices such as occult, witchcraft, sorcery, divination, enchantment, charm, the observer of times etc. were to be forbidden. Those who practice such things should be killed (Deut. 18:10-13).

Any Disobedience Or Transgression From The Law Of God Is Sin.

Sin is the transgression of the law of God (1John 3:4). The penalty for wilful sin is death. Repentance and sacrifice were for sin through ignorance, but death for presumptuous sin worthy of death (Num. 15:27-31). Blasphemy against God was not to be tolerated. The Sabbath day should be observed as a holy day for worship (Ex. 20:8-11). He gave definition to sin because the law makes us know what action is considered as sin (Rom. 5:13, Rom. 4:15).

The Tabernacle of the congregation:

The Sanctuary is the dwelling place of God on earth, the place where He meets with his people, to present Himself to them so that they would know Him, to see His glory, know of His holiness, goodness, beauty, mercy and covenant promises (Ex. 25:8).

The pattern of the sanctuary under the law was shown to Moses by God, and Moses was commanded to build according to that pattern. It was a shadow of the tabernacle which should be reveal in the future. The structure, and the requirements of

the sanctuary was to show the manner of approach to the Almighty God (Heb. 9:1-10).

a. *The Court*

This was a fenced area of a given dimension as God's premises. In it the tabernacle was built at the northern end. The worshippers of God would stand at the court, but the priests entered into the Holy place daily, and the high priest alone entered into the Holy of Holies once a year with blood on the day of atonement. This shows that the worshippers of God could approach God only through a mediator. The mediator of the new covenant is Jesus Christ who only has access into the throne room of God in heaven. In Christ the human body as the body of Christ is the sanctuary and tabernacle of worship (1Cor. 3:16). We are in Him, through our recreated spirits, (John 4:23-24), and His spirit is in us (Rom. 8:9-11).

(b) *Laver of Water:*

This was a pot of water for the washing of hands and legs of the priest and his children for outward cleansing. That at the fullness of time, man shall receive grace to approach God, through the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5, John 3:3,5; 1 Pet. 3:21).

(c) *The Altar of sacrifice:*

This altar was for the sacrifices of burnt offering unto the Lord. The fire in the altar was to burn day and night, not be quenched (Lev. 6:12-13). In the new dispensation, the worshipper of God is to worship God in Spirit and must present his earthly body as living sacrifice, a freewill

offering, holy and acceptable to God every day. This is the service of the believer to God (Rom. 12:1-2). His sacrifice of righteousness to God must never cease (Ps. 4:5).

The blood of atonement had been offered by Christ for the removal of sin and death, therefore, the individual been set free from death, his body must be offered as sacrifice of freewill offering to God, to be dead to sin daily. This is our union and love of the Father (Rom. 6:5-11, 1Cor. 15:31).

(d) *The Altar of incense:*

This golden altar for the burning of incense was located at the holy place before the veil. The High Priest burnt incense upon it every morning and evening when he dressed the lamps (Ex. 30:7-9). No strange incense was to be burnt there, it was not for burnt offering, nor meat offering, or drink offering, it was holy. God requires that we approach Him with sweet smelling. He lives only in places of pleasant smell (Lev. 16:12-13). The sweet smelling incense was to enable the priest stand approved before God. Eternal life gives the new creation man the approval to stand before Him. Our appearance, prayers and praises are His delight because we are sweet smelling before Him as the image of His being on earth. In our union and partnership with Him, our prayers are always answered (Ps. 141:2, Rev. 8:3-4). Isaiah was explicit (Isa. 1:11-20). The Christians are sweet and can approach Him at will through their prayers. (2Cor. 2:14-15, Isa. 65:24).

(e) *The Golden Candle Stick:*

God is Father of lights. The light that comes from the golden candlestick came from the oil of God, the worshippers must walk in the light of God. The light is the Word. The worshippers of God must worship Him in the Word. The lamps must be on continually (Lev. 24:2-4, Ps. 119:105) to shine continually (Matt. 5:14-16) as the holy spirit continues to unveil the hidden things of God to us.

(f) *The Table of Shewbread:*

Twelve loaves of unleaven bread (cakes) set in two rows on a table were dedicated to God daily (Lev. 24:6-9). God requires the fruit of man's labour to be presented before Him, that there should be food in His house every moment.

(g) *The Holy of Holies:*

This was the throne room of God. It was separated from the Holy place by a veil. None would enter into it except the High Priest once every year with blood of atonement for himself and for the sin of all the people of Israel. In that room, there was the golden pot that had manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the law; above the ark was the mercy seat of God (Heb. 9:1-7). This sacred room showed the holiness of God, the presence of the word of God, His throne and presence, and the rod of the priesthood of His Holiness. In the new covenant, man is the holy place of God and we are complete in Christ as the temple of God (Col. 2:9-10). The Holy Spirit is in us. The word is written in us, in our spirits (heart), through divine act by the Holy Spirit, and we are priests under the

royal priesthood of Christ. We are the place of His holiness, the place of His rest, the true Sabbath of God (Mark 2: 27-28). God is in us by His spirit and Holiness.

(h) *The veil:*

The veil is a curtain that separated the holy place from the seat of God. The priest would perform their daily services in the holy place without entering into the holy of holies. Only the high priest goes in once a year on the Day of Atonement. The veil shows that the time to see the face of God has not yet come. In the new dispensation, Jesus is in the throne room seated at the right hand of God as High priest (I Tim. 6:16). The veil was rent on the day of crucifixion and the holy of Holies was opened to all. The Christians are in the presence of God through the body of Christ on earth (2Cor. 3:18, Heb. 10:19-20).

The disciples of Jesus are now priests under the priesthood of Jesus Christ, standing in the holy place to offer spiritual services to God every day. The temple is the body of Christ (2Cor. 6:16, 1Cor. 6:18-20, 1Cor. 3:16-17). The Holy Spirit in them means access to the presence of God (2Cor. 3:18, Rom.8: 16).

(i) *Blood sacrifice:*

The law of God demands the sinner should die for his sin, but for him to live somebody must die for him. Under the Law of Moses animals were used as sacrifice for the sin of man. The blood sacrifice satisfied the demands of the law of the covenant, that life be given in exchange for life that

is lost, blood being the seal of life was used for the atonement of the works of death (Lev. 17:10-11).

Sacrifice was done for every sin committed if such sin was committed in ignorance. On the day of atonement a general sacrifice for the sin of everybody was offered and the blood taken to the Holy of Holies. In Christianity, Jesus has offered his blood once and for all forever. If a sinner accepts Jesus as Saviour, his blood is already provided in exchange for his life. Not only is it used for his sacrifice, the blood when poured on the individual is capable of removing every cursed thing Satan has penciled into him to make him abnormal. Hence with Jesus he needs no other blood sacrifice throughout his life (Heb. 9:22).

j. *The Priesthood:*

One cannot approach God in a casual way. We are to contact Him through representative procedures. An ordained priesthood is always needed. God deals with sinners through a mediator. Jesus is the high Priest in the throne room of God in heaven as a mediator. The disciples or Christians are Priests in his priesthood and can always contact the Father through Christ in prayers.

The Prophets:

Prophets are those ordained by God as His spokesmen. They do not speak words of their own, neither do they add nor subtract from what God had said. The word of God is planted in their mouth and it is made known to the people exactly as it is given. The words of the Prophets are the words of God

(Deut. 18:18-20, Jer. 1:9). When we disobey the prophet we have disobeyed God.

