

Glossary
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**Abba** In Aramaic, it means "dear father," or "daddy." Jesus used this phrase in prayer.

**Adoption** Christians are adopted as sons and daughters in the family of God.

**Agnostic** One who believes that the limits of human knowledge will not allow man to settle the question of God's existence or other spiritual truths.

**Allegory** Speech or writing where the literal meaning takes second place to the symbolic meaning. Some in the early church interpreted too much allegory in the Bible.

**Almighty** Describes God's ability to do anything which is not against his character and laws.

**Altar** Place where sacrifices are made.

**Amen** Used at the close of prayers, it means "let it be so."

**Analogy** The method of description which compare two things that are alike. When we say that God is Father, we mean that God's relationship to us is like that of our own father.

**Anathema** (lit., "devoted to destruction") Accursed, morally worthless and thereby to be destroyed (cf. Gal. 1:8,9; 1 Cor. 12:3; 16:22).

**Angel** It literally means "messenger." Spiritual beings used by God to speak to man, to minister to man, or to perform a task for God.

**Apocalyptic** A literature form found among the Jews which uses images and symbols to convey its message to its intended audience, while hiding its message from the enemies. The book of Revelation is written in apocalyptic style.

**Apocrypha** The fourteen books written between the time of the Old and New Testaments, which were not considered as inspired, authoritative books of the Bible by either the Jews or early Christians. The Catholic church designated them as a part of the canon in 1546 at the Council of Trent. Churches of Christ do not regard them as inspired.

**Apostle** (lit., "one who is sent with a message") One of the twelve men appointed by Jesus and sent out to preach. Paul is also regarded as an apostle.

**Aramaic** The Near Eastern language spoken by the people of Palestine during the time of Jesus.

**Ascend** (lit. "to go up") Jesus' return to the Father which took place forty days after the resurrection in the presence of the disciples. (ascension)

**Atheist** One who believes there is no god.

**Atonement** (lit., "at-one-ment") The bringing of people back into a right relationship with God, accomplished through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ.

**Authority** That which rightfully demands our

acceptance and obedience. Christ possesses all authority for the Christian and reigns over them through His Word.

**Baptism** The necessary dipping or immersing of a believing penitent person in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Baptism is the means by which one unites with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. Baptism in water is the means by which one is born again.

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit** The promise Jesus made to the apostles of the spiritual, miraculous power they were to receive on the day of Pentecost.

**Bible** (the Scriptures, the Word of God, the oracles of God). A collection of the 66 books written between 1500 B.C. and 100 A.D., which are recognized as inspired and authoritative. The Bible contains all spiritual truth, everything Christians need to know for life and godliness.

**Bishop** (lit., "overseer") In the New Testament is used interchangeably with elder (presbyter) and shepherd. In the second century individual bishops began to be in sole charge of congregations, a move away from New Testament pattern of a plurality of elders in each congregation. (The idea of an "archbishop" is wholly human.)

**Blessing** The giving of spiritual benefits, especially through the gospel or by prayer.

**Body of Christ** A phrase Paul used to describe the church. The picture conveys that each member of the body has a role or function to benefit the others.

**Calling** An invitation or summons God issues to people to follow him. Christians are "called" through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). Not everyone who receives God's calling obeys that call.

**Calvary** The hill upon which Jesus was crucified. It is often used as a reference to the death of Jesus.

**Canon, The.** The list of books regarded as rightly belonging to the Bible, because they are inspired and possess God's authority.

**Charismatic Gifts** These were miraculous, spiritual gifts as listed in 1 Cor. 12:4-11. These gifts were to pass away when the perfect comes (13:8-13; Eph. 4:11-16).

**Christ** The Greek word for the Hebrew term Messiah, so that Jesus Christ means "Jesus the Messiah." The Messiah for the Jews was the coming servant king, who would establish an eternal kingdom for the Jews. The Jews did not at first realize that this kingdom was the church (Matt. 16:15-19).

**Christ, In** A phrase frequently used in the writings of Paul to describe those who are in the body of

Christ, the church. To be "in Christ" is to be united with Him in His death, burial and resurrection. One who has done this receives the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13,14) and undergoes the new birth. One is baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3-7; Gal. 3:26,27; John 3:3-5).

**Christian** One who belongs to Christ and thus follows Him. The word was first used in Antioch a few years after Jesus' resurrection and the beginning of the church (Acts 11:26). Surprisingly, the word Christian is only used two other times in the NT (Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). One becomes a Christian when one obeys the gospel through faith, repentance and baptism.

**Christmas** This word is not found in the NT. It is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, variously dated Dec. 25 or Jan. 7. This celebration, a human innovation, began when Christians took over existing pagan festivals a few centuries after the time of Christ. No one knows the actual day of the year when Christ was born. (See Rom. 14:1-8.)

**Christology** The study of the nature of Jesus Christ, and in particular the relation between the divine and human in him.

**Church** The word church is used in three different ways. It is most often used to refer to the world-wide body or kingdom of Christ, comprised of all who have obeyed the gospel and were added by the Lord. Baptism is the point when one is added to the church (Acts 2:41,47). Used in its universal sense, church is always used in the singular; there is one body or one church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22,23). A second use of the term "church" refers to the local congregation, so that the Scripture refers to the "church of God in Corinth" (1 Cor. 1:2), "the churches in Galatia" (Gal. 1:2), or the "seven churches in the province of Asia" (Rev. 1:4). One should not assume that these are different kinds of churches (as denominations, which have different names, creeds and practices). The NT knows nothing of the denominational concept. The NT knows of only one universal church identifiable in local congregations, so that Paul speaks of the "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). A third use of the term "church" is a reference to the assembly of the local congregation as in 1 Cor. 11:18 or 14:34. In the NT "church" never referred to a physical building, though it is used today to refer to a meeting place. The church is made up of people, living stones. Other terms that are synonymous with the "church" include: temple, vineyard, kingdom, body, family of God.

**Circumcision** The removal of the male foreskin as a sign of membership in the covenant Israel maintained with God. This act was done on the eighth day after the birth of all the descendents of Abraham. Gentile converts to Judaism were also circumcised. There was a dispute in the NT as to whether Gentile

converts to Christianity should be circumcised. The Scriptures emphatically say no (see Acts 15; Gal. 5:1-6).

**Clean, Unclean** The Hebrew terms chiefly describe states that qualify or contaminate the Israelites or their possessions so that they can or cannot be involved in the worship of the tabernacle or temple. The terms also refer to types of foods which Israelites may or may not eat. Israel was to maintain itself as a "holy" people.

**Clergy** A term used to refer to preachers and priests. Some use the term to describe priests and pastors whom they regard as a special group within their denomination.

**Communion** Another term referring to the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10:16 KJV). It is also a term that refers to the fellowship of all Christians.

**Conscience** The faculty in man by which he distinguishes the morally right from wrong, which urges him to do that which he recognizes to be right and restrains him from doing that which he recognizes to be wrong, which passes judgment on his acts and executes that judgment within his soul. (See Rom. 2:14,15; 14:23; 1 Tim 4:2; Tit. 1:15). The conscience can be deceived when it is not educated in accordance with truth (Acts 23:1; 1 Tim. 1:16).

**Confession of Christ** This is the acknowledgement that one believes that Jesus Christ is the Lord, the Son of the living God. Peter made this acknowledgement at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:16); the Eunuch made this acknowledgement at his baptism (Acts 8:37); and the Lord expects all men to confess publicly with their mouths their allegiance to Him (Matt. 10:32,33; Rom. 10:9,10).

**Confession of Sin** The admission that one has sinned, whether one does it privately or publicly. The Christian confesses his sin and prays that God will forgive him (James 5:15,16; 1 John 1:9). Along with repentance and prayer (Acts 8:20-24), this is what the Christian (who has received his initial forgiveness in baptism) does in order to maintain his relationship with the Lord.

**Congregation** The local body of Christians who come together regularly for worship and join together in Christian service and evangelism.

**Conversion** The turning away from the world or worldly religions and sin to Christianity. The term is sometimes used interchangeably with "repentance." Conversion to Christianity is not complete, however, until one is baptized into Christ, in which he is born again and is redeemed from all sin.

**Covenant** A solemn agreement made by God with His people, with the aim of securing a lasting relationship with them. The "old covenant" (or Old Testament) refers to the legal relationship God instituted with Israel at Sinai. This relationship was

based upon the giving of the Law, including the Ten Commandments (Ex. 34:27,28). God through Jeremiah prophesied a "new covenant," which was made through the blood of Jesus Christ (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13). By establishing the new covenant, the old covenant was to make the first one obsolete.

