

## PART ONE

When we think of our beliefs and convictions concerning God and His Word, often we have trouble articulating those thoughts into words. However, we know that words are the vehicles of thought. If we are unable to verbalize our faith to those of other “faiths,” we will never see the power of God working in their lives to bring Him unto Himself.

It is to this end the Lord has led me to give a series of lectures on how to biblically defend or “contend for the faith.” Our key verse for this study will be taken from the Book of Jude,

Jude 1:3 *“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”*

This passage of Scripture and many others make it inescapably clear that we, as born again children of God, have a mandate to proclaim and defend the faith against those who have been taken captive by the devil at his will (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

In the theological world there is a name for what we are studying here in these lectures, it is commonly called apologetics. A Christian apologist does not apologize for his beliefs but rather uses the only authoritative literature God has been pleased to give us, the Bible, to reason with others concerning matters of faith and practice.

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As we begin this study, it would be very helpful here to lay down a foundation for the key elements that will be discussed, a synopsis of the course if you will.

- ❖ We must have full faith in the inspiration of ALL Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17). If the Bible cannot be trusted as absolutely authoritative, then we have no weapons with which to contend.
- ❖ We must be aware of our world-view. Everyone has a world-view whether or not they realize it. A world-view is simply how you think about this life in matters of faith, God, the eternal destiny of your soul, the end of the world, the Person and Work of Christ, etc. Our world view must stem from our study and correct interpretation of the Scriptures. In other words, our philosophy of life must grow out of our theology (what we believe to be true about God).
- ❖ We must be able to articulate verbally to others what we believe in matter of faith and this can only be done as we use bible language. This ability only comes from your private and regular study of the Word of God. We can no longer rest in the faith of our fathers; our God must be real to us and we must be able to express that intelligently.

Before we begin to look at other major systems of religion in the world, let us be clear on what we believe. Perhaps all of true Christianity rests upon the words of the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the Corinthian believers.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: “*

Although there are many “trunks” that branch off the tree of “Christianity” these truths aforementioned are the life blood of our faith and hope of eternal bliss, namely, the Gospel. When we speak of the Gospel, we realize we are speaking about Christ’s Supreme mission upon this earth, *“to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

We, as Bible-believing Christians will not compromise the clear Scriptural teaching that Jesus of Nazareth did in fact die for the sins of the whole world. After this, He was bodily resurrected by His own power thus proving God the Father’s satisfaction with the Atonement.

However, there are other vital elements to biblical Christianity that we must never let slip. These doctrines are often referred to as **“The Fundamentals.”** I shall elaborate briefly on each of these. It should be noted that believing in all these doctrines does NOT necessarily qualify a man as a “Fundamentalist” (the pope believes these doctrines). In order to join the ranks of this army of the faithful we must be willing to not only **BELIEVE** these things but also to **DO BATTLE** (contend) for them.

- The verbal, plenary inspiration and absolute inerrancy of the Scriptures. By this we mean that the very words (verbal) of the Scripture are God-breathed and all the words (plenary) are God breathed (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 12:6; Matthew 4:4).
- The virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. By this we mean that Christ was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary as she was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-35).
- The vicarious (in place of another) death of Christ on the cross for mankind. We believe that Christ did not merely die to show us a higher standard of living but that His death was in our place and satisfied the demands of a righteous God (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:8).
- The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the tomb. We believe that Christ came forth after three literal days in a glorified body from the borrowed tomb. This was no ‘spiritual’ or ‘supposed’ resurrection, the Lord literally resurrected Himself of His own power never to die again (John 2:19-21).

- The visible, literal, second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that Christ is coming again to the earth to set up the kingdom of His father (according to the flesh) David. This will be an everlasting kingdom that will be manifested upon the earth for a literal one-thousand year period (Psalm 145:13; Isaiah 9:6-7; Revelation 20:1-2).

## So Where Are We Today?

Whether we like it or not, this land is not the land of the forefathers. This is not the day of the great revivalists such as Moody and Finney and Sunday. We are now living in a society that could best be termed Post-Christian. The once revered and respected moral code of the Judeo-Christian religion has been termed 'narrow' 'bigoted' or 'archaic.'

