

THE WAY, PART ONE

Isaiah 35:8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called **The way** of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

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.

Long before there were terms like Christian, Pentecostal, or Apostolic, the early church referred to itself simply as "The Way." Luke uses the term a half dozen times in the book of Acts. The idea wasn't original with them; rather, it came from the words of Jesus Himself. "**The Way**" is an **exclusive term!** And that's why the early Christians were persecuted and even called heretics in the first century. It's much the same today, because there are not many roads to God – there is only ONE WAY!

Acts 9:1-2 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of **this way**, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

Acts 24:14 But this I confess unto thee, that after **the way** which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

The gospel message is how our lives are changed by God's power!

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.

The gospel is not the gospel if you take away from it or add to it. It will not work if you do that! Paul says in Galatians 1:8 that those who mix God's message with men's ideas, creating a "perverted gospel," are accursed. (These Judaizers of Paul's day did not deny Christ; they merely changed the plan of salvation preached by his Apostles.)

Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Jesus Christ would be angered by most "gospel" messages that are being preached today, mainly because they lack nearly all the major points that He and the Apostles preached on!

There are now as many variations on the plan of salvation as there are denominations – a logical and theological nightmare! So we have dealt with the problem by saying that “we’re all going to the same place, so let’s forget doctrine and just love Jesus!” The problem with this approach is simple – IT IS WRONG! There are not two, ten or twenty ways to be saved – there is only the Bible way to be saved. What matters is not my opinion, your opinion, or your pastor’s opinion – just God’s opinion!

**“Accept the Lord as your personal Savior” is NOT IN THE BIBLE!
The issue is not that WE accept God, it is that GOD accepts us!**

Ephesians 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

There is only ONE salvation message, regardless of what various denominations say! It is not that WE are right and THEY are wrong; it is that the BIBLE is right and EVERYONE ELSE is wrong! ‘

In this series, we want to make sure that we know “THE WAY” ...

The word “gospel” is from the Anglo-Saxon word “godspel,” meaning “god-message” or “good story.” We use the transliterated term “good news” in place of the Greek word “euaggelion,” and usually think of it as meaning ONLY the good tidings themselves. However, in the Greek language the word “euaggelion” actually signifies “a present given to one who brought good tidings,” or “a sacrifice offered in thanksgiving for such good tidings having come.” Therefore, the “gospel” signifies NOT ONLY the message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (the “good news”), BUT ALSO our response (i.e. obeying the plan of salvation).

The gospel message has three components that work together.

1 John 5:6-8 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

There are “three that bear witness” – the Spirit, the water and the blood – and these three agree in one. (This is the view from Heaven, looking “backwards” – we experience “blood, then water, then Spirit.”)

That’s why there were THREE ELEMENTS involved in the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt ... BLOOD ON DOORPOST, RED SEA, PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE (BLOOD, WATER, SPIRIT).

Exodus 12:13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the **blood**, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the **cloud**, and all passed through the **sea**; And were all baptized unto Moses in the **cloud** and in the **sea**;

There were 3 pieces of furniture involved in ATONEMENT in the Tabernacle (other 3 were involved in worship) ... BRAZEN ALTAR, BRAZEN LAVER, ARK OF THE COVENANT (blood, water, Spirit).

And that's why Paul said that the gospel has THREE ELEMENTS ...

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:

The ORIGINAL ALTAR CALL of the New Testament Church contains ALL THREE ELEMENTS of salvation (blood, water, Spirit) ...

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Ghost**.

REPENTANCE is the first action step that we take toward salvation. Because we have a sinful nature, and have committed sinful acts, it is **essential** that we repent.

Repentance is not **PENANCE**, which is doing acts of devotion required by a priest to receive "absolution" for sin. This is merely a religious tradition.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Repentance is essential for salvation. God wants to save us, but requires us to respond to His love by turning from sin. Jesus said:

Luke 13:3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

REPENTANCE is powerful. Repentance is why some of your friends who've never been baptized in Jesus' name or received the Holy Ghost and spoke with tongues have still had a major change in their lives! They're not all the way there yet, but they've experienced something undeniable. That's because real repentance, in and of itself, is powerful. It's not a dead end, it's not a stop sign, it's not a conclusion, it's not the whole package, but it's powerful in and of itself.

Greek METANOIA – An inner change of attitude leading to an outward change of behaviour. That's why John the Baptist said, "Bring forth therefore fruits – evidence! – meet for repentance."

Matthew 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Hebrew SHUB – verb found over 1000 times in OT, used 164 times in a covenant sense, meaning "TURNING AWAY from a previous life."

The root of this word means "DESTROY THE HOUSE," leaving nothing behind, and comes from ancient warfare ... because when you have nothing left to go back to, it's much easier to move ahead with God!

Repentance involves more than 'feeling sorry' – destroy the house!