**Covetousness** A strong desire for things that one has no right to possess. Coveting is regarded in the NT as a form of idolatry (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5).

**Creation** God's action in bringing into being the universe and everything in it. Man and woman, made in God's own image, is the crown of His creation. Belief in God as the Creator brings with it the conviction that this world and life were made with purpose, and that mankind was not the product of evolution or chance.

**Creed** A formal statement of belief. The only NT creed was a simple confession of faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, the Son of the living God. This simple, public confession was made at baptism, which was performed in the name of Jesus Christ. In later centuries men drew up more detailed formal statements; the best known creeds are the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed. Since these later creeds are not Biblical requirements, they can never be considered as an authoritative criteria for NT Christianity.

**Cross** The wooden instrument of death upon which Jesus was nailed to die (crucified). It is generally regarded as two pieces of wood joined together in the shape of a lower case letter "t." "Cross" is sometimes used to refer to the death of Jesus. The cross has become the central emblem of Christianity.

**Cults** Groups that deviate from Christianity, often characterized by heresy and a dominant leader, who maintains control over his followers. Their members are often marked by single-minded commitment. Cults often concentrate on some aspect of faith to such an extent that they become unbalanced in their approach to other matters.

**Deacon** (literally "servant"). The term is used with general and specific meanings. Generally, it refers to one who serves the Lord without regard to the type of service. Specifically, it refers to men who hold an office and are delegated with specific tasks in their service to the church (Acts 6:1-6). Paul gives the qualifications of a deacon in 1 Tim. 3:12,13. It is unlikely that a woman held the office of a deacon (1 Tim. 2:10-15).

**Death of Jesus** The NT views Jesus crucifixion as the atoning sacrifice for man's salvation. Jesus died in our stead, even though we deserved the penalty of death for our sins. Jesus died as our substitute so that we might be forgiven and be reconciled (brought back into a loving relationship with God). The death

of Jesus was the means by which God demonstrated to us the depth of His love and the full extent of His grace.

**Deism** The belief that God exists but reveals Himself through nature rather than directly through the coming of Jesus or through the Bible.

**Demon** Evil spirit working for the Devil against God and against righteousness. Jesus saw demons invading people's bodies and personalities; He frequently cast them out.

**Denomination** The organized grouping of congregations with similar names, creeds, beliefs, structures and practices. This concept is foreign to the NT, since Jesus Christ only built one church. The belief that there can be many churches with many names, creeds, organizations, and practices and that these denominations can co-exist with the approval of God is clearly denied by the Scriptures. Jesus prayed that His people be one (John 17:20-23); division is condemned (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Rom. 16:17-19); and Jesus identifies the true disciples as those who abide in his teaching (John 8:31,32; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11). Only those who obey the will of the Father in heaven will enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:21-27). Every plant which the Father has not planted will be rooted up (Matt. 15:8-14).

**Devil, The** (also called "Satan") The leader of the spiritual forces opposing God. His authority is strictly subordinate to God. The Devil is thought to be a fallen angel; he was not created evil but became evil through sin against God. Jesus overcame the Devil and his works by his death upon the cross.

**Disciple** (literally, a student follower of a teacher) One who follows Jesus in order to learn from him and grow to spiritual maturity. One becomes a disciple when one is baptized into Christ (Matt. 28:19). It is God's plan that his disciples be taught to obey everything that Jesus commanded and so please Him in every respect (Matt. 28:20).

**Discipline** The application of certain rules of life to keep Christians, individually and corporately, within a spiritually and morally healthy way of life. Congregations through its leaders must exercise discipline against those who impenitently do evil (Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Rom. 16:17-19; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; Tit. 3:10).

**Disfellowship** The act of shunning or excluding a disorderly or impenitent church member from the fellowship of the church. The purpose of this action is to cleanse the church from sinful influence and to persuade the sinning member to repent. The loss of fellowship means that faithful church members show such disapproval of the sinning brother's activities that they will not associate or eat with him until he repents. A disfellowshipped brother is considered given to Satan and lost. (See 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Matt.

18:15-18; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; Tit. 3:10; Rom. 16:17,18).

**Divinity** The being of God. Christians believe that Jesus existed in the form of God and shares the divine nature with His Father and the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:5-11).

**Divorce** The legal breaking and ending of a marriage covenant between a husband and wife. What God permits in the ending of a marriage often disagrees with the laws of the state. One who is divorced in the eyes of the laws of the state but not according to God's teaching commits adultery when one remarries (Matt. 5:31,32; 19:3-9). The exception to this teaching is in the case of fornication causing the breaking of the marriage. Some scholars see the desertion of an unbelieving mate from a believer as permission for divorce and remarriage (1 Cor. 7:10-15).

**Doctrine** (lit., "teaching") A belief or teaching that has been carefully formulated. The term "doctrine of Christ" can refer to the whole body of belief. The Scriptures always use the word "doctrine" in the singular when referring to the doctrine of God, and use it in the plural when speaking of the doctrines of men. There is "one faith," i.e., one system of beliefs or doctrines (Eph. 4:5), which was once for all time delivered to the saints (Jude 3). God expects men to agree with one another in their teaching (1 Cor. 1:10-13). There is only one gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).

**Dogma** Close to "doctrine," but can carry the idea of a fixed and inflexible system of belief. Dogmatics is the study of Christian doctrine, often in a way which centers on its philosophical implications.

**Dualism** The belief that there are equal and opposite forces of good and evil at work in the universe. This is an old heresy into which it is all too easy to fall when speaking of the devil and the presence of evil.

**Early Church** The church in the first few centuries, after the days of the primitive church.

**Easter** Not found in the NT. A holiday on a Sunday shortly after the beginning of spring when some Christians remember the death and resurrection of Jesus. Like Christmas, this tradition began some centuries after the time of Christ. Many of the activities associated with Easter were borrowed from pagan rituals. (See Rom. 14:1-8.)

**Elder** An officer in the local congregation, whose responsibility it is to lead, shepherd, and oversee the members. The term may be used interchangeably with bishop, pastor, overseer, shepherd, or presbyter. In the NT a plurality of elders were always appointed over a local congregation. The concept of one bishop over a church is a later development.

**Elect, The** Those who are "chosen" by their positive response to the calling of the gospel (Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 2:9; 2 Thess. 2:13-15). The term is synonymous with all who are "in Christ," the church.

**Epistemology** The philosophy of knowledge, particularly inquiring as to how we know and what are the sources of our knowledge.

**Epistle** A formal letter written with authority. In the NT usually written by an apostle to a church, a group of churches, or to an individual.

**Eschatology** The study of "last things," i.e., what will happen at the end of the age, and in particular at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

**Essenes** A sect of Jews, who lived in a separate community based at Qumran on the Dead Sea. Their characteristic beliefs were kept secret, but some are now known from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

**Eternity** The state of being beyond and unlimited by time. God is eternal and grants eternal life to those who believe and obey Him (John 3:36). The Christian hope is that though he may die in this life, he will live on through eternity (John 11:25,26).

**Ethics** The study of morality and moral choices. Christian ethics seek to relate the moral teaching of the Bible to its application in everyday life.

**Evangelism** ("evangel" means gospel) Telling other people the good news about the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ with the aim that they might believe, repent and obey the gospel in baptism, so that they might find forgiveness and life through the blood of Jesus Christ. Evangelism is the primary work of the church (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 15:15,16).

**Evil** Harm which comes to human beings, turning us away from God and from goodness. Moral evil is harm which comes through sinful, human choice and action. Natural evil is harm which comes through events in nature such as disease or earthquakes. The origin of natural evil is usually associated with the moral evil in the fall of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:14-24).

**Evolution** The theory (not established fact) that the development of all forms of life takes place through a series of modifications, the direction of which is governed by environmental factors. This theory, put forward by Charles Darwin in the mid-nineteenth century, has come under strong attack but is still accepted by many scientists. Some of its proponents use it as a philosophy, explaining many aspects of life and society in a way which excludes God. Christians hold that creation and evolution are mutually exclusive concepts.

**Existentialist** One who rejects externally imposed values or codes, in the belief that a person has to make his or her own choices in terms that make sense of his or her own existence. It is a modern philosophy, sometimes leading to despair, though sometimes to courage. Many existentialists are atheists; others have tried to integrate existentialism with Christianity (such as Soren Kierkegaard).

**Exodus, The** The escape of the Israelites from

slavery in Egypt by the power of God through His servant Moses. This escape led to their establishment of their own land in Palestine. The OT and Judaism look back to it as God's greatest deliverance, when Israel became a nation. NT teaching of Jesus and salvation through His blood sometimes uses the imagery of the exodus.