When we deal with and confront people concerning spiritual matters, we must realize that relativism has taken our society by the throat. Relativism is the idea that says, "What is truth for you is not necessarily truth to me." When we hear such statements as that, we must accept the fact that our society has long left behind objective truth. Objective truth is that which is the Word of God- it is not open to debate or scrutiny. On the other hand, a shift in the last fifty to seventy-five years has revealed that the masses prefer subjective truth. This is "truth" that is the product of their own interpretation. If this concept could be summed up in one phrase it would be, "If it feels right to you, it can't be wrong!" That kind of thinking is utterly condemned by God due to our wicked hearts and depraved natures (Proverbs 28:26; Jeremiah 17:9).

To have a proper understanding of the battle we are currently engaged in, we must look briefly at the streams that have branched off from the river of orthodoxy (right doctrine).

**RATIONALISM**- this is the ideology that seeks to prove all things spiritual by scientific testing. If the rationalist cannot see, hear, touch, taste, or feel it...it simply does not exist. This type of thinking began to grow as men put more and more emphasis on knowledge and academia.

**SECULARISM**- this system of belief and behavior simply claims ties to no religious operations. The secular humanist believes that man is the measure of all things and that he determines his own destiny. This man takes no thought for God as Creator or Judge; when this man dies, he believes it is all over.

**ATHEISM**- simply put, this crowd claims a belief in no God. However, for a man to say such things means that he has rejected common sense teaching and a reasonable burden of proof to the contrary (Romans 1-2).

**GNOSTICISM** this perhaps is the oldest stream of heresy that made itself manifest in the first century (see I John). This system teaches basically that all things “carnal” or fleshly are evil while all things “spiritual” are good. This belief leads to the idea that Christ could not have come in the flesh because flesh is evil. This system overlooks the power of the virgin birth to preserve the sinless nature of Christ Incarnate.

**SPIRITUALISM or SPIRITISM** this is perhaps the most subtle form of error that bible believing Christians contend with. This crowd claims to be spiritual rather than religious and they say they have found the path of peace as Jesus walked. Within that statement they mean they have left “organized religion” in favor of personal meditation and contemplation. They do not attend services with other believers unless they are very small in number and usually in the home of the head guru. All of this type of thinking can be traced back to a rejecting of authority. These people, by and large, do not want to be under the authority of a pastor or church. What is even more subtle is that they do not place themselves under the authority of the Scriptures either. (Example: in these spiritual house-churches, are missionaries sent out? Are tithes given? Are converts baptized? Is the Lord’s Supper observed?) Usually, the textbook for these meetings is a motivational, self-help publication written by someone who also espouses these views.

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As we deal with this subject of contending for the faith, often the question arises, “Who or what are we contending with?” This is a very valid point and must be addressed if we are ever going to be the kind of Christians God has saved us to be.

**We are NOT contending with the WEAK.**

When we speak of the weak, we are speaking of the babes in Christ. A new convert certainly cannot know all the major themes and dispensations found within Scripture. These must be dealt with gently as with babes.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 *“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”*

**We are not contending with the SEEKING.**

There are people among us who are genuinely searching for the truth. They may have some strange ideas about what truth is. We, however, do not have to fret about where the truth is to be found. *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”* John 17:17

When we come across these people, we must be gentle toward them ‘speaking the truth in love.’

**We are contending with the DEVIL.**

We must remember that according to the Scripture we have but one adversary, the devil (1 Peter 5:8). The foe will work through other individuals to get to us. He will work through the LOST; he will work through the CULTS; he will work through the OCCULT. Satan has many darts in his arsenal and the Christian can only contend successfully if he or she uses the same resource as did our Captain, the Word of God.

Knowing this, we must also remember that the Adversary knows the Scriptures. However, he uses them deceitfully and twists them to suit his purposes as he did with Christ during the temptation. This is precisely why we are commanded to *“study to shew thyself approved unto God...rightly dividing the word of truth.”* May we be able to say with the Apostle *“But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.”* 2 Corinthians 4:2

## Contending for the Faith among 'Professing' Christians

### PART TWO-

*The term "Christian" is an umbrella word that encompasses many systems of belief. Most works on theology would characterize all Christians under one of these three sub-classes.*

#### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### EASTERN ORTHODOX

#### PROTESTANT

Methodist  
Presbyterian  
Church of God  
Lutheran  
Reformed  
Brethren  
Holiness  
and others...