God made Moses different from all other prophets. Others heard from God through vision or dreams but with Moses God spoke to him face to face and mouth to mouth. (Ex. 33:11, Num. 12:6-8). This was because of the role Moses was to play in the deliverance and salvation of Israel. God said He would make him as God and Aaron would be his Prophet (Ex. 4:15-16). He was portrayed as Christ the Saviour.

Jesus came as a Prophet as prophesied by Moses (Deut. 18:18-19). He is the redeemer, Saviour, and deliverer, the word of God, He is God. His disciples have Christ indwelling in their hearts, the words of God are written in their hearts, and in their mouths, and they speak as the oracles of God, not only with their mouth but with their conduct showing themselves as the model of Christ. If you believe in them you have satisfied the Father already. Under the law or religion, prophets may rise and fall because the Holy Spirit was not permanent in them. It could come only at the time the message was to be given and once the words are spoken, the spirit left them. They were spiritually dead men walking in the senses because the Messiah had not come to die for our sin. David killed Uriah and took his wife because of spiritual death, the Holy Spirit is not in the spiritually dead man.

But Christ had come and completed the work that would set us free from sin and spiritual death. His blood is to remove the works of death in our spirits. The born-again man is transformed to the image of Christ, and qualified to be with

God in one body. True Christians are new creatures in fellowship with God and with the Holy Spirit. They are the righteousness of God in the world (1John 3:9).

Prophets of old stood on the law and spoke of the future relationship between God and man. They testified of Christ, of His life, the time of His coming, His nature, conduct, behaviour as son of God as true standard of man, the kind of man that is desired of the Father. They spoke of what Christ would do and the salvation of man. Their teachings, warnings, and truth were expanded by the apostles and shown in their lives. Love is the fulfillment of the law and words of the prophets. Jesus lived as a fulfillment of the law.

The law demands you should love God with all your heart, obey Him and keep His words. Call on him in time of trouble, rely on Him only as your helper, deliverer and saviour. He is your salvation and refuge. If you fulfill these conditions, God is always at your right hand. Your prayers shall be answered.

Love your fellow man even as you have love yourself. Do not plan evil against your neighbour, do not lie to deceive but be sincere, honest and kind to all. If you are oppressed and persecuted, do not reward evil for evil, but forgive and wait for God's deliverance. If you fulfil these conditions in your life, then you will be called son of God, and be blessed in all your ways.

The man who hates, kills, lies, robs and oppresses others shall have his portion with the devil. Satan shall be in his right hand. In the judgment of God he shall be condemned. His prayers

shall be sin and abomination to God. He will not enter into the land of the living, his position another will take, his wealth others will take and his children shall be wonderers. His life shall be a curse, and blessing shall be far from him (Ps. 109).

Righteousness exalts a nation and sin as a reproach to a people. Jesus brought the life that brings a better civilization in the world than before.

The Sabbath

God created the heavens and the earth and needed an instrument to rule the world, God called him man.

After all His works God created man and rested because His dominion and rulership over creation was established. He was in His rest both in heaven and on earth. His place of rest on earth was man. Adam was the offspring of God. ³³ Nature he was like God. He reasoned like God. He had the authority of God, and was subject to no carnal ordinance except the law of Love which already was his being. To love God is to obey Him, this obedience was to be shown through the commandment of abstinence and God rested and His rest was eternal. This eternal rest is the Sabbath of God. The day of His rest is not in man's calendar because a day with God is like a thousand years to man (2Pet. 3:8, Ps. 90:4, Gen. 2:1-3). So we cannot assume creation to be made in the six days of man's calendar.

Adam sinned and lost the Nature of God. He lost the glory of God, and God withdrew from him. So His rulership of creation fell into the hands of the enemy devil. He had no place of

abode on earth anymore. Man was no longer the place of His rest because he was alienated. He became sin and cannot be His sanctuary anymore (Rom. 3:7). God lost his instrument of dominion and rulership on earth. He must do something to redeem man from this fallen state and to recreate him to his former state as His image, and man's co-operation was necessary.

So God visited man in the flesh to give him an understanding of his present condition and future reconciliation.

God imposed on man, the law of rest from works on every Sabbath day of man's calendar week. God was to observe this Sabbath of rest with man in the flesh too. No manner of work should be done on the Sabbath as a memorial of rest from the works of death. On that day, they should gather in the Tabernacle in sanctification to commune ³⁴ with God. Everybody showed outward holiness. It is rest from evil works.

God does not dwell in a house that is built with hands. The tabernacle and its ordinances, and observances were given as a shadow of what God would establish in the future. The weekly Sabbath, Sabbath years and years of Jubilees were all memorial of rest from works. The Land rested on the Sabbath year and the fruits of it were for the poor, needy and strangers. Six Sabbath years is 49 years; and the 50th year was the year of jubilee. It was the year of freedom for slaves, the year of restoration of landed property, every indebtedness to another was cancelled.

Sabbath means to cease from work or to rest, a day one has ceased from work, when one should not carry a burden, the day of self discipline and withdrawal from sin, when both man and beast is in the rest of God (Ex. 23:12, Lev. 23:3).

The first day of the Seventh month of every year was a Sabbath day also, a day of memorial of the blowing of trumpets and of salvation, a day of joy and holy convocation (Lev. 23:24). The tenth day of this same month was a Sabbath of rest also, the day of atonement, a day of fasting, a day of repentance cleansing in which no manner of work was done (Lev. 23:26-32).

The 15th day of this seventh month was the feast of tabernacle where Israel lived in booths for seven days rejoicing and celebrating with palm fronds as memorial of Israel's dwelling in booths in the desert. When they learn to observe the rest of God, the fruit of their labour shall be multiplied, and they shall be blessed (Lev. 25:18-22, Lev. 26:1-12).

Their contact with God was to observe the Sabbath, and see the glory of God on that day. But this was a shadow of good things to come because God does not dwell in a temple that is built with hands (Act 7:47-49, Isa. 66:1, 2Chr. 2:6).

God rested on the seventh day after creation and He blessed it. It was an endless day of eternal rest after His works were complete. A day with God is like a thousand years to man, and a thousand years like a day (2Pet. 3:8). The sin of man put God into another burden of works and at the end Christ said "It is Finished". After the redemption work, God is now in His place of rest again. Man is sanctified unto Him as a temple (2Cor.

6:16). And God is in His temple, the church, the body of Christ, the Holy sanctuary where the spirit of God dwells. It is an eternal rest after a new creation has been made. Israel kept the Sabbath in the wilderness, but God still spoke of another rest that those who would not believe or obey Him will not enter into His rest. This is the actual rest of God that has been promised for every believer. The Sabbath of the law was made for fallen man, and not the actual rest of God. (Heb 4:8-11)

The burden of Israel in the wilderness was of hunger, thirst, human enemies, etc. and their rest was of the body when they may have settled in the Promised Land. This was a shadow of the heavenly calling that should be revealed in the future. Israel was told that when they come to rest in the land of their inheritance, then the Lord would choose a place and cause His name to dwell there, and there they should worship and bring all their offerings, tithes and vows (Deut. 12:9-11). Consequently Jerusalem was chosen in which the temple was built.