**Exorcism** Casting demons out of people in Jesus' name. The ability to cast out demons ceased with the other miraculous gifts available to the apostles and those on whom the apostles laid their hands. There is no evidence that anyone today possesses demons in the same way the NT describes.

**Expiation** Making an offering or taking action that atones for sin. Jesus offered His body on the cross to atone for our sins (Heb. 10:5-14; 1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:17-21).

**Faith** Personal belief and trust in a person or an idea, such that loss will be inevitable if the object of faith proves untrustworthy. Christian faith in Jesus is therefore more than intellectual assent to beliefs; it is personal commitment to Jesus and to His teaching. Faith is regularly linked to repentance and to obedience to the commandments (cf. John 3:36; Rom. 1:5; 16:26). Unwillingness to obey the commandments or neglect of duty may truly be considered as unfaithfulness. A tree may be judged by its fruit (see James 2:14-26).

**Faith, The** Used in the objective sense, this is the content of what is believed. Jude encouraged Christians to contend for "the faith," which was once for all time delivered to the saints (Jude 3; cf. Eph. 4:5). This refers to the embodiment of all that Jesus taught, the system of doctrine, in which the Christian must put his trust as the Truth.

**Fall, The** Adam's and Eve's choice to disobey God's will by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This sin had consequences for all humanity in the separation from the tree of life and in the curses God placed on the devil, the woman, and the ground (Gen. 3:14-24). Because of their sin, spiritual death passed to Adam and Eve, and physical death passed not only to them but to all humanity thereafter (Rom. 5:12-19). This event set the stage for all that follows in the Bible, which is the story of God's scheme of redemption. This redemption finds its ultimate goal in the death of Jesus upon the cross, through which man could be forgiven of his sin and reconciled to God. Those who are redeemed by the blood have a right to eat of the tree of life in heaven (Rev. 22:1-5,14).

**Fasting** Going without food or other things so as to focus concentration and devotion on God. Fasting usually includes extended time in prayer.

**Fatalism** The belief that an individual's destiny is

shaped by impersonal spiritual forces that do not take personal welfare or choice into consideration. Often this belief leads one to an attitude of helpless resignation. It cannot co-exist with faith in a personal, loving God.

**Father, God as** The quality in God which relates to humanity in a parental way, so that God is caring, guiding and disciplining His children. "Father" was the characteristic way that Jesus referred to God. Christians commonly speak of "God the Father" to distinguish Him from "God the Son" and "God the Holy Spirit."

**Fellowship** Doing things together and having things in common within the Christian community. The emphasis is on shared participation in the Christian life rather than simply meeting together. Christians are not to live isolated lives but to find mutual encouragement and support in each other. One who has "fellowship" with Christ and other Christians walks in the light. Those who cease to walk in the light (i.e., follow the way of Christ) lose fellowship with the church and a right relationship with God (1 John 1:6-10).

**Flesh** In the spiritual sense it reflects our lives and personalities when they are directed in a way that leaves God out and acts as if there were no spiritual dimension. The mind set on the "flesh" is hostile to God and is not able to please God (Rom. 8:5-8). Paul notes that the flesh opposes the Spirit in our lives (Gal. 5:13-21). The works of the flesh keep one out of the kingdom of God. The NIV translates "flesh" (sarx) as "sinful nature" in several passages. While the flesh is weak to sin (Matt. 26:41), one should not equate the word "flesh" with inherent sinfulness. Jesus "became flesh" (John 1:14), yet He was sinless (Heb. 4:14-15).

**Forgiveness** The merciful act of no longer holding a person's sins against him; forgetting against. Because of the death of Jesus, people who obey the gospel can know that God no longer holds their sins against them; but they are free of the guilt that would otherwise separate them from God (Isa. 59:1,2). Forgiveness opens the door for reconciliation, the reuniting of two estranged people. Because Christians are forgiven, they ought also to forgive others (Matt. 6:14,15; 18:21-35; Eph. 4:32).

**Free Moral Agent** The human quality that describes his ability to make moral choices freely and not be governed by any outside factors. This quality is what holds him responsible for those choices. God could not justly judge humans if they were not able to make choices in whether or not to follow His will. Free moral agency denies that individuals are predestined to heaven or hell and beyond change.

**Fruit of the Spirit** Characteristics in the Christian life which are products of the Holy Spirit. They are

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Gal. 5:22,23)

**Gentile** Term used by Jews referring to one who is not a Jew.

**Gifts of the Spirit** (spiritual gifts) Miraculous abilities given to believers by the Holy Spirit, to be used for the good of the whole body (1 Cor. 12:4-11). These gifts are directly from the Holy Spirit and not natural talents.

**Gnostic** Member of one of the group of movements holding that salvation is attained through a secret knowledge (gnosis). The early roots of Gnosticism can be seen in the NT and was opposed by Paul and John. Some Gnostics believed that Jesus was merely human and that the Christ did not come in the flesh (1 John 4:1-3).

**God** Christians believe specifically in a Person, God, whom Jesus called Father. This Person is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, all-loving, just, holy and perfect. While God is transcendent (beyond our ability to fully understand), He is also close to us in our everyday lives and relates to us as a Father. He is the creator of the universe and the sustainer of our lives. He sent Jesus His Son to die for our sins on the cross, that we might live eternally with Him.

**Gospel** (lit., "good news") The good news message of what God has lovingly and graciously done for man through Jesus Christ, who has died for the forgiveness of our sins and rose again for our justification, that we might live eternally with Him (1 Cor. 15:1-3). It is through hearing and obeying this gospel that man is able to receive the blessing that Jesus came to give (Rom. 6:16-18; 10:14-17). There is but one gospel message (Gal. 1:6-9); all other messages are accursed.

**Gospels** The four accounts of the life, ministry, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ found in the NT: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Gospels are more than just biographies; they are tracts written to persuade men to believe (Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30,31).

**Grace** The quality in God that gives freely; its root meaning is "favor or pleasing." Grace is always given; it is not earned (Eph. 2:4-10; Rom. 4:4,5). It is a relationship word which means that one stands in the favor and blessing of God. To "fall from grace" is to lose that favor and blessing (Gal. 5:1-4), which includes forgiveness and other blessings which come to us through the blood of Jesus Christ.

**Healing** An important part of Jesus ministry was miraculous healing. This healing was a sign that confirmed His message as Divine (Heb. 2:3,4). Christians are today involved in healing, believing that medical means and prayer do bring health. (See

"Does Anyone Have Miraculous Gifts Today?")

**Heaven** The place where God's presence is now may truly be called "heaven." There is also that permanent place that Jesus has gone to prepare for us, a place that Christians will enter after the final judgment. Heaven is a perfect place without sin, death, mourning, or any kind of corruption or disease.

**Hell** (gehenna) The place of eternal torment, characterized by fire and darkness. Hell is totally removed from the presence of God and any comfort or blessing He provides. Hell was originally prepared for the devil and his angels; but men who reject God and His way, whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will enter this lake that burns with fire and brimstone, the second death (Rev. 20:11-15).

**Hellenism** The predominantly Greek culture that began with Alexander the Great (300 years before Christ) and continued for centuries together with Roman culture. The Greek influence made such an impact that the New Testament was originally written, not in Hebrew but in Greek.

**Heresy** A false teaching that causes the church to divide. It is a teaching in contrast to the truth that was received from Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Heresy causes division, which is a work of the flesh that keeps one from the kingdom of heaven (Gal. 5:19-21).

**Hermeneutics** The science of interpretation, the study of how one is to interpret the Scriptures. Good hermeneutics seeks to understand the message the original author intended in its Scriptural, historical and cultural context. It also seeks to properly apply to today the intended message of the text.

**Hierarchy** A system of government in some denominations which employs officials of graded status. By extension it has come to refer to the top church leaders, such as archbishops, cardinals and the pope. The concept of a hierarchy among men is wholly foreign to the word of God. In the NT there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ.

**High Priest** In the OT he was the priest specially appointed for certain duties connected with the sacrifices, especially those on the Day of Atonement. In the NT Jesus is regarded as our high priest, who offered his own body to atone for our sins.

**Holy** A quality of purity that initially comes from God and refers to a separation from anything defiled or sinful. Saints are "holy" people, who have been sanctified by the blood of Christ. Christians are commanded to live holy or morally pure lives, so that they reflect the nature of God in their behavior.

**Holy Spirit** The third person of the Godhead, who dwells in Christians today. He is not a force or an influence but a Divine Person. He is regarded as the author of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:20,21) and the

source of miracles (Heb. 2:3,4). In the OT the Holy Spirit was given to particular individuals for special tasks. Since the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit has been given to all who repent and are baptized (Acts 2:38,39).

