**MOUNT ZION**

**MINISTRIES INC.**

**FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS**

 Mount Zion Ministries Inc. is Nondenominational Church and Ministry we are not associated with any other denominational church or ministry although we agree on many of the key issues and same points. We must remain independent and as not to be influence by statements or point of view that may come into conflict with the word of God we must remain true to the word of God and our Lord Jesus Christ whatever the cost may be. Denominations was in instituted by man not God. So at Mount Zion we remain independent to do God’s will on earth.

 There is one God who is eternally existent in three persons. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. God is infinitely perfect and is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:26) (Deuteronomy 6:4) (Isaiah 40:28) (Matthew 28:19) (John 14:26) (2 Corinthians 13:14)

 The Bible is the inspired word of God and is without error in the original autographs. It is the Divine revelation of God's will, His plan of salvation and is the complete authority for all who choose to believe in him (John1:1-2) (2 Timothy 3:16)

 In the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, In His virgin birth, In His sinless life, In His miracles. He gave his life as the perfect sacrifice for our sins, In His bodily resurrection, In his ascension to the right hand of the Father, In His personal future return to the earth in power and glory to rule for a thousand years.(John Ch. 1) ( Matthew 1:18) ( Matthew 28:5-6) ( Revelation 20:4)

 Water baptism by immersion and communion are ordinances to be observed by the church, but are not to be regarded as means of salvation. They are to be followed until Jesus Christ returns (Matthew 28:16-20) (Luke 22:7-20) (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

 The blood of Jesus provides justification and salvation for those who believe in Him. Mankind was created in the image of God, But because of the original sin, is therefore lost. Only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation be obtained and spiritual life restored. Only those who believe in and receive Jesus Christ as both Savior and Lord are born of God (1 John 1:7) (John Ch. 3) (John 14:6) (1 Corinthians 15:22) (Titus 3:5) 

 The Holy Spirit is the Divine nature of God whose primary work is to convict the lost with the message of the gospel and to guide, Instruct in righteousness, regenerate and comfort the believer. The baptism of the Holy Spirit supernaturally empowers believers to be witness and equips them for service and ministry. The gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus Christ and are manifested in the life of the believer daily. (John 14:26) (John 16:7-8) (Acts 1:8) (Acts 2:4) (1 Corinthians Ch.12) (Galatians 5:16-25)

 Salvation is a covenant relationship with God the Father and as such can be broken by mankind. The Bible is clear that eternal security is conditional and maintained by the believer's continuing faith in Jesus Christ and submission to His Lordship. (John 15:1-17)

 Divine healing of the human body provided through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross in answer to believing prayer (James 5:16-17) (1 Peter 2:24)

 In pubic witness of the believer's life as a light that shines in darkness. The believer's life as a witness of the indwelling presence of God. As such each believer must study the Bible and pray daily to progressively reflect the image of Jesus Christ through his or her life. There should be no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness. We should love the sinner and hate the sin. Our love must be expressed in compassionate concern for the physical as well as the spiritual well being of all humanity (Matthew 5:14-16) (Matthew 18:21-35) (John 13:34-35) (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) (1 Peter 3:8-9) (1 Peter 4:8)

 In the five ministry offices given to the church for the purpose of equipping the saints (Ephesians 4:10-16)

 The gospel is to be proclaimed to all creation, not only in word but also express in deeds with signs and wonders following. (Matthew 28:18-20) (Mark16:15-18) (James 2:14-18)

 We believe in the blessed hope, the soon return of Jesus Christ to receive his bride at His coming. In the new heaven and the new earth and the Holy Jerusalem, the city of God, descending out of heaven and filled with God's glory. In the resurrection and final judgment of both the saved and the lost, the first to everlasting life and the second to everlasting damnation. (Titus 2:13-14) (Rev. 20:11-15) (Rev. 21:1-2, 10) 

** We believe in covenant relationship**: between God and Man and in so doing. We choose to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and not only follow him but as his Followers we must obey his commands. (Mark 12:28-31) (Hebrews 8:1-13)

 **We believe in tithing:** For purpose to enlarge God’s kingdom and meet all financial needs of the Church and to fulfill God’s command to go into all the world and preach the Good News and make disciples. So when the Christian commits to tithing the Blessing will following if our giving is truly coming from our hearts. Christians have received the riches of God’s grace, and are to respond with generosity and giving. Christians are called to a life of service, sharing and stewardship. We have an obligation to do good. When we give ourselves to the Lord, we will give generously.

 The old covenant required 10 percent. The new covenant does not specify a percentage, nor do we. However, the new covenant admonishes people to give what they can, and tithing still provides an instructive point of comparison. For some people, 10 percent may be too much. But some will be able to give more, and some are doing so. Christians should examine their own circumstances and the better blessings they have been given in the new covenant through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us and the gift of the Holy Spirit to us. Contributions should be given to the church for its collective work of preaching the gospel and the expenses involved in the local ministry and congregational needs.