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* vehement desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge! In all *things* ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

We've defined repentance by what we feel. But repentance has nothing to do with what you FEEL, and everything to do with what you DO! "I am so angry at the devil. I am so tired of being bound. I'm going to destroy the house so there's NOTHING to ever go back to! I'm done with him!" Repentance means to walk away, leaving the smouldering ruins of your old life in the distance. **Repentance means "GOODBYE!"**

When I repent, I am applying the DEATH of Christ to my life, making it effective in me! I am "destroying" the old kingdom of sin in my life.

Romans 6:6-7 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

THE WAY, PART TWO

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The gospel message has three components that work together.

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There are "three that bear witness" – the Spirit, the water and the blood – and these three agree in one.

There were THREE ELEMENTS involved in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt on the night of Passover ... BLOOD ON DOORPOST, RED SEA, PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE (Blood, Water, Spirit).

There were 3 pieces of furniture involved in ATONEMENT in the Tabernacle (other 3 were involved in worship) ... BRAZEN ALTAR, BRAZEN LAVER, ARK OF THE COVENANT (Blood, Water, Spirit).

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STEP ONE = REPENTANCE

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STEP TWO = BAPTISM

THE LAST COMMAND OF JESUS ...

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing** them in the **name** of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the **gospel** to every creature. He that **believeth** and is **baptized** shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Luke 24:47-49 And that **repentance** and **remission of sins** should be preached in his **name** among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the **promise** of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with **power** from on high.

John 20:23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are **remitted** unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

BECAME THE FIRST COMMAND OF THE CHURCH ...

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be **baptized** every one of you in the **name** of Jesus Christ for the **remission** of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Ghost**.

Two critical things: MODE (what is done), FORMULA (what is said).

IMMERSION (Greek "baptizo") vs. SPRINKLING (Greek "rantizo")

MUCH WATER - John 3:23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

INTO THE WATER - Acts 8:38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

OUT OF THE WATER - Acts 8:39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

BURIED IN WATER - Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

PLANTED IN WATER - Romans 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

BAPTISM MUST BE DONE BY IMMERSION IN WATER.

"Name of Jesus Christ" vs. "Name of the Father, Son & Holy Ghost"

JEWS - Acts 2:38 ... be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins

SAMARITANS - Acts 8:16 ... they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus

GENTILES - Acts 10:48 ... he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord

REBAPTISM OF EPHESIANS - Acts 19:5 ... they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus

PETER TAUGHT - 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.

PAUL TAUGHT - Colossians 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

BAPTISM MUST BE DONE IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

What about Matthew 28:19?

1. NO ONE is being baptized in this verse.
2. NAME is singular. These three titles don't have any authority; they just describe the one name.
3. Matthew didn't write this until AD 62. EVERY baptism for 30 years had been in Jesus' name.
4. The Apostles didn't just REPEAT Jesus' command; they OBEYED Jesus' command.

There are no delayed baptisms in the New Testament.

Acts 2:41 - "the same day"

Acts 16:33 - "the same hour"

Acts 9:18 - "immediately"

Acts 10:48 - "he commanded them to be baptized"

Acts 22:16 - "why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

My sins are washed away or "remitted"

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

My conscience is cleansed from past guilt

1 Peter 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

I put on the only saving name, Jesus Christ

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

I apply the burial of Christ to my life

Romans 6:3-4 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

I am legally brought into God's covenant

Colossians 2:11-12 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

I am “born of the water” to portray my new life

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

BLOOD, WATER, SPIRIT ... THERE IS JUST ONE WAY!

Remember how REPENTANCE means “destroy the house”? Well, you could say that BAPTISM means “drown the army”! Paul compares our baptism to Israel crossing the Red Sea, while Pharaoh’s army drowned.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

ONCE ISRAEL CROSSED THE RED SEA, PHARAOH AND THE ARMIES OF EGYPT COULDN’T GET THROUGH THE WATER!

- The devil cannot LEGALLY bring up your past.
- God declares that He has FORGOTTEN your past.

WHEN YOU ARE BAPTIZED, THE “ARMY” OF PAST SINS CAN’T GET THROUGH THE WATER TO CONDEMN YOU ANY MORE!

DESTROY THE HOUSE! DROWN THE ARMY!

BLOOD, WATER, SPIRIT ... THERE IS JUST ONE WAY!

THE WAY, PART THREE

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WHEN I REPENT, I APPLY THE DEATH OF JESUS TO MY LIFE.

STEP TWO = BAPTISM

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- **BAPTISM MUST BE DONE IN THE NAME OF JESUS.**

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

WHEN I'M BAPTIZED, I APPLY THE BURIAL OF JESUS TO MY LIFE.