**Hope** Confident expectation. The conviction that what God has promised, He is also able to perform, and that one will enjoy those promises. Hope is often placed in company with faith and love as supreme qualities of Christianity. Hope is regarded as the sustaining force Christians possess during great trials.

**Humanist** One who holds a high view of the capacity of human nature, such that man is his own god and there is nothing higher in the universe. A Christian humanist believes in God but holds that man by his aesthetic and moral senses and by his education is able to save himself.

**Icon** An image in the form of art or sculpture, usually of Jesus or the Virgin Mary, used in the worship of Orthodox churches. These are not mere decorations but are seen as windows into the spiritual world.

**Idol** Something physical or natural that people take for God and so worship. Many cultures have used idols made of gold, wood or stone; but men also make idols out of things such as money, sex, the state or science. (See Acts 17:24ff.)

**Image of God** The characteristics in human beings which reflect the nature of God, such as a moral sense, a conscience, freedom of choice, reason, memory, aesthetic abilities, and love. Man's moral sense of right and wrong especially comes from man's creation "in the image of God" (Gen. 1:26,27).

**Immaculate Conception** In Catholic belief, the idea that the Virgin Mary was from the time of her conception free from original sin. This is not a NT teaching but was made an article of faith for Roman Catholics in the nineteenth century.

**Immanence** The quality in God which causes him to be involved in the life of humanity and the world and not stay remote from it. God is near. That Jesus as the Son of God became flesh is the supreme example of God's association with man. God is both immanent (near) and yet transcendent (holy and beyond our full understanding).

**Incarnation** (lit., "taking flesh") The action by which Jesus as God took on human flesh and became subject to space, time and the problems of this world (John 1:1,14; Phil. 2:5-11). What made Jesus unique as a human was his freedom from sin (Heb. 4:14-16). His life as both God and man gave mankind an opportunity to understand the character of God

**Indulgence** In Catholic belief, remission of the debt owed to God for sin after the guilt has been forgiven. Catholics could buy indulgences from the church in order to be released from purgatory more quickly.

This is thought possible due to the "treasury of merit" believed to have been built up by Jesus, the Virgin Mary and the saints. It was the sale of indulgences for money which provoked Martin Luther to issue the Ninety-Five Theses, which launched the Reformation.

**Inerrant** The quality of being without any mistakes of fact or interpretation. Things divine are regarded as inerrant. Jesus was inerrant. The Scriptures are inerrant in so far as the Holy Spirit originally delivered them.

**Infallible** A term very close in meaning to inerrant and may be used of the Scriptures. Catholics incorrectly apply this term to the pope when he is pronouncing a matter of doctrine.

**Inspiration** (lit., "God-breathed" from 2 Tim. 3:16) The means by which God through the Holy Spirit moved man to write the sacred Scriptures so that they can be fully trusted as the Word of God (2 Pet. 1:20,21). The Holy Spirit so moved the writers that their books contain the meaning God intended, yet not lessening the individuality of the writers.

**Intercession** The aspect of prayer in which believers make petitions to God on behalf of themselves or others. Jesus is now in heaven and makes intercession for us (Heb. 7:25). Because we do not know how to pray as we ought the Holy Spirit also intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express (Rom. 8:26,27).

**Intermediate State** The condition all men will be in between the time of their physical death and the resurrection at the second coming of Christ. It is characterized by two realms, one of comfort in Abraham's bosom or Paradise and one of anguish in Hades (Luke 16:19-31). In the intermediate state the souls of men will be "unclothed," that is, without a body. Resurrection is the reuniting of the soul to a glorified body (1 Cor. 15:33ff.). In Paradise (Luke 23:43) one will be in the presence of God.

**Interpretation** Understanding the Bible in a way true to its original meaning and intent. Interpretation must be duly considered in any application of Scripture to modern day life.

**Jesus** (lit., "one who saves" from Matt. 1:21) The God-man born in Bethlehem and brought up in Nazareth who became an itinerant teacher and healer, was crucified and rose again. He was indeed the fulfillment of the promised Messiah, the Christ, and is the Son of God.

**Jubilee Year** In Israel every fiftieth year all land reverted to its original owner from whoever had bought it. The intention was to keep land in family units and prevent vast estates being built up. (See Leviticus 25)

**Judgment Day** The day God calls all men of all

time to account for the deeds in their lives and will assign them either to Heaven or Hell for eternity. Those who have believed and obeyed Christ will find Him the source of their salvation. Unbelievers and the disobedient will find it a day of weeping and gnashing of teeth. Judgment takes place to some extent at the time of death (Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:19-31); but the judgment day, the day of sentencing, will take place the day of the Second Coming (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

**Justification** God's reckoning of a person to be righteous in His sight. A person is justified by faith when his sins are washed away by the blood of Christ at baptism (Col. 2:12,13). The term is taken from the law court and means that one is acquitted.

**Kenosis** (lit., "he emptied himself" from Phil. 2:7) The belief that when Jesus took on flesh and became a man that he emptied himself of all distinctively divine attributes and revealed himself as God simply and solely through his humanity.

**Kingdom of God** (or kingdom of heaven) The rule and authority of God and every person and community of believers in whom that rule is accepted. The Jews looked for Jesus to restore the kingdom of Israel as in David's time, but Jesus established an eternal kingdom filled with both Jews and Gentiles. The kingdom of God on earth today is the church that Jesus died to purchase (Matt. 16:18,19). Paul and John regarded the church as synonymous with the kingdom of God (Col. 1:13,14; Rev. 1:4-6 NASB or NIV).

**Laity** (meaning "people"). Some people use this term as a means to distinguish the ordinary "people" from the professional "clergy." Such distinctions are foreign to the NT.

**Lamb of God** A description of Jesus used by John the Baptist and by John in the book of Revelation (John 1:29,35; Rev. 5:6). This title highlights the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins and the victory he won in his death.

**Law, The** (or the Torah) The set of God-given commandments found in the first five books of the OT and highlighted by the Ten Commandments. The Law is God's fatherly instructions to Israel for their good; it outlined the pattern of behavior through which they were to demonstrate their love for Him and for their neighbors. Though the Law was a blessing to the Jews, Christians are not under the Law of the old covenant (Rom. 7:4-6; Gal. 3:19--25; Heb. 8:6-13). They are citizens of the kingdom under the law of Christ in the new covenant (1 Cor. 9:19-21; 2 Cor. 3:2-6). Those who attempted to bind circumcision and the Law on NT Christians were fallen from grace (Gal. 5:1-6).

**Laying on of Hands** The identification of a person before God as the object of a special prayer by placing hands on him or her. This was done in the Bible for healing, for ordination and for receiving the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17).

**Legalism** The approach to religion which sees its center in keeping rules and laws rather than in a covenant relationship characterized by faith and love. The Pharisee characterized an approach to religion whereby they sought to establish their own righteousness by keeping the Law and their traditions. Instead of establishing their own righteousness they lapsed into a system of hypocrisy that forgot the important matters (Matthew 23).

**Lent** A term unknown to the NT. A period of forty days leading up to Easter, during which Catholics are encouraged to exercise special self-discipline to prepare to celebrate Easter. The forty days are associated with the time of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

**Liberal Theology** A type of theology which asserts the freedom to question authority and to avoid Biblical restraints. It is usually characterized by doubt in the resurrection, doubt in the inspiration of the Scriptures, or doubt in an afterlife. It is often critical of Biblical Christianity.

**Liturgy** A set form of worship (in prayers, Scripture lessons, and hymns), usually published in a book. Liturgy is followed word for word, and sometimes provide a framework within which there is some freedom of expression. It developed several centuries after the NT was written and is characteristic of Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican worship.

**Lord, The** A title for God in both the OT and the NT. It is generally written in the Bible in small capital letters. The "Lord" translates the Hebrew term "Yahweh" or "Jehovah," and is used to describe the self-existent nature of God, who says of Himself, "I am that I am" (Ex. 3:14; cf. 6:3). Later Jews regarded the name too holy to be spoken. The title is used in the NT to refer to Jesus Christ and reflects His Deity and His absolute authority.

**Lord's Day** the first day of the week, so named because the Lord arose on the first day of the week. This is the day that early churches met to observe the Lord's Supper, the first day of the week, so named because the Lord arose on the first day of the week. This is the day that early churches met to observe the Lord's Supper. The term is used only in Rev. 1:10.

