

# I. Spiritual Understanding

## Fundamentals of the Gospel

### God the Creator

God is holy and without flaw. There is none like Him. He is the just and gracious eternal Creator of all things. His knowledge, power and authority is superior and to be revered. All of creation is subject to Him and sustained by Him. The One and Only Living God is characterized by love, grace, mercy, wrath, and judgment.

*"I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King." – Isaiah 43:15*

*"For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes." – Deuteronomy 10:17*

*"For this God is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to the end." – Psalm 48:14*

### Sinfulness of Man

"The holy justice of God and the sinfulness of man create a tension for our Creator. Although He loves the world, He cannot condone sin. Yet, He cannot condemn those He loves. God requires payment for sin but wants to have a relationship with people. Christ came to build a bridge between humanity who is lost in sin and God who cannot tolerate sin. As fully God and fully man, Jesus came to redeem humanity. He lived in complete obedience to God's law and fulfilled the commands of the Father – a requirement that no one could meet. In His divinity, He was able to satisfy the wrath of God against sin as He provided Himself as the perfect sacrifice. In His death, He was a substitute on our behalf, and in His resurrection, a conquering Savior. He is the way of salvation, and His life and death were sufficient to bring redemption to a sinful people on behalf of a God who judges sin rightly and loves wholly." – Dr. David Platt

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" – Romans 3:23*

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." – Romans 6:23*

*"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient." – Ephesians 2:1*

## Necessity of Christ

While we were yet sinners, God graciously sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from our sins. Jesus Christ, having all deity and supreme authority of God, is the only source of salvation. Christ alone is able to cover sin, offering forgiveness and reconciliation with God through His death and resurrection. He alone satisfies the wrath of God for our sins.

*"...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve." – 1 Corinthians 15:3-5*

*"For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross." – Colossians 1:19-20*

*"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed." – 1 Peter 2:24*

*"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." – Romans 5:8*

*Christ died for his enemy = sin*

*"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." – Romans 8:1*

## Personal Response

We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Grace refers to receiving an undeserved gift. We cannot earn salvation – it is a gift from God. When we put our trust and faith in Christ as our Savior and Lord, we receive the gift of salvation. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer and causes complete transformation – new life, new desires, and a newly restored relationship with God. When we follow Jesus in obedience, we choose to die to sin and self and live a new life in Him. Our eternal destiny is dependent upon our response to Jesus Christ.

After coming to a greater understanding of who God is, our sin problem and its consequences, the sacrifice and obedience of Jesus Christ, we are forced to make a personal response. There are only two options in response to this knowledge: follow Him as personal Lord and Savior, or complete rejection of Him, His Word, and His authority.

After responding to Christ in repentance and faith, we also have a responsibility to share our faith by profession of faith and baptism. Baptism (the Greek word "baptism" translates as "immersion") is an outward symbol of an inward transformation. Profession of faith and baptism are ways to express joy and excitement of our new life in Christ.

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." – Ephesians 2:8-10*