In Christ, the people of God do not worship God in Jerusalem. They worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:21-24). We worship God in a Mystery. Those in the worldly sanctuary should depart because it is not their rest according to the eternal purpose of God (Micah 2:10-13). We are in Zion, the heavenly sanctuary, the church of the first born of God (Heb. 12:22-29). This is the place of rest (Matt. 11:28-31). Those who do not believe in him will not enter into His rest (Heb. 4:1-11). We are conformed to the image of Christ and our bodies being the temple of God is the habitation of God on earth. Since God is holy, His temple must be holy and this is

every day, everywhere. Our bodies are now presented as a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1-2).

Jesus came as the second Adam. He had the Holy Spirit without measure. The Spirit was permanent in Him except on the cross because He was holy throughout his ministration. His body was given up as living sacrifice through hunger and persecution, for the service of God. Those conformed to the image of Christ are in his service, suffering and glory, and God reveals Himself to the world through them. They are the dwelling places of God, the actual places of His rest on earth.

The Sabbath of the law and the weekly worship was committed into the hands of a Priesthood, the Levites. It is abolished because true worship and actual rest have come to stay. Jesus' Priesthood is established. Spiritual worship had come with a new law and new mode of operation (Heb. 7:12, Col 2:14-17, Heb. 10:5-9). Man is the temple of God, and God is in him by the Holy Spirit. We worship God not only on the seventh day but every day. We no longer keep the seventh day as the only holy day but everyday to eternity is to walk in the holiness of God.

3 CHRISTIANITY

Meaning of Christianity

Christianity is not a religion. It is not the works of the law of the Jewish religion. Christianity is the actual relationship between God and Man as Father and son in a family: the truth about man's redemption from sin and union with God, that God's own life is in man showing that man is indeed a new creation. The coming into being of a generation known as the generation of the righteous, a kingdom of Priest to minister righteousness to the world. The life and spirit of God in man makes him the fullness of God on earth with God's ability. God is in His children by His word and spirit as companions with their bodies as the house of fellowship. Christianity is supernatural; that God is in man reconciling the world to Himself to gather His children that are lost (2Cor. 5:19). His beauty and goodness is revealed through the lives of the redeemed. Righteousness is the mark of His people.

Christianity is fellowship with God. Fellowship means common bond, resemblance, the partaking with God of divine nature etc. When you sin against Him, fellowship is broken. God puts His life into the body of man and manifested Himself in the world in the image of son (Adam), Jesus was the only true son of His person. Jesus is the true glory of God to the world (Heb. 2:14), it was God coming into the world through a

body to become our being. By accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour our old man (Nature of sin in our spirit) shall be destroyed, and God's divine nature shall replace it. It is God coming into our being to become our renewed spirit. Every incarnate is the fullness of God in the world (2Cor. 6:16, John 14:23, Col. 2:9-10, Ezek. 36:26-27). You are conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. You are not subject to carnal ordinances because it is God acting through you.

This is where liberty works to allow us live the life of God to His praise in the world. It is God revealing His true life in us to the world: at home, on the way, in the office, market, school etc. showing His nature of love, wisdom of love, the productive power of love, the authority, the ability, the eternity of His love etc. Christianity is the true fact of God as Father and man as son. God is acting through the lives of His children and He becomes their ability.

Salvation through Christ is to bring into the world spiritual reawakening, reformation and better civilization where love, righteousness and peace reign in the minds of people. The test of Christianity is righteousness through love. Love is mark of perfection, it is our holiness, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It is the way, the truth and the life, our defence and victory on the judgment seat of God (1John 4:16-18). Love has his own kind of thoughts and wisdom (Gal. 5:22-23). It cares, provides, overlooks, forgives, and desires for the welfare of others. It is the realm of God. Agape is the seed of God. This is the wisdom of Christ (Prov. 8:12-21). The bringing down of God's own life to fallen man is to change the entire course of the history of man.

Characteristics of Christians

1. They walk by faith, not by sight. They rely only on the word and on the name of Jesus (2Cor. 5:7).
2. They represent God in the truth of his being (John 4:23-24).
3. Their mark or identity is righteousness through agape love.
 - a. They bear the fruits of the spirit of the word (God) (Gal. 5:22-25).
 - b. Humility and obedience to the Father is perfect. They see that all about them is God's.
 - c. Pride, hypocrisy, arrogance, lying, hatred, revenge etc. are no longer part of their being.
4. They love everyone, including those who hate them because their desire is to save them. The world has passed through stages of civilization since from the fall of Adam: from military dictatorship, autocracy and tyranny to democracy: from slavery, oppression and despair to liberty, freedom and hope. Democracy is the climax of freedom and hope. The autocrat lives to defend his position and interest only. He makes decrees and laws to satisfy his purpose, and disagreement with him will lead to death. He is a mini god to the people. The people serve him with fear and trembling and their cry to God is freedom from oppression. This cry for freedom is universal. Now God has heard the cry of man, and has visited the world for man's freedom. Everyone has a say in the government of his being. God is the king and He agrees with our collective will. The voice of the people is entrenched in codes and constitutions as the sovereign. Man is to fear God

through the bible or scripture or through the sovereignty of the people. But man is neither willing to obey God nor the sovereignty of the people whose foundation of life is Christ. People are after selfish gain, God is kept aside, man's collective will is dethroned and dissolved for personal gain, even the ruler is for himself and interest. There is the glowing loom of an impending catastrophe, because the world is now in opposition to the doctrine of Christ. Even the major economies of the world are breaking down, there are demonstrations and protests here and there. Even the Pastors and Prophets work for their gain. God's solution to man's problem is elapsing into the horizon of darkness and loss of hope. We need another world, not this one again.

True Christian Worship (John 4:23-24)

Religious worship demands for a temple built with human hands. Fleshly bodies gather to present themselves to God in His desired mood, in the way He had commanded. The chosen place of God was Jerusalem, children of Israel went to Jerusalem to worship in the holy temple. Those afar off worshipped in their synagogues all facing the direction of Jerusalem, where the Holy Spirit dwelt (Deut. 12:5, 1Kings 8:38-49).

In Christ neither in Jerusalem, nor anywhere would men worship, but the worshippers of God must worship Him in Spirit and in truth (John 4:21-24). The temple of Christian worship is the church made of individual human bodies, where the Holy Spirit dwells (1Cor. 3:16). To worship God is to

honour Him with your body, to keep it holy as the sanctuary of God. The recreated human spirit is in His presence, in fellowship with Him through partaking with Him of the same body, standing before Him with His nature, so he is His delight. His glory is revealed in him and by him God is glorified on earth. The church is the mystery of union between God and man. God's life in man's flesh means God is to share with man of his body and to live in it. Righteousness is our sacrifice, and commitment of oneness, the only reasonable service God wants from us (Rom. 12:1-3).

The End of the Christian Journey

The goal of every believer is to conform to the image of Christ through the gift of eternal life. The end of the journey is the resurrection of the believer with an immortal body for an everlasting union with God (1Cor. 15:50-58). The New Heaven and the New Earth is the final home (2Pet. 3:13-14).

Authority of the New Creation

We have seen and heard, and know that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh. His righteousness is ours and we walk in His ability. We have acted on His word and life, we believe He is true. Our faith in Christ has made us sons of God, and the things He did we will do also because we are sons even as he is (John 14:12).