**Lord's Supper** A term referring to the memorial Christians observe each Lord's Day, consisting of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine. The bread calls to memory the body of Jesus, which was given for us. The fruit of the vine calls to memory the blood of Jesus which was shed for the forgiveness of



our sins. (See Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-32). To partake of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner is to be guilty of the body and the blood of Jesus.

**Love** An active caring for others, such that one puts another's interests first, regardless of the cost and whether or not the other person deserves it. God demonstrated His love for man in the giving of His Son Jesus (John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-9). The greatest commandment is to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind and strength and to love one's neighbor as himself (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:36-40). Jesus gave a new commandment, that we love one another, even as He has loved us (John 13:34). Loving one another is a mark of a disciple (John 13:35). The apostle Paul describes the greatness of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

**Marriage** A covenant made publicly between one man and one woman that they will form a lifelong union of love and sexual exclusiveness. Marriage is the beginning of a new family; a husband and a wife are to leave father and mother and become one flesh. It is God's desire that what He has joined, people are not to separate (Matt. 19:6).

**Martyr** One who dies for his faith, refusing to turn from his confession in spite of persecution. Christians were martyred when the Roman government took to itself god-like powers and demanded that Christians deny their faith. The word martyr originally meant witness.

**Materialist** One who gives highest value to the physical and observable in life, and does not accept the reality of anything that cannot be seen, touched or measured.

**Mediator** One who stands between parties who are at variance and works toward their reconciliation. Jesus is uniquely qualified to mediate between God and man (1 Tim. 2:3-6), since He is both Divine and human (John 1:1,14; Phil. 2:5-11).

**Medieval** Pertaining to the time of the Middle Ages. In Christian thought this period was characterized by an appeal to natural theology and an attempt to harmonize Bible teaching with the philosophy of Aristotle.

**Meditation** A spiritual concentration used in Bible study, in which one considers the context, meaning and applications of a particular passage of Scripture.

**Messiah** (lit., "anointed one") The one whose coming was prophesied in the Old Testament, who was to be prophet, priest and king. He was to set his people free (Matt. 1:21) and establish a kingdom that would never end (Daniel 2; Luke 1:33). Jesus said that faith in Him as the Messiah was necessary (John 8:12-24). The Greek term for Messiah is the word "Christ." Calling Jesus the Christ is to acknowledge that He is the Messiah.

**Millenium, The** A thousand-year period prophesied

in Revelation 20 when the righteous will rule with Christ. The view of this reign has been interpreted three ways:

*\*Premillennialism* maintains that Jesus will return before the millenium and that he will reign with his people on the earth in the kingdom. This view wrongly holds that the church was a "stop-gap" measure, and not the kingdom of Christ. It also holds without Scriptural foundation that the reign will be on earth.

*\*Postmillennialism* argues that Jesus will come again after the millenium, which will be a period of spiritual prosperity. This view is rarely held today.

*\*Amillennialism* holds that the thousand-year period is symbolic and that Jesus' Second Coming will bring, not a reign on the earth, but the eternal age.

This view correctly acknowledges that the church is the kingdom of God (Rev. 1:4-6). It also recognizes that those who were to reign were beheaded saints in heaven (Revelation 20).

**Ministry** (lit., "service") The whole range of service all members of the church offer to one another and to non-Christians as well. Those involved in the preaching ministry are sometimes referred to as the "minister." It should not be thought, however, that his is the only ministry in the work of the church. All members of the body are to serve (Eph. 4:11-16).

**Miracle** A mighty work, beyond the normal functioning of nature and beyond the ability of man. Miracles evoke awe and amazement. Their purpose is twofold: to evoke faith in those who acknowledge them and to confirm the truth of the message preached (John 20:30,31; Heb. 2:3,4).

**Mission** (from a root word meaning "sent") The primary mission or directive of the church is to preach the gospel to every person in every nation (Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16). While evangelism is central to the work of a mission, Christians are also involved in benevolence and service to those who are needy (Matt. 25:31-46).

**Missionary** At one level this means anyone who works to fulfil the church's mission. But usually it refers to an individual who crosses national or cultural boundaries to spread the gospel to people of no faith, corrupted faith or other faiths.

**Monism** The belief that all things, material and immaterial, personal and impersonal, are essentially one stuff. It is the underlying philosophy of Hinduism.

**Monotheist** One who believes that there is only one God, as opposed to the polytheists. This belief is basic to both the OT and NT. Belief in the Trinity is not an affirmation that there are three gods; rather it is affirming one god in three persons.

**Mystery** In the NT something that was formerly hidden but now revealed (Eph. 3:2-6; Col. 1:26;

2:2,3). There are some things that God keeps hidden and does not disclose (Deut. 29:29).

**Mystic** One who pursues the inner life of the spirit, using any of a vast number of spiritual methods in the effort to know and experience God at the deepest possible level.

**Myth** A story through which people seek to encapsulate a religious idea. When Biblical scholars speak of myths in the Bible, they are usually using the technical term that does not regard whether the story is historical or not. When the NT uses the term, it is used in contrast to historical reality and truth (2 Pet. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:4; Tit. 1:14).

**Natural Theology** The belief that a knowledge of God may be reached through experience of the world and reason alone without the need for special revelation. It is often considered as complementary to revealed religion.

**Neo-orthodoxy** The type of twentieth-century theology associated with Karl Barth and which provided a critical reaction to liberal theology. It stresses the importance of God's revelation through the Word of God.

**New Birth** (also called regeneration) Jesus said, "Unless a person is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3-7). The new birth describes a birth comprised of both water and Spirit, a reference to baptism (Tit. 3:5-7). It is at the time of the new birth that one's sins are forgiven and that he becomes a child of God (Gal. 3:26,27; Rom. 6:3-7; 2 Cor. 5:17). All NT Christians have been born again.

**Nonconformist** (in some places called "free churchman") One who does not accept the established church of his nation (such as Anglican in England or Lutheran in Germany) but joins instead a denomination or congregation that is free of ties with the state.

**Occultism** Involvement with secret supernatural forces, often including magic and astrology. Occult practices are strongly condemned in the Bible.

**Omnipotent** Almighty, able to do all things (except things which are logically impossible).

**Omnipresent** Present everywhere, not confined to any locality.

**Omniscient** Knowing everything, unlimited in knowledge.

**Once Saved, Always Saved** The unscriptural, Calvinist doctrine that once a predestined child of God has been saved, he cannot for any reason thereafter be lost.

**Ontological** Pertaining to the essential nature of things. The "ontological argument" for the existence of God maintains that, in the nature of things, a Being must exist who is greater than everything else or

there would not be a supreme being.

**Original Sin** Some believe that man has a totally depraved predisposition toward sin, which he inherited from Adam as a result of the fall in the Garden of Eden. This view holds that man is incapable of doing good without a miraculous change of personality, which they regard as a work of grace in the new birth. They seem to forget that Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Knowledge of both good and evil, not evil and evil.

**Pacifist** One who believes that war or violence is never justified and so refuses to bear arms.

**Pagan** One who is thought to be unenlightened as to the truth, an alien (Eph. 2:12). It is often used of primitive religions but may be used of those who have no faith.

**Panentheist** One who holds that everything exists in God and emphasizes that God is immanent. Should not be confused with pantheism.

**Pantheist** One who holds that everything is divine, so that many pantheists worship nature. A tendency of pantheism is to be morally neutral, since everything is an aspect of the divine being.

**Parable** (lit., "to cast alongside") At its simplest, it is an extended metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life used to illustrate a spiritual truth. Its value is in its ability to rouse the mind to active thought by appealing to the familiar. This figure is characteristic of Jesus' method of teaching.

**Paraclete** (lit., "one who is called alongside") A term used to describe the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26), who was given to the apostles to be a "Comforter" or "Helper." Jesus is described as our "advocate" when we sin (1 John 2:1,2).

**Paradise** A term used in the bible referring to the "blessed state hereafter." Paradise is where Jesus and the thief on the cross were to go after death. The phrase is used in Rabbinic literature as synonymous with "Abraham's bosom." It is a place of comfort.

**Passion** The Passion of Jesus is his suffering as his death approached, including his temptation in Gethsemane, his humiliation by the Roman soldiers, and his suffering on the cross.

**Passover** In preparation for the exodus from Egypt, the Israelites families were spared the death of their firstborn, when God "passed over" their houses while destroying the firstborn of the Egyptians (Exodus 12). In consequence, God established a feast of the Passover, which remembers the incident. Of special importance is the Passover meal, during which Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper.

**Pastor** (lit., "shepherd") One who cares for a congregation's spiritual, physical and emotion needs. It is used synonymously with the role of an elder or overseer (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1,2).