**We must remember that BAPTISTS are not in any of these categories. We can trace an unbroken line of doctrinal succession back to Christ and His Apostles. As we move along in this study you will quickly recognize that we are defending the historic orthodox faith of the Apostolic band. This faith, as we will show includes the belief in such doctrines as:**

The Millennial Kingdom  
The Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church  
The Inerrancy of Scripture and the Priesthood of the Believer

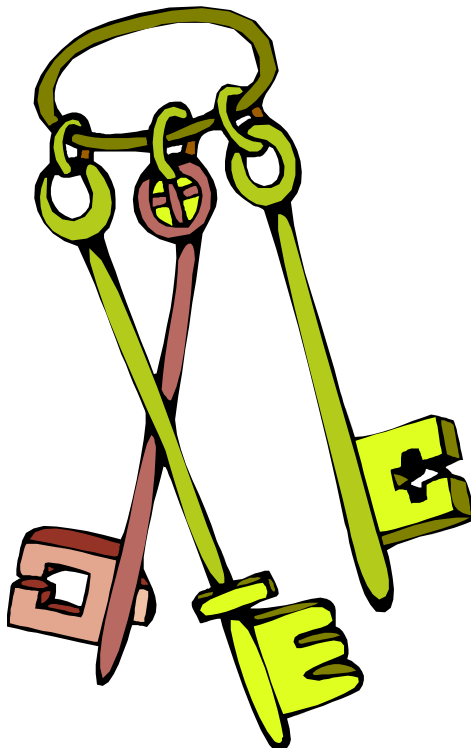
Although we find our only rule of faith and practice in the Scriptures, there have been some helpful Creeds devised over the course of history that have helped to define the Church's official position on matters of crucial doctrine (*NICENE CREED*).

Defending the Faith among others who call themselves Christians is by far the most difficult branch of apologetics. When a church or an individual begins to attack the beliefs held by other "believers in Jesus," that church or person is seen as divisive and unloving. We must, however, remember the words of our Lord...

*"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matthew 10:34-36*

## Roman Catholicism

- Rome teaches that salvation is not solely of grace but also in keeping the Seven Sacraments. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- Rome teaches that Mary, the “Mother of God” is our mediator to Christ. (1 Timothy 2:5)
- Rome teaches that Mary herself was conceived without sin, this is also known as the Immaculate Conception. (Luke 1:46-47)
- Rome teaches that a man or woman must suffer hell fire for venial (minor) sins in purgatory before they can be admitted into heaven. (Luke 16:26)
- Rome teaches that indulgences (money paid to the Church) can buy merit and favor with God and lessen a loved one’s time in purgatory. (Acts 8:20)



In this study we could literally spend weeks dealing with the errors of Roman Catholicism. However, for more research, the Bible student should consult this author's teachings on the book of the Revelation. In short, let us make a contrast between popery and Christianity.

### Salvation-

*The Roman Catholic will say that Jesus Christ DID die for man's sins on Calvary, but that man also has a responsibility to keep that grace that Christ gives through a system of works including the Seven Sacraments. The Christian, however, believes that a man is justified simply by placing faith in the blood of Christ. We believe the Bible teaches that works will in no way grant or aid in salvation (Eph.2:8-9; Gal.2:16).*

### Mediation-

*The Roman Catholic believes that Christ is Saviour but Mary is His Co-Redemptress. They also refer to her as "Mother of God" and "Co-Mediatrix." The idea behind this doctrine is that when a sinner comes to Christ he only sees the angry face of God until prayers are made to Mary. Upon these prayers being said, Mary proceeds to persuade her Son to save the believing sinner. This false doctrine is also taught in the Catholic "confessional" in which a catholic confesses sins to a priest who then, if he deems the sinner worthy of absolution. The Bible believing Christian has a far different view of Mediation. We believe that Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between us (sinners) and a righteous God (1 Timothy 2:5). We also do not look to other sinful men to grant unto us forgiveness for our sins. The Scriptures teach that only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7; 1 John 1:9).*