We are in Him because He is the head of our body, the church, the habitation of God, on earth (John 15:1-7, John 17:17-25). Jesus is the surety of every word spoken (Matt. 5:18). God created the world through the word, Christ is the word (Gen.1: 3-21, John 1:1-4, Col. 1:16, Heb.1: 2). What God has in mind

to happen is made manifest by the Son of God and established (Job 22:28). We speak of His will and they are established. When we bind or loose, it is done in heaven (Matt. 18:18, Matt. 16:19), so we are to pull down, to plant and to rebuild (Jer. 1:10).

We are created for good works; which God ordained for us before the foundation of the world (Matt. 5:14-16, Eph. 2:10).

The new creation has the dominion, authority and power as in (Gen. 1:26-28). Our faith in Christ makes us heads of principalities and powers because God is in us. It makes us exercise dominion over devils and demons, and over all the powers of Satan. (Eph. 6:11-12, 2Cor. 10:3-6). The new creation has the Power to heal the sick, cast out demons, raise the death etc. (John 14:10-12), because the word of God is in his lips (Mark 16:17-18, Jer. 1:9-10, 51:20).

He is the ambassador of God, a reformer and fisher of men. His duty is to deliver men from the hands of devil, and to show them the way so that through repentance and faith in Christ they can obtain the gift of life. The enemy devil is a spirit, a very powerful monarch ruling the human race with every conceivable power. He can imprison, kill, and mislead. Ignorance is his potent weapon and man is his tool.

The new creation fights with the following spiritual weapons:

- (a) The Name of Jesus (Mark 16:17-18, John 16:23-34, 14:14).
- (b) The Blood of Jesus, and the water from the body of Jesus (1John 5:6, 8, Rev. 12:11).

- (c) God's own heavenly fire (2Kings 1:9-14, Luke 9:54-56).
- (d) The Holy Spirit (1John 4:4).

It is a spiritual warfare, the fight of faith to believe that what the Father has said is true. Our power is as in (Mark 11:23-24, 16:17-18, Matt. 10:8, 12:29). Whatever we speak which is the will of God is done (Matt. 18:18), with the power to bind demons and cast them to abyss (hell or deep) (Luke 8:26-31), devil is a defeated foe.

The Grace of God

Grace means undeserved love pouring out from God to unrighteous and wicked human, making His Righteousness available to man to restore the fellowship that was lost. God is making a way to restore the authority lost by man to enable him overcome the adversary, the devil, to be able to defend himself and his household against the dethroned rulers and demon ruled men. Those who receive the grace according to God's will are in-christed and are called sons of God for the benefit of mankind.

God and Man before Grace came.

The fall of Adam made man lost all his sonship rights and privileges with God. He was condemned and doomed for destruction (John 3:18), unholy, a gentile (heathen) and unworthy to enjoy the holy things of God (Gen. 10:5, Eph. 2:12 Matt. 15:26, Matt. 7:6). Humanity is in the hands of devil and doomed to face the wrath of God. It regretted God that He created man. He destroyed the first world with a flood, and saved only Noah and his family. He destroyed Sodom and

Gomorrah with fire and none was spared except Lot and his daughters. He saw the heathens and gentiles as unworthy to inherit the earth which was made for His children. So the heathen (sinners) were destroyed at the least provocation because they are condemned already (John 3:18).

There was no law or commandment until Moses came except the law of creation, people walked according to their conscience and moral precepts. So God made a covenant with the children of Israel and gave them commandments. He promised to make them a peculiar people on earth, but were not spared from His severity. Israel was destroyed when they disobeyed the law of the covenant. He ruled them with the law of sin and death. The heathen nations that were enemy to Israel were cut-off from the face of the earth. In like manner, Israel was destroyed when they forgot God and walked in the way of the heathen. Sinners worthy of death were killed without mercy. Wickedness is faced with violence, tooth for tooth, eye for eye, life for life. This was God's way of ruling spiritually death, abnormal and mad humanity until the time of reformation (Heb. 9:10).

The Grace of God through Christ: John 1:17

God promised Abraham that through him the world would be blessed. This brought hope to man when Isaac was born because the promised was fulfilled. It shows the inescapable reality of redemption, salvation and abundant blessings for mankind (Luke. 2:13-14). So Christ came with the true horizon of hope (John 3:16). God poured down His love on mankind with every good thing the rebellious man needed from Him (John 3:16). The law of sin and death was abolished; the sinner

is to obtain mercy and be saved. It is not His will that any should perish. The idolators, adulterers, sorcerers, witchcrafts, disobedient children etc should all live to obtain the salvation of Christ, to amend their ways and be converted to God through Christ. Christ came because of sinners, to make them escape the grip of devil through faith. By confessing their sins, they are forgiven, and cleansed by water baptism (1John 1: 9, Acts 2:38). The idolators, sorcerers, witches, etc are no longer to be killed by the law but to repent and be converted to Christ.

Many will receive the Grace of God in Vain

When one accepts Christ as Lord and Saviour, repents of his past sins, and lives a righteous life through the gift of eternal life then the full benefits of God's grace are established in him (John 15:1-7). Christ is made none effect to the sinner when he refuses to repent to have eternal life, though he will not be killed, he has received the grace of God in vain. The wrath of God still abides in him and must suffer destruction on the last day. We benefit from the grace of God if we actually become new creatures through the word and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:1, John 3:18, 36). The old man is condemned to be destroyed but the new man shall inherit the new heaven and the new earth.

In the past we fought and broke people's bones, but the law of grace demands we should be weak and let others persecute us without we fighting back. The law breaks our bones, power and might, and puts us into the realm of the perfect.

The rejected Man in Christ

The rejected man is the man with reprobate mind. The man is disqualified and rejected of God due to his inability to act upon

the word of God. He has refused to sanctify himself by the word. He has the knowledge of the truth, but holds it in unrighteousness, as a result, God has withdrawn from him all He has for his perfection. God has taken away from him the convincing power of the word and the Holy Spirit. So blindness once more has set in and the heart is hardened to do abominable things even in the name of God (Titus 1:16).

The man has the memory of Christ but because he refused to repent and allow the word be built into his life, he becomes vain and confesses Christ with mere lips, but without God, without Christ and without the Holy Spirit in him. The promises of God are no longer his.

God gives reprobate mind. He withdraws His power of conviction and understanding so that there is nothing to convict the man of his sin again. He is blind to the truth and excited in lies.

Every reprobate believes in lying testimonies, and not in the truth, deceiving one another with lies and bad in every conduct (Titus 1:16, 2Thes. 2:11-12). Paul says God gave Israel a reprobate mind (Rom. 1:21-32), because after Israel had known God and seen the glory of God, they refuse to obey Him and walk in His counsel, but rather devised their own way and turned the image of God to vanity, so God withdrew Himself from them and allow them walk in their uncleanness.

All false prophets are reprobates. They cannot repent again (Matt. 21:28-32).

No Sinner Is a Christian

Before the world was formed, God had in mind of children that would be holy, without blame before Him in love (Eph. 1:4). So God created man in His own image to realize His dream (Gen. 1:27, 31).

Man was created not to be manipulated or operated by God as a machine but to reason, think and exercise the power of will but under guidelines and instructions from his maker. He must keep his Father's instructions as sign of obedience to Him (Gen. 1:29-30, Gen. 2:16-17).