**Penance** In Catholic and Orthodox belief, the

performance of an assigned duty in restitution for sin. It is held to be a sacrament, and absolution of guilt may be made dependent on it. While repentance is necessary to salvation, the concept of penance is foreign to the Scriptures, making grace an earned blessing (Eph. 2:8-10).

**Pentecost** The Jewish festival during which the Holy Spirit miraculously came upon the apostles, the gospel was first preached, and the church was established (Acts 2). Pentecost came fifty days after the Passover and always fell on the first day of the week. Pentecost as a Jewish feast commemorating the barley harvest, when the sickle was first put to the grain. Pentecost was regarded as a day of rest, and all Israelite males were required to attend the festival in Jerusalem.

**Perseverance of the Saints** The Calvinist and unscriptural belief that once a Christian has been saved, he cannot for any reason thereafter be lost.

**Pharisee** Member of a sect of Judaism, strict in their observance of the Law and believing that could establish their own righteousness through the Law and their traditions, which they regarded as an "oral law." (See. Matt. 15:1-14). Unlike the Sadducees they taught the importance of the whole law, not only the worship of the Temple.

**Philosophy** (lit., "love of wisdom") The age-old study of the reality of things, trying to make sense of the world and life through clear thinking and observation. It involves the accurate use of language and logic. Philosophy also addresses the important question of ethics, how a person should live.

**Pietist** Member of a movement in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that sought to bring back devotion and holy living into Protestantism, which had become rigid and theoretical.

**Pluralism** The existence of many religions side by side in the same community with the belief that each is equally valid and approved by God. The obvious consequence of such a view is that there is no such thing as heresy or false doctrine. Pluralism stands in bold contrast to Jesus' prayer for unity (John 17:20-23) or Paul's exhortation that there be no divisions in the church but that they "may be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Cor. 1:10). There is but one body, one church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22,23).

**Polygamy** One man having more than one wife. This is in bold contrast to the clear principle of one man, one woman, for life.

**Polytheist** One who believes in more than one god. Polytheism was the popular religion in the Near Eastern, Greek and Roman societies in Biblical times. Pope (not found in Scripture) The bishop of Rome and leader of Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholics see him as the successor of Peter and the vicar (representative) of Christ on earth.

**Prayer** In its simplest form, prayer is communicating to God one's praise, thanksgiving, and petitions. Prayer and Bible study are central to the Christian life. This communication may be uttered in words or may be transferred by thoughts to God, who knows the hearts of all men.

**Predestination** The Calvinist belief that God decides a person's eternal destiny in advance and that man has no free will to change that destiny.

**Pre-existent** Being in existence before the universe was created. This is true of God in all three persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

**Presbyter** (lit., "elder") A man appointed to lead a congregation in coordination with other men who serve as elders. A plurality of elders (presbyters) were appointed in NT churches to lead, to "oversee," and to "shepherd" the church.

**Priest** One who represents God to people and people to God. The term is also used of one who offers sacrifices. The OT priests were of the Levite tribe and were central to Israel's worship in the tabernacle and temple. In the NT Jesus is our high priest and every Christian is a priest (1 Pet. 2:5-11; Rev. 1:4-6; 5:10). The Catholic idea that there are special priests is unscriptural.

**Primitive church** A term sometimes used of the church in the time of the apostles.

**Principalities and powers** Authorities in the world that possess something of the devil or the demonic, so that the apostle Paul writes of them as "forces" against which the Christian must struggle. Christians have the panoply or full armor of God to help them in this struggle (See Eph. 6:10-20).

**Prophet** One who "speaks forth" the word of God by inspiration. His message may be to a particular nation, city, or person. Prophecy contains elements of prediction but is not confined to future events. Prophets were considered in the OT as "servants" of the Lord, bringing His revealed will to the people. NT prophets were inspired preachers and teachers who spoke forth the gospel or the faith. The gift of prophecy was to cease in the first century when the NT was completed (1 Cor. 13:8-13).

**Propitiation** An atoning sacrifice, an offering that brings a person back into a right relation with the One who has been offended. Christ Himself "is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:1,2).

**Proselyte** A non-Jew who is converted to Judaism and allowed to worship in the synagogue and temple (court of the Gentiles). Proselytes often became impressed with the message of Christ and obeyed Christ.

**Protestant** Member of one of three Christian traditions, besides the Catholic and Orthodox denominations. It is a general name given to the

successors of those who separated from the Church of Rome at the Reformation. Protestantism is featured by its rejection (or protest) of the Pope, church tradition, and the order of priests and its reliance solely on the authority of the Scriptures. Protestantism has divided into many different denominations.

**Providence** The care God takes of all existing things. Whether through His acts of salvation or His giving man and animals their daily food, God provides for His own. God is able to provide for everything because of His wisdom and power. (See Gen. 22:13,14).

**Purgatory** (not found in Scriptures) In Catholic belief, this is where the spirit goes after death to be "purged" of sin and so prepared for heaven. Such a belief is a mockery of the blood of Christ as sufficient for our eternal salvation. The blood of Christ makes one really free from sin (John 8:34-36).

**Rabbi** A teacher of the Jewish faith, who in Jesus' time would gather around him a group of disciples (students). Jesus was often called "Rabbi." Jesus taught his disciples not to be called "Rabbi"; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren (Matt. 23:1-12). Religious titles for men are condemned in Scripture.

**Ransom** Payment offered to secure someone else's release from slavery or prison. It is therefore used to describe what was achieved by the death of Jesus, being close in meaning to redemption. (cf. Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6)

**Rationalist** One who believes that everything can be judged by unaided reason, and that reason is superior (or equivalent) to revelation. Rationalism was an important school of philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and its influence is still felt today.

**Reconciliation** The restoring of the relationship of two estranged parties, so that they are in close fellowship with one another. Jesus died to take away our sins so that we could be reconciled to the Father. Once reconciled we are obligated to bring reconciliation to others throughout the world. (See 2 Cor. 5:12-21; 1 John 1:7-9).

**Redemption** The buying back of someone from slavery so as to secure their freedom. It is a concept used frequently in the OT to describe what God did for Israel in the exodus from Egypt. In the NT it describes what Christ has done for us in releasing us from the bondage of sin through his death. (See Col. 1:13,14).

**Reformation, The** The sixteenth century movement to reform the Roman church, which led to separation from Catholicism to form the Protestant movement. It was not the intention of the reformers so much to

divide the church as it was to reform it according to the Scriptures. Martin Luther, Huldreich Zwingli, and John Calvin are considered important leaders in the Reformation.

**Reformed churches** A world-wide fellowship of denominational churches, which are in line of descent from John Calvin and more or less hold to his teachings: Total Hereditary Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints.

**Reincarnation** The belief that we live a series of succeeding lives, sometimes at different levels of being. This concept is wholly foreign to the Scriptures, which teaches that after death comes judgment (Heb. 9:27). The idea is important in Hinduism and New Age thinking.

**Renaissance, The** (lit., "rebirth") A group of movements in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which marked the transition from the medieval period. It was marked by great interest in the works and arts of classical times. One important feature was its deep humanism, which may have influenced the Reformation.

**Renewal** The return to a deeper Christian faith and life on the part of a person or a community. Renewal is found in prayer and Bible study, so that a person may become more and more like Jesus Christ (Cf. Rom. 12:1,2; Col. 3:5-11).

**Repentance** (lit., "a change of mind") A complete turning away of mind and heart from any evil and a complete turning to the way of Jesus Christ.

Repentance is prompted by godly sorrow and the love of God and leads to a change of life.

Repentance is necessary to conversion and salvation.

Repentance is a change of character.

**Representative** A term used to describe the position Jesus held in his death. Being fully human and yet without sin, he became the representative person, who as high priest, died for us, representing the whole of humanity in its guilt for sin.

**Restoration** The belief in the need for doctrinal repentance and a return to New Testament teaching. Belief in restoration comes from the belief that God wishes men to return to His once-for-all delivered Word to please Him in all respects. We ought to restore our beliefs and practices to agree with the teachings of the New Testament.

**Resurrection** God's restoring the life of Jesus after his death and raising him up from the grave.

Resurrection is the reuniting of the spirit to the body, so that one comes back to life. As the risen Lord, Jesus lives eternally at the right hand of God in a glorified state. In His victory over death, Jesus has given us assurance that there is life after death.

