Hope For All Fellowship

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Note: See A1, A2, etc. takes you to our free online book; then scroll to "Contents," and click the appropriate Anchor (i.e. chapter) number.

SCRIPTURE

The Scriptures are central to our faith as they historically establish the preeminence of Jesus Christ, Lord of All.

You are mistaken, **not understanding** the Scriptures nor the power of God (Matthew 22:29 NASB).

The foundational truths of our faith, taught in the Scriptures, are veiled to us unless Christ, the *Logos*, the *Word of God* Himself (John 1:1-14) opens our understanding of them (John 1:1-14; Luke 24:45).

Whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have **hope** (Romans 15:4).

This can only happen when we know God's true character as it has been revealed to us in Jesus Christ (Col 1:15). More on Scripture

JESUS CHRIST

Scripture testifies, both directly and indirectly, to the divinity and lordship of Jesus Christ—name above all names.

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11).

I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. (1 Corinthians 2:2)

We can't separate Jesus from His cross. The cross defines the depth of God's love:

By this we know love . . . He laid down His life for us (1 John 3:16).

Jesus' life and death were and are all about Love. More on Jesus Christ

LOVE

Love is at the heart of our Christian faith for it defines God (1 John 4:8, 16) and the purpose of our lives.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing . . . Now abide faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13).

In addition to how Paul defines love in verses 4-8 of this chapter, John defines it this way:

This is how we know what love is: Christ gave his life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for others (1 John 3:16 GNT).

Jesus said: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:35).

Understanding Love as both a person and our mandate affirms the Gospel as truly Good News for all people. <u>More on Love</u>

THE VICTORIOUS GOSPEL

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to **all** people, for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10-11).

With the angel's words in mind, which of the following sounds most like the true Gospel of Jesus Christ?

- (A) In you all the nations **shall be** blessed.
- (B) Accept Christ now or suffer forever in hell.

How does Scripture read? The Apostle Paul wrote:

And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the **Gospel** to Abraham beforehand, saying . . . 'In you **all** the nations **shall be** blessed' (Galatians 3:8).

All peoples *shall be* blessed! This is truly a Victorious Gospel! This great promise is not an isolated occurrence; it is repeated seven times! Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Acts 3:25-6; Galatians 3:8. More on the Victorious Gospel

To fully embrace the Gospel as Victorious for all, we must correctly understand our Father's judgments.

OUR FATHER'S LOVING CORRECTION

Judgment warnings abound in Scripture. The central thing to know about them is from whom they come and what their purpose is. They come from our Heavenly Father's loving heart—the Father of us all. See A7 Once we are assured that God is our Father, this passage beautifully reveals His purposes in judgment:

When we were children we had fathers who corrected us and we respected them for it. Can we not much more readily submit to a heavenly Father's discipline, and learn how to live? For our fathers used to correct us according to their own ideas during the brief days of childhood. But God corrects us all our days for our own benefit, to teach us his holiness. Now obviously no 'chastening' seems pleasant at the time: it is in fact most unpleasant. Yet when it is all over we can see that it has quietly produced the fruit of real goodness in the characters of those who have accepted it in the right spirit (Hebrews 12:9-11 J.B.Phillips New Testament).

You have appointed them for judgment ... You have marked them for **correction** (Hab 1:12).

A correct understanding of our Father's judgments (see A3), as loving correction (whether in this life or a subsequent life or age after our resurrection) establishes and preserves the glorious scope and power of the Victorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. More on Correction

MYSTERY

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search it out (Proverbs 25:2).

Learn why appreciating mystery is critical to our faith.

UNITY

What was the most pressing thing on Jesus' heart on the eve of his arrest, torture and crucifixion? Our oneness. Please stop a moment and think about that.

Learn why this meant so much to Jesus and why it should be central in our lives.

COMMUNITY

Where **two** or **three** are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them (Matthew 18:20).

Jesus is inviting two or three at a time into His communal presence. This creates an environment for authenticity as we grow closer to each other in one-on-one conversations—making it natural to share the deep things of the soul.

I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit (Isa 57:15). The high and holy place is being contrite and humble—honest with ourselves and with each other. Transparency draws us close to each other where true communion happens—where we confess our trespasses to one another and pray for one another for healing (James 5:16 a).

Confessing our failures necessitates love and trust, and once these bond us together, part "b" of James 5:16 will flow naturally: *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous* [loving] person avails much.

Jesus calls us to authentic close-knit community where he joins us in our contrite and humble demeanor. *I'm in their midst* (Mat 18:19-20). Please brothers and sisters, don't settle for less. Find someone you can trust, someone with whom you can be yourself—with whom you can confess your failures to, pray with and find healing. Honesty and humility touches the deepest parts of our being where Christ abides. It heals our wounds; nurtures faith and love—love which moves us to prayer and action in a suffering world (1 Jn 3:18; Mat 5:16).

Kingdom Communion Video by Gerry Beauchemin; filmed by Gary Amirault

PRAYER

Pray without ceasing . . . for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).

Prayer is a central theme of the Christian faith mentioned 394 times in Scripture. Jesus himself continually prayed to his Father and taught his disciples to pray. He said, *Without Me you can do nothing* (John 15:5). Prayer is at the core of a fruitful life in Jesus. Our activities in mission start with prayer—prayer that flows from a hurting heart for suffering humanity. "Lord Jesus, transform our hearts to be like yours." More about Prayer

GOD'S POWER

You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the **power** of God (Mat 22:29 NASB).

Why is understanding God's power so important?

The Gospel is only good news if we are convinced God can fulfill his salvation-of-all promises. The same goes with our confidence in prayer.

So can God really fulfill all his promises—even change our hearts? The answer is Yes!

Whatever His soul desires, that He does (Job 23:13b).

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you ... and cause you to walk in My statutes and you will keep My judgments and do them ... **I will** cleanse you from all your uncleanness (Ez 36:23, 35-38). More on God's Power