But Adam sinned because he ate the fruit he was commanded not to eat. His action brought sin consciousness, sense of unworthiness and inferiority complex and death. Sense of guilt robbed him of his legal approach to God, and fellowship was broken. Man had fallen short of the glory of God. This broken fellowship alienated man from God and Satan took him and breathed his cursed nature to him. Man became a partaker of the nature of devil, a subject of Satan and bond slave of his circumstances (1John 3:8). Satan his new spiritual father has turned him an enemy of God. Man is sin, evil, ⁵¹ child of devil (Gen. 6:5, Eph. 2:2-3, John 8:44, John 10:10, 1John 3:12, Rom. 5:12).

Before the coming and death of Christ the condition of man was described as:

1. There was none righteous, not even one (Rom. 3:10-18).
2. None was good, save one, that is God (Lk. 18:19).
3. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

4. Man's righteousness was as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6)
5. All have the sentence of death and condemned (2Cor. 1:9-10, Rom. 5:12, 18).
6. All men were liars, murderers and enemies of God (John 8:44, Col. 1:21, Ps. 116:11, Rom. 5:10.)

Due to the fall of Adam, spiritual death (corruption) entered into the world and passed unto all men and to every creature and creation became bad (Rom. 8:19-25). Satan is the author of all that is evil in the world. The fruits of devil's nature are hatred, lying, lust and revenge which is the very opposite of God's own laws of love, peace and joy. In spite of demons that possess man, Satan plants bonds in the human spirit to blind him from the truth about God (Eph. 4:18, 2Cor. 4:4, John 12:40). Man is carnal, with wisdom too weak to understand the things of God (1Cor. 1:21, 1Cor. 2:14). He cannot be righteous except he is redeemed or delivered from this evil circumstance.

Jesus came to destroy the works of devil, to deliver man from his sinful nature (1John 3:8, Heb. 9:22). Blood represents life and must be shed for the atonement of sin (spiritual death) (Lev. 17:11). Man's spirit is to be delivered and be reawakened to the life of God. Since it is the spirit and not the flesh, a spiritual sacrifice was needed (Heb. 9:22-24).

Christ is an eternal spirit with God from time everlasting, (Micah 5:2, Prov. 8:22-23), he appeared in the world with a body in the womb of a virgin (Heb. 10:5, Matt. 1:20). He was not of this world (John 8:23). Isaiah saw it as a "Sign" (Isa. 7:14) and Jeremiah said, God had created "a new thing" in the

earth (Jer. 31:22). His body is without sin and it's suitable as sacrificial lamb for the real man (human spirit) (John 1:29, Heb. 9:14).

Jesus offered this sacrifice by his death on the cross (John 19:34, Heb. 9:12). Christ is high priest for every man, so he took his sacrificial blood into the throne room of God in heaven for our redemption (Heb. 9:24). This blood is preserved as supernatural power for the deliverance of every man (Rev. 3:18, Isa. 55:1-2). As the priest under the law stood daily in the temple to offer sacrifices of blood of calves and goats for the purification of the flesh even so is Jesus daily interceding and the disciples are priests on his behalf daily ministering with his blood for the freedom and healing of mankind (Rev. 22:2, 1Peter 5:2).

There is general invitation to every man to accept Christ and be saved. The saved ones are free from the curse (spiritual death) that makes man prisoner of sin. The believer is now to cleanse his mind, will and heart from evil thoughts, and his body from unclean habits. The blood of Jesus cleanses only the human spirit, but the man is to repent of his sins for his mind to be renewed (2Cor. 7:10). Under the law or Jewish religion, the sinner was to provide a lamb unblemished as sacrifice for his sin. In the new dispensation, the sinner once purged from his sin must present his body as a free-will offering, a living sacrifice, a holy one, fragrant and sweet smelling for the perfecting of his spirit (Rom. 12:1-2). By acting on the word of God, his heart shall be completely renewed. If he does not repent, the spirit shall be overtaken by Satan once more and the condition of the man at the later end shall be worse (Matt.

12:43-45). But if he keeps himself away from evil, trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and work in love, then he shall be justified for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Repentance, faith and love admit us into the throne room of God, (Acts. 20:21).

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of the promise of power from above by God to make us complete over-comers, (Acts. 1:4-8). The Holy Spirit builds back God's nature into our spirits making us new creation (2Cor. 5:17, Rom. 5:5). We are conformed to the image of Christ (Eph. 5:9, Rom. 8:29), reborn through the **Word** (Christ) but recreated by the Holy Spirit (James 1:18, Eph. 2:10, 1Peter 1:23). Regeneration is making our spirits partakers of divine nature (2Peter 1:4). We are reconciled with God when we become partakers with Him of His nature (eternal life), and the spirit of God dwells in our body (temple) (1Cor. 3:16-17, 2Cor. 6:16, Rom. 8:16). A Christian is an incarnate, Christianity is a miracle (1John 4:4, Col. 3:10, Eph. 4:24, 1Cor 1:30). Divine nature makes us walk in the love of God (1John 2:29, 1John 3:10). Christian means Christ-like, and love is the common bond.

The redeemed have the seed of God, (God's nature) (2Cor. 5:17), in God, there is no sin and those with His nature cannot sin (1John 3:9). The seed of God makes them perfect and called Christians (Christ - like) (Matt. 5:48). God's children are God's spokesmen on earth. God's nature is love, our oneness with Him is love, it makes the individual servant of righteousness (Rom. 6:18). It manifests itself in the speech, wisdom, character, conduct and behaviour of the child of God (Matt. 7:20). Agape or charity is God acting through the lives

of his children to manifest Himself to the world (John 14:21, 23, 1John 4:7-11, 16, John 14:12). Christians are the body of God on earth. They are not of the world even as Jesus is not of the world, they are of the spirit, but in flesh and blood (John 17:14-16, Eph. 1:3), and truly free from sin.

From the fall of man, opinions, beliefs, practices and customs are formed through the influence of devil. These practices as passed down from generations constitute the tradition of man. God gave laws through Moses to check this abnormality in man until the saviour would come. Jesus came to redeem man from his old corrupt life and from the traditions under the law so that man can obtain righteousness exceeding that of the law to be worthy to be called son of God (Matt. 5:20).

The word of God is God's call to our spirits. Obedience to the call is the submission of human reasons, logic and sense knowledge to the will of God. When we exercise ourselves in the word our spirits are reawakened (1Tim. 4:7, James 1:22-23). The living word (Christ) must direct our thinking and meditations. This will help bring to our spirits ⁵⁵ C~d'~ life. As our reasoning faculties are developed along intellectual lines, so is our spirits to be given the chance to develop along spiritual lines through the word. The human spirit is to dominate our reasoning faculties because he is like God. It is the source of creative ability, faith, love, wisdom etc. (Gal. 5:22, 1Cor. 1:30, Eph. 3:16-19).

In the mind of justice, every sinner is a servant of sin (devil). They help the course of the devil to defile others, children of God are servants of righteousness, through them the glory of

God is revealed. With their personal character, conduct and behaviour, and speech they change corrupt people to good ones. God is righteous so are his children. If you are unrighteous but claim to be child of God, you lie and the truth is not in you (1John 1:5-6). If you are righteous as he is righteous then it is evident that the blood of Jesus has cleansed you from your sin (spiritual death) (1John 1:7). No natural man is justified before Him, except the new creation. If you say you have no sin as a natural man you deceive yourself (1John 1:8). But if you accept that you are a sinner and confess the evil things you have done and forsake them, He is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). Once cleansed from unrighteousness, you are no more unrighteous, but the righteous son is God (1John 2:29).