**Resurrection, general** At the second coming of Christ, all who are dead will be raised up to new life

(John 5:28,29). This means that they will receive new, glorified, imperishable bodies (1 Cor. 15:35-55; Phil. 3:20,21). The resurrection is a source of great comfort to the Christian who sorrows over the loss of a loved one (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

**Revelation** God's action of making Himself, His will, and His way known to man. Specifically, this revealing has been made in history through particular acts of revelation, such as prophecy, visions, dreams, miraculous events, and theophanies. The record and correct understanding of these historical acts are in the Bible, which Christians believe that God has so inspired as to ensure that his revelation is fully accurate and accessible to us. The greatest act of revelation of the character, love and righteousness of God is in the sending of His Son Jesus to live on the earth. There is a sense in which the character and power of God can be seen in the physical universe and nature (Rom. 1:18-20; Psalm 8). A complete and true understanding of God's nature cannot be realized without the written revelation found in the Bible (1 Cor. 1:21).

**Reverend** (lit., "terrible, awesome") The term is used only once in the King James Version of the Bible (Psa. 111:9) and is a reference to God. Men who wear the term as a religious title do so presumptuously (Psa. 19:13) and in disobedience to the clear teaching of Jesus against such (Matt. 23:1-12).

**Ritual** A symbolic action, usually in the context of worship, that points to a spiritual truth.

**Roman Catholic** A member of the catholic church of Rom, acknowledging allegiance to the Pope. The Roman Catholic church is the most populous denomination. Its headquarters is the Vatican in Rome, where the Pope lives.

**Sabbath** The seventh day of the week, when people are called to cease or rest from their labors and reflect on God. The observance of the Sabbath was demanded of the Israelites as part of the Ten Commandments. Christians are not under the first covenant and so are not obligated to keep the Sabbath (Col. 2:16). Some people mistake the first day of the week (Sunday) for a Christian Sabbath. The only Sabbath rest for Christians is in heaven after the judgment (Heb. 4:1-13).

**Sacrament** (Not found in Scripture) Augustine called this "an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual grace." It is regarded by some as a sign or dramatization, giving an effect more powerful than words. Many regard baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments, even though the Lord's Supper is a commemorative feast not a vehicle to dispense the grace of God. Catholics also regard as sacraments: confirmation, marriage, ordination, penance, and

extreme unction. Such notions are human in origin.

**Sacrifice** From the earliest times God demanded that men offer sacrificial gifts as a form of worship. In the OT, animal sacrifice provided the means by which sin might be atoned for and relationship with God preserved. The sacrifice, giving up, of Jesus in his death on the cross was the full and final means of atonement for all time.

**Sadducee** Member of a Jewish sect, powerful at the time of Jesus, who set great store by regular worship at the temple. Sadducees believed only in the Torah (first five books of Moses, also called "Pentateuch") and did not believe in the resurrection.

**Saint** (lit., "holy person") In NT usage, anyone who is sanctified or "in Christ" is regarded as a saint (1 Cor. 1:2). Catholics reserve the term for people of special holiness who are canonized or authorized to be called saints. In Catholic belief, the saints can be called on to intercede with God for us. The Catholic use of this term is foreign to the Scriptures and unwarranted. The Scriptures teach that Christ and the Holy Spirit intercede for us (Rom. 8:26,27; Heb. 7:25). The concept of intercession of the saints is not from God but in the imagination of man. Of course, all Christians have the right to pray for each other (James 5:16).

**Salvation** The rescuing of someone from danger. In the Bible it means bringing someone from captivity to sin into the fullness of freedom in Christ. Jesus means "Savior." Salvation has a past reference: a believer has been saved through the death of Jesus, who died once for all (Heb. 9:26). Salvation has a present application: one is saved when he obeys the gospel through faith, repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38-47). Salvation also has a future hope for those who remain faithful: believers will be rescued from eternal destruction at the second coming. Christians are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-10).

**Sanctification** (lit., "being made holy,") The setting apart of one for a holy purpose. In one's obedience to the gospel (by faith, repentance and baptism), the Holy Spirit makes one holy (Tit. 3:3-7) by freeing one from sin. The Christian is expected to live his life by continuing to sanctify or set himself apart in holiness. In this sense sanctification is a process whereby one progressively conforms his life and character to that of Jesus (2 Cor. 6:14-18) and keeps himself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).

**Satan** (lit., "adversary") the Devil, the chief opponent of God and the church, who is pictured as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). Satan was a created being (probably an angel) who, being lifted up with pride, rebelled against God. Hell is the place God prepared to punish the Devil and his angels (2 Pet. 2:4-11; Matt. 25:41-46).

**Savior** One who brings deliverance or rescues. The

name "Jesus" means Savior.

**Schism** A separation or division between groups, usually based on personalities or heresies.

**Scholasticism** An approach to theology in medieval times, of those who worked outside the monasteries, often in universities. The approach was detached and objective, using logic, debate and speculation.

**Scribe** A Jewish teacher of the Law. Scribes often opposed Jesus' teaching. Though most men could read in first century Palestine, not all could write.

**Scripture** The holy writings found in the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament. While Catholics proclaimed the Apocrypha to be Scripture in the Council of Trent (1548 A.D.), Christians throughout the centuries have not regarded them so. The Scriptures differ from other writings in that they are inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

**Second Coming** The promise that Jesus will come again publicly as Lord of all (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11). He will bring this world to an end, judge all people of all time, and usher in the eternal age. Jesus will come as a thief in the night (Matt. 24:35-36; 2 Pet. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:1-10).

**Sect** Can refer to a cult, but is also used of Christian groups that tend to become exclusive through overvaluing secondary beliefs.

**Secular** Concerned exclusively with this world, taking no account of a spiritual dimension. Secularism is the most characteristic feature of the modern Western world.

**Self-existent** Looking to no one or nothing else as the source of existence. This describes the nature of God, since everything else has come into being through him (John 1:1-3).

**Separatist** One who is ready to divide off from others on religious grounds.

**Septuagint** A translation of the Hebrew OT into Greek, variously dated from 250 to 150 B.C. It draws its name from the 70 Hebrew scholars who translated it.

**Servant of the Lord** A character who appears in four poems in the prophecy of Isaiah. His chief characteristic is that he is a suffering servant. In the NT, this concept of a suffering servant is applied to Jesus.

**Shalom** (lit., "peace" from the Hebrew) The state of being in harmony with the Lord, with the world, with others and within oneself. It is the richest of blessings and close to the NT idea of reconciliation. Used often in greetings.

**Sin** Carries a range of meanings, including breaking God's law and falling short of God's will for our lives. Sin includes both specific wrong actions and failure to do what is right. Sin is what breaks the relationship between God and man (Isa. 59:1,2). It is because of sin that man deserves God's punishment

of death (Rom.6:23). Jesus died so that men might be free from the guilt and punishment of sin (2 Cor. 5:21).

**Situation ethics** An approach to ethics which gives greater importance to the situation in which an ethical decision has to be made than to any moral system, including the authority of God's Word. It is founded on the belief that the only intrinsically good thing is love. This approach inadequately understands that God's law teaches one how to love. Obedience to Jesus Christ is how we love God (John 14:15).

**Son of God** A title given to Jesus Christ, designating him as one who is pre-existent and shares the nature and essence of God. It is as the Son of God that Jesus is spoken of as being the second person of the Godhead.

**Son of Man** A title given to Jesus, designating both his divinity and his humanity. Jesus uses this title most frequently when he refers to himself. The phrase coming from Daniel refers to a divine figure who would come from heaven; the "son of man" was widely expected in Jesus' time.

**Soul** In the Bible, this term variously refers to the whole person (1 Pet. 3:20), the life force within a person (Matt. 16:25), or the eternal essence of a person which survives death (Rev. 6:9; 20:4; Jam. 1:21; 5:20). "Soul" and "spirit" are not entirely synonymous terms (1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12); yet they do sometimes refer to the non-material seat of a person's consciousness, mind, heart, and volition.

**Sovereignty** A quality of God denoting his freedom from any kind of outward restraint. He is free to act as He wills, without limitation. In spite of this, God will only act in accordance with His character, which means that His actions are reliable, not arbitrary, and always for the good of His people.

**Speaking in Tongues** (also called "glossolalia") A gift from God so that one is miraculously able to talk in human languages that were unknown to the speaker. The gift is given so that the speaker may either praise God in a tongue (1 Cor. 14:15) or deliver a teaching message (Acts 2:5-13). Tongue speaking was only to be practiced publicly when someone who could interpret was present (1 Cor. 14:26-28).

**Spirit** (pneuma) That aspect of a person which is given directly to us from God (Heb. 12:9); which is able to think, reason, feel, and choose; which is able to have a relationship with God; and which survives death (James 2:26; Eccl. 12:7). This is the same term, which is used to describe the Holy Spirit. Paul often contrasts the spirit with the flesh.