### The Scriptures-

*Catholics will give lip service to the Bible. They will go as far as to say it is the Word of God, however, they will not pronounce it as their final authority for matters of faith and practice. They also place tradition (or the teaching of the early church fathers and the pope) on the same level as Scripture. Orthodox Catholics are still encouraged to read the Bible but they are advised not to attempt to interpret it. The gift of interpretation only lies with the priesthood. Again, the Bible believing Christian differs greatly here. We believe that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are in fact the Word of God. Therefore, they are our final authority. All of our teaching and preaching is done from the Book of God. We revere great men and women of the faith who have gone before us, but God's Word trumps all other writings because only the Bible is inspired or God-breathed. We also believe that every child of God may understand the Scriptures through the ministry of illumination carried out by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13).*



## *The Pope*

The Pope or “Papa” is the most revered man in Roman Catholicism. He is called the “Vicar of Christ.” That phrase literally means “In the place of Christ on earth.” Catholic dogma teaches that the Pope is infallible in matters of doctrine when he speaks *ex-cathedra* or ‘from the chair.’ The Pope has the power to anathematize souls to Hell for eternity if they blaspheme (i.e. the Reformers).

Again, Biblical Christians see all this as heresy. First of all, Jesus Himself instructed His disciples to call NO MAN FATHER UPON THE EARTH in a spiritual sense (Matthew 23:9). The Pope is mostly referred to as the “Holy Father.” We believe that there is a VICAR OF CHRIST upon the earth, but it is NOT the pope, it is the Blessed Holy Spirit. “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever” John 14:16 We also believe that no man is infallible (incapable of error) because of what the Scriptures say about our hearts and our tongues .

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

Psalms 53:3 Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

The Catholic Church claims authority over all Christians because of what Jesus said in Matthew 16:18-19. They claim that through their bishops and popes alone can apostolic succession be found. However, they fail to rightly divide this passage. Jesus, when stating He would build His church was referring back to Peter’s confession that He was God (Christ). The name Peter literally means “petros” or “a fragment of a rock. But when Jesus said UPON THIS ROCK, He used the term “petra” which means BOULDER!

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Q. How are we to defend the faith against these Romans Catholics who also call themselves “Christians”?

A. Faithfully give them these words of God and silence the teachings of their unlearned priests. But above all, pray for power from the Holy Spirit to open their eyes.

## Eastern Orthodox

The second trunk that branched off the first century church came to be known as the Eastern Orthodox. It is estimated that in America alone there are as many as six million people who adhere to this body of teaching. Worldwide, there are over two hundred million adherents to Eastern Orthodoxy.

- The highest ranking leaders in this religion are referred to as a “Patriarchs” or a “Metropolitan.”
- The Eastern Orthodox Church believes itself the one, true and official church in the world today.
- The Eastern Orthodox Church finally split from Rome in 1054. The headquarters for the Roman Catholic Church remained in Rome while the Eastern Orthodox Church found its base in Constantinople.
- The Eastern Orthodox Church contends that Roman Catholicism went into apostasy through the development of the papacy and its claims to absolute supremacy over all other churches (*this is sort of double talk; this is the claim of the E.O. Church as well*).

### Similarities between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy

- Both teach Apostolic Succession but vary on its recipients.
- Both teach that more emphasis should be placed on the INVISIBLE church than on the VISIBLE church.
- Both place the Church and Tradition OVER the Scriptures. Only the Church and the Clergy have the divine right to interpret Scripture.

### Major differences between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy

- While the Eastern Orthodox observes the Mass, they hesitate to use the term “Transubstantiation.”
- Eastern Orthodoxy does not in any way submit to papal authority.

It is interesting to note that these two “faiths” parted ways because of TWO WORDS found in the Nicene Creed. This was referred to as the “filioque” controversy. These words literally mean “and Son.” The context states that the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and Son.

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

## Islam

We now move into another realm of “religion” that in no way claims to be Christian. In studying other religions outside of the professed sphere of Christianity, one cannot overlook what is perhaps the most formidable force to be reckoned with in the modern age—the Religion of Islam.

As we look into this system of belief, we will be brought face to face with some startling facts:

- ❖ Islam has gained tens of thousands of converts in North America, including many high profile celebrities and athletes.
- ❖ Islam is the youngest among major world religions but still is one of the largest.
- ❖ Islam is so missionary minded that it is seeking to convert Western countries, not just African and Asian countries.

Most estimates place the number of people across the globe who adhere to the teachings of Islam to over 1 Billion; in other words, one out of every six people are Muslim. Islam originated in what is now called Saudi Arabia and spread along trade routes from there to Africa and Asia. The country with the most Muslims is Indonesia, with 120 million.