Our Victory over Sin in Christ

God sent his beloved son Jesus into the evil world to save His children that are lost (Heb. 1:1-3), to set them free from the bondage of sin and condemnation. Man disobeyed God and for him to be reconciled obedience is needed. Jesus showed the obedience required of man. It was perfect because he knew no sin. He gave up his body for our redemption because there was none beside him that can save us from sin, so he died for us. His life is a love story.

Jesus learnt obedience by the things he suffered, he showed the way, demonstrated the strength and had victory over sin in the flesh. By him the human race has shown obedience to God. The secret is obedience to the word. Born in the likeness of sinful flesh, in a sinful world, yet he rejected the desires of the

flesh and lived of the spirit through his Father's word (Rom. 8:1-13). His obedience becomes ours if we follow his steps. When we walk in his likeness then God is our beloved Father. Jesus has destroyed the limitations of our senses, and given us a new hope and access to a new life, beyond the human senses. We walk with the knowledge from above.

He saved us on substitutional ground and shown us the way. We have it in our minds and body as the light. His nature is our victory over sin and Satan. It becomes ours when we believe, and we are in Him and He in us, and we walk in the spirit, and live of the spirit of the word. This faith makes us overcome the world.

Jesus was made sin on the cross to taste death for us. He suffered for us so that God will Justify Himself to justify the sinner (Rom. 3:25-26). A righteous man was made sinner for not committing sin means the end of the law for sin, so the sinner becomes righteous without works if he accepts Christ. He was made sin on the cross, diseased, weak, and he died and went to hell. His suffering is revealed by Isaiah as substitution for our healing and justification. *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities" "and by his stripes we are healed" "and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all". "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted" "he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter". He was taken from prison and from judgment", "he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken". He made his grave with the wicked" "he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth, yet it pleased the*

Lord to bruise him, he had put him to grief: when thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed (fruits), and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand". "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities". "He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressor" (Isa. 53:4-12).

God requires the sinner to suffer for his evil. He must pay the penalty of his sin according to God's council. So Jesus suffered to satisfy the claims of justice on man's transgression. He died for it and went to hell, and after three days he resurrected with power. He resurrected because he was absolutely obedient to the Father, now in heaven in newness of spirit. Those who believe in him have in the mind of justice suffered with him and justified with him. They are dead with him and resurrected through baptism in newness of life. If one dies for us, then we have all died for our sins, and because he is justified his justification become ours also (2Cor. 5:14-15).

Those who do not believe in Him will not be saved. When you reject him, He will reject you also. And you are ever for the devil, condemned and hell doomed, and afterwards to the lake of fire (Matt. 10:32-33, Rev. 20:13-15). The saved ones are in the kingdom of the living, free from sin, sickness, disease and want.

Our Victory over temptations (Joy)

The victory of the church over the devil is not the ability to cast out demons or knowledge of miracles but the ability to overcome temptations and all the circumstances of the devil.

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven"(Luke 10:20).

The most significant victory of the church is the rest in the word. There is peace, joy, and rest. The power is hope, but the greatest is charity. They give the believer a sound mind, triumphing over persecutions and temptations, overcoming all in hope, and they enter into the kingdom with absolute victory.

The faith that brought us to Christ is of the senses, but then into another realm of faith, the faith of the recreated Spirit. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and by walking in his stead, character, conduct and behaviour we are transformed. We cry desiring, seeking, knocking and asking to be like Him, and He answers. The believers are given power to become sons of God. The faith of the recreated spirit works because eternal life is imparted to our spirits (Gal. 5:22).

Faith shows the realities of the word of God in our actions and conduct, that what we should hope for is already received. Faith is always now, in the present always rejoicing in God. This is the source of joy. The believer has absolute confidence in the word of the Father (Heb. 11:1).

Joy is behind the assurance that we belong to God, and the hope for a new home begins, that we shall be in a better place (Lk. 10:20, 1John 3:1-3). Faith is now but hope is of the future.

Hope enables us despise our afflictions and shame, with meekness and long-suffering, gentleness and kindness, goodness and temperance etc. all in the hope of the kingdom. We rejoice not only when things are good but also when things are bad, in tribulations, persecutions, and afflictions (Rom. 5:1-5). God has a reward for our sufferings. Joy is manifested in full when God reassures that He is with us. It comes when prayers are answered (John 16:24), to show His presence. Though we suffer, we suffer in hope, and though we live, we live in hope; and though we die, we die in the hope of the glory of Christ. Through faith we overcome the weaknesses of the flesh. We are more than conqueror, we are masters of circumstances. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:35-39).

We will see Him and be with Him in the New Heaven and New Earth. Faith and hope brings joy to the believer. They give the strength to endure and overcome (Isa. 30:15). Majority of those who confess Christ are not walking in the faith and joy of the recreated spirit. They have happiness, rejoicing in circumstances; music, eating and drinking, reveling, banqueting, enticing and deceitful words, false promises and hope of material blessings. This rejoicing disappears as soon as the circumstance changes, and the individual begins to blaspheme God, denying Him in all. Joy is of the spirit, happiness is of the senses.

Joy is an integral part of spirit life, and it remains even in death. Happiness disappears in pains while joy is found present even in pains. Happiness and unhappiness cannot be found together, but joy and sorrow can exist together. Christ was afflicted with pains, shame and sorrow, but the joy that was set before Him enabled Him to despise the shame of the cross overcoming all the pains with absolute victory (Heb. 12:2). The victory of the church over all the circumstances of devil is the joy that is planted in their heart at the new birth.

The State Of The Church Today

The individual believer is a member of the body of Christ, the church, the source of light and truth, a place where the righteousness of God is revealed, the place where the glory of God is seen. Christianity is supernatural, but it's made carnal and given a new face.

It is seen as an association of ushering praises to God with lips, as a congregation of the flesh. Many do not know the spiritual realities of the church, and have made Christianity not different from tradition.

a. Commercialization Of The Word And Power:

The underlying principle of the Christian life is love. The law is that freely you received and freely you give in love. Preachers bargain for money for the word of God, and for healing and blessings. It is now a free trade of buying and selling anointing and power. Remember that no sinner can receive the Holy Spirit, only genuinely repented souls are worthy for it. So when a sinner is anointed by a fellow man devil comes in.

b. Politicization:

The church now is an arena for politicking and election. Clamour, lobbying and campaigns for appointment is never mentioned as part of the church. But Christians go to the ballot to elect as the Disciples of Christ did before Pentecost when they cast lots to elect Mathias. But not as the disciples after Pentecost when they appointed the deacons under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The love of money is the reason for the fierce battles among fake believers. The church is even used as a tool for campaigns by politicians during elections.

c. Tradition and Culture:

The knighthood ordinationhood with their peculiar red overall and sword at the side as the image of Christ is making devil to be accepted as God. The Cannon dresses of white collar or the coat as ordination-hood of the priest or pastor is also a way of misconstruing the priesthood of Christ. The types of music and instruments, the slangs and babbling, the unclear utterances and violent shouting of the preacher are all traditions made to look like the way of God. The church is Americanized. Modes of honouring the dead are introduced. Corpses are taken to the church for blessing when God Himself said it is unclean. Mourning garments, shaving of the hair and cuttings on the body for the dead had already been spoken against (Deut. 14:1). Beauty contest, comedy preachers, music competition, indecent dressings, etc makes the church as a kind of club or association not different from those of the world

d. Traditional titles:

The more titles one has the more one is honoured in African society, so titles have been made as an integral part of the

Church. E.g. Chief/Rev/Dr/ pre-eminent/General Overseer, Reverend-Father. A Christian does not need titles he is recognized by his function in the body of Christ e.g. Teacher, Prophets etc. We are all brethren. A Christian cannot accept to be a traditional Chief because the demands of the title cannot agree with the Christian life. Reverend and Father are God's name Pre-eminence is Jesus' position, General Overseer is the Holy Spirit (Ps. 111:9, Col. 1:18). The desire for title is evil (Job 32:21-22). Remember that "the prophet Jeremiah or Jeremiah the prophet" is different from "Prophet Jeremiah." You see "Philip the Evangelist," and not Evangelist Philip; Paul the Apostle of Christ, and not Apostle Paul.

e. Human Worship:

Many worship church leaders as God, and called them "Daddy", by both young and old, they bow down before them or stand up in reverence at their coming. This is not the image of Christ, or the light Jesus showed. Their guards of honour shows they are out of the way. Judas Iscariot kissed Jesus before they knew Him because they were alike.

f. Spiritualism:

Worshipping of familiar Spirits: They are done through:-

- (i) Using of Sacrifices and feast for spiritual results.
- (ii) Enchantments to invoke magical powers e.g. calling on Jesus seven times, tongues without interpretation and such magic as vomiting a snake, a bird etc. some ask the spirits of the one that is possessed what is to be done for the man's problems to be solves. e.g. Who are you? Where do you live? What have you done to men? How many people have you killed? What do you want? Etc.

And as they consult, the demons respond with lies to stir up hatred and revenge. This is clear case of divination.

- (iii) Observance of times: Deliverance times such as 12 mid-night. A child of God is to work as Christ worked. Healing and deliverance have no limit as to days or time.
- (iv) Charm: The use of rings, soap, water, oils, handkerchiefs, etc for healing, protection and wealth is as the wizards charm.
- (v) Necromancy. Some consult the dead to bring messages to men, so it becomes easy for devil to deceive them to worship him in the name of God and Christ. It is devil worship.
- (vi) Initiation through fasting and prayers without repentance, so Satan anoints the instrument and uses him in the name of God.

4

Summary: Differences Between Religion And Christianity

Religion (Judaism)

Christianity

1. *Purpose intended to achieve*

1. Fallen man is not different from a little child. Therefore he needed tutors and governors, and schoolmasters to give him rudimentary knowledge until the time appointed for him to exercise his sonship rights and privileges (Gal. 3: 3-24-25, 4:1-7).

Man had been quickened in spirit to conform to the image of Christ, therefore he is son in the likeness of Christ with divine knowledge, wisdom and understanding as image of God. He walks with the wisdom from above.

2. It was established to make man realize that he was exceedingly sinful and that there was nothing good in him. This would make man become guilty before God as a sinner so that he would desire for deliverance and salvation from God (Rom. 3:19-20)

Man is redeemed from sin, he is free from sin consciousness, inferiority complex and sense of unworthiness⁶⁵ he is justified before the Father. His spirit is quickened and his conscience is now alive unto righteousness and good works.

3. It was a provision for man to be judged in the flesh, and to be justified in spirit because eternal life was not made available to man at that time (1Pet. 4:6).

4. It was a shadow of good things to come being represented by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and his twelve sons. (Heb. 10:1). They were called sons of Abraham.

5. Judaism is an example of Religion. The Ten Commandment, the ordinances and religious observances imposed on them by God constitute a religious relationship.

Man is to be justified by believing in Jesus and by having eternal life only. Those who have this life in Christ are justified already.

It is the manifestation of the very good thing that was promised and was born out of God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ and the twelve apostles. They are called sons of God.

Christian is not a religion. It is the true fact of God as Father and man as son. No law is imposed, because the sons have the nature of the Father and walk in love at their own liberty. The only commandment is Love (Agape).

6. It was called the law of sin and death, because it was designed to rule people under the bondage of sin and spiritual death. The sinner was killed physically (Rom. 8:2).

2. Man's Relationship with God

1. Fallen man was in the position of servant. As servant, man could dissociate (backslide) and later comes back to God. This is called backsliding.

2. Every presumptuous sin worthy of death was sin unto death and the sinner was killed physically.

The law of love is called the law of life (Rom. 8:2), love is the law of acceptance of divine nature.

Man is uplifted through divine power to the position of son to exercise the authority of the Father. Any disobedience means actual breaking of fellowship, then the son loses the nature of the Father (eternal life).

Every presumptuous sin is sin unto death, and the man shall be overtaken by spiritual death once more. He is now in the kingdom devil.

3. The Holy Spirit was not permanent in man. It would come only when a message was to be delivered by the prophet. After the message, he left them. It was the reason the prophets were subject to sin, e.g. David.

4. It was the old covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. Two tables of stones engraved with the commandments of God were given. They walked according to the ordinances and observances given by the laws of Moses e.g. sacrifices, the Sabbath, the feasts, ceremonies etc.

5. It is called the old wine: the Jewish tradition in addition to human tradition and culture makes up what is called the old wine, the old wine operates in unrepented bodies (old bottle)

The Holy Spirit has descended and he is permanent in the body of the believers. They are the righteousness of God in the world (Rom. 6:18).

It is called the new Covenant establish on the day of Pentecost in John Mark upper room. The Holy Spirit descended on them, and they receive new natures as the laws of God were written in their hearts by the Holy Spirit (Heb. 8:7-13). There is no more sacrifice of blood, feasts, festivals and ceremonies except the Lords supper.

The doctrine of Christ and the righteousness of God as tradition of God being brought down to man is the new wine. This New Wine operates in a repented body only (new bottle).

6. Because of Spiritual death the dead saints who died were in paradise or Abraham's bosom or third heaven. They were waiting for their redemption through the blood of Christ. 1Pet. 4:6, Rev. 7, Heb. 11:39-40.

7. Service to God was to keep the ordinances and observances contained in the law.

3. Mode of worship or manner of Approach to God

1. Man worshipped God in the flesh, by sight through physical signs (Matt. 12:38-39, 16:9).

2. Many feasts were commanded to be observed: Passover, tabernacle, harvest etc. (Ex. 23:14-16).

Jesus had died to redeem us from Spiritual death. Those who have eternal life through Christ go direct to heaven after death (John 3:24). Judgment is on Spiritual purity.

Our service to God is to present our bodies as living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God every day i.e. to be dead to sin every day. Rom. 12:1-2, 6:4-18.

We worship God in Spirit and in Truth. We walk by faith, not by sight (2Cor. 5:7).

The only feast approved is the Lord's Supper with his disciples (1Cor. 11:24-25).