**Spiritism or Spiritualism** The practice of seeking dealings with the spirits of people who have died. It is clearly condemned in Scripture as "necromancy" or "witchcraft" (cf. 1 Samuel 28; Gal. 5:20; Isa. 8:19; Rev. 22:15).

**Stewardship** The relationship in which people stand both to God's creation and to their own abilities and possessions. We do not own these things; they belong to God. He permits us to use and holds us accountable for managing them to the best of our ability (cf. Matt. 25:14-30; 1 Cor. 4:1,2).

**Substance** A technical term used in defining the doctrine of the trinity. It means "being," so that one may say that God is one in "being" or "substance" with the Father. The trinity is three persons and one substance.

**Substitute** A way of describing the role Jesus fulfilled in his death. He died instead of us, who deserved to be separated from God as a result of our sin. Because He died, believers can be free from sin and guilt.

**Sustainer** God as the one who source of our continued or sustained lives and being (Acts 17:23-28; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:3). He causes all the conditions necessary for life to carry on. This Biblical concept denies the view that God started the universe and has left it to run down on its own.

**Syncretism** The combining of different faiths in such a way as to blur their distinctiveness. This destroys true faith in the one true and living God. It is compromise that leads to condemnation (cf. 1 Kings 11:1-13; 2 Kings 17).

**Tabernacle** The portable tent of meeting God instructed Moses to build as the center for worship (Exodus 26). The tabernacle contained the 'Holy Place' and the "Holy of Holies," where the high priest entered only once a year. The tabernacle went with Israel in the wanderings through the wilderness. The most sacred items of worship were kept in the tabernacle, which could be moved only by the priests. Eventually, the tabernacle was replaced when Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem.

**Temple** The building in Jerusalem which was set apart as the center of Israel's worship and sacrifices. First built by Solomon but destroyed when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, it was replaced after the Jews returned from exile. In Jesus' time Herod's Temple had been completed (after forty-six years of work), but this temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. No temple has been built since that time.

**Temptation** The pull towards sin which all humanity, including Jesus, experiences through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17). To be tempted is not in itself sinful. Sin only comes when a temptation is welcomed and yielded to (James 1:13-15).

**Testament** (lit., "covenant") The two testaments together form the Bible. The Old Testament or "old covenant" covers the period from the creation and the first covenant made with Abraham and renewed with

Moses to the struggling of Israel throughout its history. The New Testament or "new covenant" was established by Jesus in his death on the cross (Matt. 26:28; Heb. 8:6-13; 9:11-15). Christians today have a relationship to God by means of the new covenant; consequently, they are subject to the teachings of the new covenant and not the old (Rom. 7:4-7; Gal. 3:19-27).

**Theism** Belief in God. Christianity starts with theism and builds from there, giving specific content to theism through God's revelation and particularly thought the character and teaching of Jesus.

**Theodicy** The justification of the ways of God, especially dealing with the problem of suffering and injustice. Theodicy seeks to defend belief in an omnipotent and all-loving God in spite of the existence of the suffering of innocent people. The book of Job may be considered a theodicy, as well as many passages in the writings of Paul and Peter.

**Theology** The study of God. Christian theology is not based on speculation about him but studies Him through understanding the revelation he has made for himself through Jesus and through the Scriptures.

**Total Hereditary Depravity** A Calvinist belief arguing that humanity since the fall is from birth totally incapable of himself to believe the gospel or to choose good over evil in the spiritual realm. His heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt, and his will is not free but in bondage to his evil nature.

Calvinists reject that the preaching of the gospel is able to bring a man to faith and repentance (Rom. 1:16; 10:17; Acts 2:37). They believe that regeneration precedes faith and repentance; faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation--it is God's gift to the sinner, not the sinner's gift to God. This doctrine denies man's free moral agency or his free will to choose to believe and repent (John 3:16; Mark 16:16; Rom. 6:16-18; Rev. 22:17; Josh. 24:15). This doctrine also suggests that infants are born in sin and will be lost if they should die in infancy. (See Rom. 7:7-11; Matt. 18:1-3; 19:13-15).

**Tradition** The religious teachings and practices passed on from generation to generation. While there are inspired, authoritative traditions that have been delivered (1 Cor. 11:2,23; 2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6), human traditions make void the Word of God and are condemned (Matt. 15:1-14; Mark 7: 1-13; Col. 2:8). The term "tradition" carries with it the idea that one "ought" to believe or practice a certain thing.

Traditions of men are wrong because they presumptuously claim an authority that only belongs to God. Modern people often use the word tradition to refer to habitual or routine practices that are meaningful but not sinful if left undone. In the strict, Biblical sense, these are not traditions. The Pharisees

accused Jesus of sin when he did not follow the tradition of the elders. A practice of men becomes a "tradition" when men regard it as sinful not to observe it. Men have no right to establish binding traditions (Matt. 15:13) or to judge others for not observing them (Matt. 7:1-5).

**Transcendent** Extending beyond human and earthly limitations and knowledge. God is transcendent and always stretches beyond our comprehension. But He is also immanent, so that his "otherness" does not make him remote.

**Transfiguration** The occasion on the mountain when the appearance of Jesus changed to a glorified state in the presence of Peter, James and John. (See Matt. 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36).

**Transubstantiation** In Catholic belief, the view that the bread and the wine in mass miraculously become the actual body and blood of Jesus. In Lutheran belief, consubstantiation means that the actual body and blood of Christ exist "in, with or under" the elements of bread and wine. In the NT, the bread and fruit of the vine are eaten as a symbolic memorial to the body and blood of the Lord (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

**Trinity** Within the one essence of the Godhead we have to distinguish three persons who are neither three gods on the one side, not three parts or modes of God on the other, but coequally and co-eternally God. "The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4); yet the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all three in essence that one Lord (Matt. 28:19).

**Unitarian** One who believes that only the Father is God, and that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are not divine. Such a belief is foreign to the Scriptures.

**Universalist** One who believes that all humanity will eventually receive salvation, even if many have no faith in Jesus Christ. This view is mistakenly based on NT teaching that all things will finally be summed up in Jesus Christ, and it ignores the teaching on the final judgment (John 5:28,29; Rev. 20:11-15).

**Virgin Birth** The teaching that Mary conceived and gave birth to Jesus while still a virgin, through the miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit. (See Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25).

**Virgin Mary** The mother of Jesus and a woman worthy of honor. In Catholic belief she is regarded as the "mother of God" and has been elevated beyond human status. She is called upon to intercede with God for believers.

**Virtue** Moral excellence (Phil. 4:8; 2 Pet. 1:3).

**Western church** The church in the western half of the Mediterranean, based on Rome, Latin-speaking. It developed its own form of life under the Pope, and its successors are those in the Catholic tradition and

the churches of the reformation.

**Wicked, Wickedness** Pertaining to a moral state, which involves sin and the misfortunes and distresses resulting from that sin. Wickedness is in bold contrast to righteousness (Prov. 12:5; 13:5; 29:2).

**Word of God** (with a capital "W") A title given to Jesus which points to him as the revelation of God in the flesh (John 1:1-3). This idea has an extensive background both in Jewish and in Greek thought. Its Greek form is logos.

**Word of God** (with a small "w") The revelation of God found in the Bible, the holy Scriptures. The Bible is the inspired word of God (2 Tim. 3:16,17; John 17:17).

**Worship** The heartfelt offering up of praise, adoration and thanksgiving to God through singing, prayer, giving, partaking of the Lord's Supper, and Bible study. Worship is primarily vertical but may also be horizontal in that worship is meant to edify others (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:26). God desires worshippers who will worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23,24).

**Yahweh** (rendered "Jehovah" or "Lord") The Hebrew name for God, thought to be too holy to be spoken in OT times. No one today knows how to pronounce it. It originates from the phrase "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:14). This name was first known to Moses (Ex. 6:2,3).

**Zealot** Member of a Jewish sect in Jesus' time, which tried to overthrow the occupying Romans by force. One of the apostles, Simon (not Peter), was a Zealot (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13).

**Zion** Geographically, Zion refers to the lower eastern hill of Jerusalem. Historically, Zion began when David captured the Jebusite fortress and made it into the "city of David," the capitol of his kingdom (2 Sam. 5:6-10). In the Psalms and the prophets, Zion becomes the spiritual capitol of Israel. Isaiah's prophecy that "the law would go forth from Zion" and "the mountain of the house of the Lord would be established" is fulfilled in Acts 2, when the gospel of the kingdom is first preached b