Remember how REPENTANCE means “destroy the house”? Well, you could say that BAPTISM means “drown the army”! Paul compares our baptism to Israel crossing the Red Sea, while Pharaoh’s army drowned.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

Once Israel crossed the red sea, Pharaoh and the armies of Egypt couldn’t get through the water! When you are baptized, the “army” of past sins can’t get through the water to condemn you any more!

STEP THREE = HOLY GHOST

There were TWO BAPTISMS for Israel – a BAPTISM BY WATER (“through the sea”) and a BAPTISM BY SPIRIT (“under the cloud”). Both baptisms were necessary – for THEM and for US.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

If it had not been for the PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE resting on the Tabernacle (the center of their lifestyle of worship), Israel would never have made it through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Without the HOLY GHOST, we have no power to live for God!

DESTROY THE HOUSE! DROWN THE ARMY! FOLLOW THE FIRE!

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

WHEN I RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST, I APPLY THE RESURRECTION POWER OF JESUS CHRIST TO MY LIFE.

1 Corinthians 6:14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

So many churches celebrate Easter, but totally miss the point of the resurrection! It was so you and I could be raised up also – not just in the future after our physical death, but right now out of our spiritual death!

THE HOLY GHOST IS POWER TO LIVE FOR GOD – YOU NEED IT!

Luke 24:49 And, behold, I send the **promise** of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with **power from on high**.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive **power**, after that the **Holy Ghost** is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

**THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS WAS A SUPERNATURAL EVENT!
THE EVIDENCE OF RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST IS THAT YOU
WILL DO SOMETHING SUPERNATURAL – SPEAKING IN TONGUES!**

Acts 2:1-4 And when the day of **Pentecost** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them **cloven tongues like as of fire**, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the **Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with **other tongues**, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

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Every Christian in your Bible received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, and spoke in other tongues at the moment of their infilling ...

- When the church began on the Day of Pentecost, the disciples spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4).
- For our dear Catholic friends, both Peter and Mary the mother of Jesus were in the Upper Room and spoke in tongues (Acts 1:13-14).
- Simon the Sorcerer saw "evidence" when the Samaritans received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost by laying on of hands (Acts 8:14-20).
- Cornelius' household, who were gentiles, spoke with other tongues when they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 10:44-48).
- Paul had this experience (Acts 9:17-18), for he spoke with tongues more than anyone in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 14:18).
- Believers who had only experienced John's baptism were re-baptized and spoke with tongues (Acts 19:1-6).

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PROPHESIED BY ISAIAH:

Isaiah 28:11-12 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

PROPHESED BY JOEL:

Joel 2:28-29 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Acts 2:12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

Acts 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

PROPHESED BY JOHN THE BAPTIST:

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

PROPHESED BY JESUS CHRIST:

John 7:38-39 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

THE WHOLE POINT OF THE RESURRECTION IS THAT JESUS WANTS TO GIVE US RESURRECTION POWER – THE HOLY GHOST!

Acts 2:32-33 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

THE HOLY GHOST IS FOR EVERYONE! IT IS FOR YOU!

Acts 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

THE EVIDENCE OF RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST IS THAT YOU WILL DO SOMETHING SUPERNATURAL – SPEAKING IN TONGUES!

Remember that it is IMPOSSIBLE for God to fill people with His Spirit when they refuse to YIELD. No one can be filled with SELF and GOD at the same time. Neither can two languages be spoken at once. Since God will not take your vocabulary away, you must VOLUNTARILY yield yourself to His control. **GOD does not speak in tongues – PEOPLE speak in tongues as His Spirit gives the words.** Become like a little child, surrender your tongue to the Spirit's control, and don't be afraid to speak in an unknown language. What an incredible experience it is to surrender completely to God and let Him fill us! **Just ASK and BELIEVE for God's gift – you don't have to earn it or beg for it! It's for YOU!**

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A 2006 study by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania found that there may be a neurological parallel between what worshipers experience when they speak in tongues and what actually transpires physiologically in the brain. Scientists took brain images from worshippers as they were speaking in tongues and as they were singing. Comparing the two images, the researchers discovered that the frontal lobes (the willful, thinking part of the brain) were quiet, as were the language centers. Scans of people practicing meditation or participating in other spiritual practices differed sharply. Radiology investigators observed increased or decreased brain activity - by measuring regional cerebral blood flow with SPECT (Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography) imaging - while the subjects were speaking in tongues. Their study is titled, "The Measurement of Regional Cerebral Blood Flow During Glossolalia: a Preliminary SPECT Study." Co-authors are Andrew Newberg, Nancy Wintering, Donna Morgan, and Mark Waldman.

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YOU DON'T RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST THROUGH YOUR HEAD, BUT THROUGH YOUR HEART! YOU MUST BE HUNGRY FOR IT!

Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Acts 19:2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.