3. There was a well-defined order of service (Heb. 9:10).

4. Repentance was demonstrated by putting on of ashes and sackcloth with prayers and fasting (Dan. 9:3-6, Matt. 11:21).

a. Those who come to God must wash their bodies with water, change their clothes, and put on perfume so that they will be sweet smelling (Ex. 30:17-38).

b. They must burn incense so that the temple will be sweet smelling.

There is no special order of service. We walk in the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Repentance is of the inward, having godly sorrow towards sin, forsaking evil and acting on the word and doctrine of Christ (2Cor. 7:10).

We are delivered from death and conformed to the image of Christ through divine power. Therefore the spirit of the saved man is always pleasing and sweet smelling before God.

The body is the temple of God. The separation of the body through Jesus' sacrifice and through our repentance make the body sweet smelling as a good place to reveal His glory. So our prayers are always answered.

c. The people must recite the laws in the presence of God to show that His laws are in their hearts.

d. Sin is the manifestation of spiritual death. Since blood means life, blood sacrifice is to atone or cover sin and death. Animals were used to die for the sinner because the wages of sin is death, so blood sacrifice was in exchange for the sinner's life that was lost.

5. Everything for the service of the temple was anointed with the Holy Anointing Oil and consecrated with sacrificial blood to make it holy (Heb. 9:19-22).

They do not recite the laws with their lips but the laws are written in their hearts i.e. they are by nature like God, like Christ. With God's mind and will.

No blood sacrifice is needed anymore because children of God have overcome sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. Christ has offered the sacrifice once and for all (Heb. 10:11-12, 9:28).

Since the body is the temple of God, there is no material object that is part of the temple, therefore, the new has no provision for anointing of objects with olive oil.

6. Every man approved of God for His services was anointed with the Holy Anointing oil. This anointing makes him holy and empowered to work as instrument of God.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in his body temple is the anointing he has to work with God.

7. Every 50th year was the year of jubilee, the year of freedom and liberty for all slaves, prisoners' etc, land and some properties sold was returned back to the owners.

The year of jubilee is once for all mankind and it has taken place through the finished work of Christ. It is called the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).

4. Temple of Worship

1. The temple of worship was carnal being built of material things of the world. God was in the Holy of Holies represented by the Holy Spirit.

The human body is the temple of God. God is in man in the person of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the temple of God must be Holy as God is holy (Rom. 8:16, 2Cor. 6:16, 1Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19-20).

2. There was only one place chosen by God as place of worship. It was chosen with the name of God written on it. Worshippers went to Jerusalem for their Spiritual service. If they were too far from Jerusalem they could worship in their synagogues by facing the direction of Jerusalem (Deut. 12:5, 13, 14, 14:22,25, Kings 8:44-49).

There is no earthly place of worship. The believer worships God in Spirit and in truth every day, and everywhere (John 4:23-24). The recreated human spirit is before God through the Holy Spirit in the body, and bears witness that we are beloved sons of God. (Heb. 10:19-20). We worship God by representing the way and truth about Him, through our bodies as living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1,2).

5. Priesthood and Ordination

1. The priesthood was committed to a family, thus it was hereditary. The priest put on a priesthood dress of honour and a cap on his head to distinguish himself from the people (Ex. 28:2).

The Priesthood is committed to the resurrected and seated Christ and given to every man. Priests have no priesthood dress and cap, hence heads must be opened (1Cor. 11:4, 7).

2. Functions and responsibilities were based on training and theological schools except prophets and kings that were directly commissioned by God (Acts 22:3, Gal. 1:13-14).

6. Sanctification and Holiness

1. Circumcision was of the flesh i.e. removal of the foreskin of the flesh.

2. Were judged according to the Law of Moses in the flesh and justified in spirit (1Pet. 4:6).

3. Man could not overcome sin because he was not delivered from sin. Bleeding sacrifice was introduced as temporary measure to remedy the ugly appearance of sin

Functions and responsibilities are determined by repentance and gift of the Holy Spirit (1Cor. 12:7-11,14, Eph. 4:11).

Circumcision is of the heart i.e. of the spirit (Jer. 9:26, Col. 2:11).

Shall be judged in spirit in the standard of the new creation (John 3:18, 5:24).

Man has been delivered from sin. He walks as the image of Christ. So he is servant of righteousness. Rom. 6:18.

4. Baptism was for the forgiveness of sins in the flesh. Since the spirit was not delivered from death, it could not be in partnership with the Holy spirit.

5. Man was fallen and too weak to withstand devil so he was commanded to abstain from eating some meat (Lev.11:1-47). They were polluted with devil's power.

6. None was righteous because of spiritual death, their righteousness was a filthy rags. Righteousness was of the flesh imputed through the law (Rom. 3:10-12, 4:3,4).

7. Authority, Power and Blessing

1. The concept of enemy to Israel were men who troubled them. They were to fight with God's power to defeat them. The enemies were killed physically.

Baptism is for the remission or washing away of sin in the flesh. Since the spirit is delivered from death by the blood of Jesus, the man after baptism is qualified to be in partnership with the Holy Spirit.

Can eat all things being sanctified by the word and by prayer (Rom. 14:20, 1Tim. 4:3-5).

All are quickened to the image of God, and walk in the actual righteousness of God through divine love (2Cor. 5:21, 1John 2:29).

The enemy of Children of God is now the real enemy of God, the devil. The truth is that every man is a brother. Devil and the demon host are the enemies (Gen. 3:15).

2. The weapons of war were carnal because man walked by sight e.g. sword, horses, etc. symbol of authority was carnal e.g. staff girdle etc. other means of power were water, leaves, oils, blood, music etc.

3. Man was guided and ruled by angels so men worshipped them even as they worship God (Ex. 23:20-23).

4. Service of God brings financial and material gains because blessings were shown in the senses (Gal. 1:12-14).

Character of Religious People

1. They are sinners, imperfect without eternal life, so they engaged in daily sacrifices and confession of sins (2Cor. 3:13-16, Gal. 3:19, Rom. 3:19-20).

Weapons are spiritual, and Mighty through God capable of destroying all that devil put in man's heart (2Cor. 10:3-4). e.g. The word of God, the Name of Jesus, The Holy Spirit, the blood of Jesus, the water that came from the body, and fire from heaven.

They are uplifted to the position of sons above the angels who are servants. They walk with the Holy Spirit of God (Gal. 4:4-7).

Service of God is of the spirit and does not bring financial and material gains. They are separated from the world. Blessings are shown in godliness and spiritual gifts (1Cor. 9:18).

Character of Christians

They are righteous, perfect with God's life, cleansed, sanctified, so they glorify God every day.

2. They are very jealous, rude, hostile, arrogant, and can kill suspected enemies of God. John 3:25, Mark 11:28).

3. Leaders demand for honour, Praises and human worship (Matt. 23:2-7).

4. Full of holiness of daily washings with water, anointing with oils, putting on of holy garments, scents and perfumes, so they walk along the streets strong smell of perfume (Mark 7:4, Heb. 9:10, Heb. 7:19).

5. They flee at the sight of a dead body.

6. Abstain from Meats considered as unclean.

7. They love only those who love them, and hate those who hate them.

Christians are loving, meek, kind, gentle etc. they love as God loves of both sinners and those of the house-hold of God.

Have the mind of equality, humility and gentleness.

A free man free of any kind of smell and religious washings.

They are not scared of anything.

Whatever they wish they sanctify with the word and prayer and eat in the name of the Lord.

They love every one and do good to those who hate them.