### *Definition of Terms-*

**Islam-** “submission” (to Allah) (this is the correct title for the religion)

**Muslim-** “one who lives his life according to god’s (Allah) will”

### *Mohammed-*

Without question, Mohammed is the man accredited for bringing this religion into existence. Mohammed is the greatest prophet of Allah according to the teachings of Islam. The facts surrounding his life are unclear, however, most scholars agree on the following: he was born in Arabia in the city of Mecca in A.D. 570; his father died days before his birth and his mother died when he was six years old; his grandfather took him in until his death when Mohammed was nine; he then went to live with his uncle Abu Talid. While with his uncle, he herded flocks and went on many trips with his uncle to Syria and Persia.

It is commonly believed that during this extensive travel, Mohammed was greatly influenced in matters of religion by Jews, Monophysites (a group that only believed in the divine nature of Christ), and the Nestorians (a group that denied Jesus was fully God and fully man). From this, it is clear that Mohammed was swayed in his thinking by those who did not have a grasp on the truth concerning Christ or the Scriptures. This most likely led to Mohammed’s teachings concerning Christ and the teaching that modern day Islam adheres to.

At the age of 25, Mohammed attracted the attention of a wealthy widow of 40 years old named Khadija. The two were married and for the next fifteen years, Mohammed spent most of his life in solitary meditation, being greatly troubled concerning matters of religion. At the age of 40, Mohammed received his first revelation. While in a cave on Mount Hira near Mecca, according to Mohammed, the archangel Gabriel visited him with the following message:

*“Read in the name of thy lord who created, who created in blood coagulated. Read! Thy lord is the most beneficent, who taught by the pen, taught that what they knew not unto men.”*

This supposed command to “read” is where the Islamic holy book gets its name. The Qur’an, meaning “the reciting or reading”, is the book wherein is recited the revelations given to Mohammed. After this encounter with Gabriel, Mohammed was so troubled, he told his wife that he had been possessed by demons or “jinns” in the Arabian tongue. His wife, however, convinced him that his revelations were indeed from god and urged him to go forward in this endeavor to “re-discover” the lost truth concerning Allah. After this prompting, Mohammed began to preach in the marketplaces of Mecca where he claimed to be the prophet of Allah.

Mohammed died in A.D. 632 determined to conquer the world for Allah...his followers have the same agenda. More could be said concerning the stormy and shady history of Mohammed, but all the pertinent facts concerning his origins have been given. We will now consider the teachings of Islam.

- ❖ **The foundation for Islam is the belief that god or Allah is ONE and that Mohammed is his greatest prophet. Muslims condemn Christians for believing in “three gods.” This shows they have no real concept of the Doctrine of the Trinity.**
- ❖ **The Qur’an is the sacred text of Islam. It is roughly four-fifths the size of the New Testament and contains 114 chapters. Much of the Qur’an jumps from one time and place to another and lacks unity. There are many documented contradictions in the Qur’an—the most notable being that in one chapter the Muslims are called on to be peaceful and in another they are told to wait behind every bush for the infidel and kill them at once!**

Also important to know are the **SIX DOCTRINES OF ISLAM**. These are the doctrines that every Muslim is required to believe:

- 1) There is only one true god and his name is Allah. Allah is all-seeing, all-knowing, and all-powerful.
- 2) The chief angel is Gabriel, who is said to have appeared to Mohammed. There is also a fallen angel named Shaitan (from the Hebrew word for Satan), as well as the followers of Shaitan, the jinns (demons). This sounds strikingly familiar to the teachings of the Bible concerning the order of the angels.

- 3) Muslims believe in four God-inspired books: the Torah of Moses (Pentateuch), the Zabur (Psalms of David), the Injil (Gospel) of Jesus, and the Qur'an. However, because the Muslims believe the Christians and the Jews have corrupted the Bible, they put the Qur'an above all other writings in authority.
- 4) Islam teaches there have been 28 prophets of Allah. These include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jonah and Jesus. Mohammed, however, was the last and greatest prophet.
- 5) The end of days or the "last day" will be characterized by the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment of all by Allah. He will sentence each to either Heaven or Hell based on their works. Heaven, to the Muslim is a place of sensual pleasure.
- 6) Everything has been predestined by Allah. No one can change what he has decreed; his will shall prevail upon the earth.

In addition to the Six Doctrines, there are **FIVE PILLARS OF THE FAITH**.

- 1) Statement of Belief. *In order to become a Muslim, one must publicly repeat the "Shahadah."  
"There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is the prophet of Allah."*
  - 2) Prayer. *Every Muslim must pray five times a day facing Mecca.*
  - 3) Alms. *Every Muslim must give one-fortieth of his profit (2.5%) to a worthy cause.*
  - 4) Ramadan. *The ninth month of the lunar year is called Ramadan. This is the highest of Muslim holidays. Muslims fast for the entire month (only during the day hours).*
  - 5) Pilgrimage to Mecca. *Every Muslim is required to journey to Mecca once in their lifetime. If they cannot go, they may send someone in their place.*
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## Defending the Faith Against the Religion of Islam

We, as Bible believers, need not to be worried over this false religion. All we need is to visit again the sure foundation of God's Word. We may make the following points concerning Islam and the Bible.

-The majority of Islam's teaching comes from a distortion of Bible truth. This, by all accounts, is a borrowed religion.

-The Scriptures plainly teach the Fatherhood of God in relation to His Son, Jesus and towards believers in His Son. From Genesis to Revelation the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly taught. (Matt.3:13-17; 28:19; 2 Cor.13:14)

-Jesus Christ was indeed a Prophet, however, He was more than that. The Bible expressly declares the DEITY of Jesus Christ and that He actually did die for our sins. (John 1:13,14; 1 Pet.3:18)

-Muslims teach that man is born with a clean slate, a clean heart. If a Muslim commits sin, it can be overcome by actions of the will...good deeds. The Bible teaches that man is born in sin and that apart from faith, nothing can be done by us to please God (Rom.3:12; Eph.5:8-10)

-Muslims believe that Allah does not love those who do wrong and that each person must earn their own salvation. This stands in stark contrast to the God of the Bible. He loved us in our sins and offers salvation freely on the basis of faith alone apart from works. (Rom.5:8; 1 Cor.15:3,4)

**(Special Application: Notice the relationship between this fast growing religion and the Babylonians in the Book of Habakkuk.)**

### ~ LESSON NOTES ~

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# Judaism

This religion is one of the world's oldest and is steeped in tradition and pride. For an account of the history of the Jewish people, the Old Testament is the authoritative voice. **It can be rightly said that Judaism is the origin of Christianity. The Savior (Jesus Christ) and the Scriptures (Bible) find their earthly origin in Judaism.**

A brief synopsis of the Jewish people will show their formation with the call of Abraham in Genesis 12, their bondage in Egypt, deliverance by Moses, wilderness wandering, entrance into Canaan, captivity, dispersion to the present day.

The Jewish sacrificial system ended in 70 A.D. when the Roman General Titus destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem. With no Temple, the Jews had no place to offer sacrifice.

## Four Forms of Judaism

As with most religions, there are several groups within the system of Judaism. These four groups are as follows:

### -Orthodox

#### -Conservative

#### -Reform

#### -Messianic

**ORTHODOX-** These Jews attempt to follow the letter of the Law of Moses (Pentateuch). The Jews refer to this law as the Torah, which means "teaching and direction." The Torah, however, also contains the oral law as well as the written, this was addressed by Christ as He condemned the perversion of the written law through oral reproduction (Mt.5:21, 27). Not only is the Torah a source of authority for the orthodox Jew, these also seek to follow the teachings of famous Rabbis. These teachings were written down around 200 A.D. in a book called the Mishnah. The Mishnah is approximately 1,000 pages long and consists mainly of instructions for daily living.

Around 500 A.D., the Talmud was compiled. This work contains 36 volumes in all and is a lengthened version of the Mishnah. In summary, there are three books that rule the life of an Orthodox Jew...The Mishnah, the Talmud, and the Torah.

The life of an Orthodox Jew is lived according to strict interpretation of the Mosaic Law. For example, an orthodox Jew will not eat dairy products and meat together because of (Exodus 23:19). An orthodox Jew cooks meat in such a way as to permit very little blood to remain in the meat (Lev.3:17). The orthodox Jew also has very high standards concerning the Sabbath Day. On the

Sabbath (Saturday), the orthodox Jew will not work, travel, use the phone, write, touch money or pose for a picture.

**CONSERVATIVE-** These Jews adopt a more lenient interpretation of the Mosaic Law. They do, however, believe the Law is vitally important. Conservatives also want to keep the native language of Hebrew alive to the Jewish nation.

**REFORMED-** The Reformed Jews believe that the principles of Judaism are more important than the practices. These Jews do not observe the dietary laws and laws concerning the Sabbath.

These three groups vary on application of several laws but agree on one principle...the Sabbath and holy days must be observed. Jews have a saying that is commonly heard in Palestine. "More than Israel kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath kept Israel." (note: the Sabbath is a Jewish ordinance that was never given to the Church)

For all Jews, the Sabbath begins at sundown on Friday night and continues until sundown on Saturday. In devout Jewish homes, as the sun sets on Friday, the woman of the house, with her family around, lights the traditional candles and gives the ancient blessing, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us by Thy laws and commanded us to kindle the Sabbath light." The father then blesses the home and the wine and everyone has a sip, and then he slices the Sabbath loaf of challah bread.

After dinner on the Sabbath, the Conservatives and Reformed Jews go to the Synagogue. Orthodox services are held earlier in the morning on the Sabbath.

### HIGH DAYS WITHIN JUDAISM-

There are certain High Days within Judaism: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year; Sept. Oct.); Yom Kippur (Jewish Day of Atonement) Yom Kippur is held ten days after the New Year.

Passover is another important day for Jews. They celebrate this at about the same time Christians celebrate Easter. In all Jewish homes, Passover begins the same way...with a question asked by the youngest child, "**Why is this night different from all other nights?**" An older member answers and recounts the story of their slavery in Egypt.





In this lesson we will be focusing our attention on an often overlooked group of Jews, the Messianic Jews.

Before we delve into this study, we must cut right to the heart of the issue when it comes to Jew vs Gentile. **“Is Jesus of Nazareth the Christ of God?”** We, as Bible believing Christians say YES! However, the orthodox, reformed, and even conservative Jews say NO!

In the Jewish world, there is still great anticipation for the day when their Messiah/Christ will rule and reign in power and put down all Gentile authority.

- ❖ It would do well for us to pause here and state again the method and both Jewish and Gentile salvation.
- ❖ Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
- ❖ Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
- ❖ Luke 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.
- ❖ Ephesians 2:11-15 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;
- ❖ Galatians 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

From these verses and countless more, we learn that a Jew must be saved by the faith of Jesus Christ. There are no two ways to salvation..it is Christ or judgment.

### The Messianic Jews

In the last decades of the twentieth century a new movement began taking place, this movement was that of the Messianic Jews. Something miraculous happened in 1967. At the end of the six-day war, Israel became its own sovereign state, thus fulfilling prophecy *Isaiah 66:8 “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.”* At this day, many Jews believed that Yeshua was indeed the Son of God as the Bible had said.

- ❖ Deuteronomy 30:1-3 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- ❖ Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

This event could be properly called the beginning of the Messianic Jewish movement. It is estimated that today there are over 350 Messianic Jewish congregations world-wide. It is interesting to note that in the last twenty years, more Jews have put their trust in Jesus than in the past 20 centuries.

These Messianic Jews still worship Yeshua and observe many of the Mosaic customs. These groups however, have welcomed many Gentiles into their assemblies.

- ❖ Acts 15:13-18 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

### **How Then can a Jew be Won to Jesus Christ?**

A Jew, though man or woman can be converted to Christ by the use of their own oracles (Scriptures).

#### **-Ethiopian Eunuch / Philip - ACTS 8:26-38**

Philip used the Scriptures from Isaiah 53. Could there be a more graphic depiction of the death of our Saviour than this? It is not unreasonable to imagine that someone could be led to Christ through the Old Testament.

#### **Concerning the Emmaus Road disciples- LUKE 24:13-31**

Jesus taught them the significance of the types of the Old Testament that pointed to Him.

**APPLICATION:** It is absolutely necessary that we learn Christ all throughout the Book, not just in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

If we are to contend for the faith among those that do not believe the New Testament, we must know how to rightly use the Old Testament.

At the close of Tribulation, the entire nation of Israel will look upon their one true Messiah Whom they have pierced.

- ❖ Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

These verses speak of national salvation. Concerning individual salvation, all Jews today must come by Christ Jesus.

**John 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

**“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” –Romans 10:1**