 (Genesis 14:18-20) (Malachi 3:8-12) (Matthew 6:1-3, 33) (Luke 6:38) (Luke 12:13-34) (2 Corinthians 8:1-15)

 **We believe biblical Marriage:** marriage is between One Man and One Woman and not marriage between One Man and One Man or One woman and One Woman. We also do not believe that sex outside of marriage or adultery is permitted for in doing so it will destroy the institution that God has ordained according to the Bible. God Created marriage and the Bible makes clear that, at the root, marriage and the family are not human conventions based merely on a temporary consensus and time-honored tradition. Instead, Scripture teaches that family was God's idea and that marriage is a divine, not merely human, institution. The implication of this truth is significant indeed, for this means that humans are not free to renegotiate or redefine marriage and the family in any way they choose but that they are called to preserve and respect what has been divinely instituted. This is in keeping with Jesus' words, uttered when his contemporaries asked him about the permissibility of divorce: "What therefore God has joined together let not man separate". For this reason, marriage is far more than a human social contract; it is a divinely instituted covenant that Our God has ordained since man and woman was form.( Genesis 2:20-24)(Leviticus 18:22) (Matthew 19:6) (Romans 1:18-32)(1Corinthians 6:9) (1 Corinthians 7:1-16) (Ephesians 5:21-33 )(Hebrews 13:4 )

 **Separation from the World** - We believe that those who are truly born again. Are the Salt and Light of this world and are called into a life of separation from all worldly and sinful practices. Although Christian are in this world we are not to participate by association in the things that contaminate the believers life, Mind, body and spirit and his or her testimony, to do so would destroy one’s testimony before God and Man. (Matthew 5:13-16) (John17:14-16) (Romans 12:1-2 )(2 Corinthians 6:14:18) (James 4:4) (1 John 2:15-17)

** Satan** We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, that he is a fallen angel and not a god and he was created by God, but because of the sin of pride was cast out of Heaven. Satan became the ruler of this world and the prince of the power of the air ([John 12:31](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2012.31); [2 Corinthians 4:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Corinthians%204.4); [Ephesians 2:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%202.2)). He is an accuser ([Revelation 12:10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2012.10)), a tempter ([Matthew 4:3](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%204.3); [1 Thessalonians 3:5](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thessalonians%203.5)), and a deceiver ([Genesis 3](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Genesis%203); [2 Corinthians 4:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Corinthians%204.4); [Revelation 20:3](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2020.3)). His very name means “adversary” or “one who opposes.” Another of his titles, the devil, means “slanderer. ”Even though he was cast out of heaven, he still seeks to elevate his throne above God. He counterfeits all that God does, hoping to gain the [worship](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) of the world and encourage opposition to God's kingdom. Satan is the ultimate source behind every false cult and world religion. Satan will do anything and everything in his power to oppose God and those who follow God. However, Satan’s destiny is sealed—an eternity in the lake of fire ([Revelation 20:10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2020.10)).
He is not to be feared and he is to be resisted by the power of the Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ who is our strength and we must realize that our fight or struggles is not against flesh and blood but evil spiritual forces that seek to destroy the works and testimony of the believer and to divide the church that faithfully obeys the word of God. (Isaiah 14:12) (Ezekiel 28:11-19) (Matthew 16:18) (Ephesians 6:10-12) (James 4:7) (1 John 4:4) (Revelation 20:10)

**Spiritual Warfare:** There are two primary errors when it comes to spiritual warfare—over-emphasis and under-emphasis. Some blame every sin, every conflict, and every problem on demons that need to be cast out. Others completely ignore the spiritual realm and the fact that the Bible tells us our battle is against spiritual powers. The key to successful spiritual warfare is finding the biblical balance. Jesus sometimes cast demons out of people and sometimes healed people with no mention of the demonic. The apostle Paul instructs Christians to wage war against the sin in themselves ([Romans 6](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Romans%206)) and to wage war against the evil one ([Ephesians 6:10-18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%206.10-18)). 

[Ephesians 6:10-12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%206.10-12) declares, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” This text teaches some crucial truths: we can only be strong in the Lord’s power, it is God’s armor that protects us, and our battle is against spiritual forces of evil in the world.

A powerful example of someone strong in the Lord’s power is Michael, the archangel, in [Jude 9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jude%209). Michael, likely the most powerful of all of God’s angels, did not rebuke Satan in his own power, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” [Revelation 12:7-8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2012.7-8) records that in the end times Michael will defeat Satan. Still, when it came to his conflict with Satan, Michael rebuked Satan in God’s name and authority, not his own. It is only through our relationship with Jesus Christ that Christians have any authority over Satan and his demons. It is only in His Name that our rebuke has any power.

[Ephesians 6:13-18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%206.13-18) gives a description of the spiritual armor God gives us. We are to stand firm with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, and by [praying](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) in the Spirit. What do these pieces of spiritual armor represent in spiritual warfare? We are to speak the truth against Satan’s lies. We are to rest in the fact that we are declared righteous because of Christ’s sacrifice for us. We are to proclaim the gospel no matter how much resistance we receive. We are not to waver in our faith, no matter how strongly we are attacked. Our ultimate defense is the assurance we have of our salvation, an assurance that no spiritual force can take away. Our offensive weapon is the Word of God, not our own opinions and feelings. We are to follow Jesus’ example in recognizing that some spiritual victories are only possible through [prayer](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C).

Jesus is our ultimate example for spiritual warfare. Observe how Jesus handled direct attacks from Satan when He was tempted by him in the wilderness ([Matthew 4:1-11](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%204.1-11)). Each temptation was answered the same way—with the words “It is written.” Jesus knew the Word of the living God is the most powerful weapon against the temptations of the devil. If Jesus Himself used the Word to counter the devil, do we dare to use anything less?

The ultimate example of how not to engage in [spiritual](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) warfare is the seven sons of Sceva. “Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, ‘In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.’ Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. One day the evil spirit answered them, ‘Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?’ Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding” ([Acts 19:13-16](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2019.13-16)). The seven sons of Sceva were using Jesus’ name. That is not enough. The seven sons of Sceva did not have a relationship with Jesus; therefore, their words were void of any power or authority. The seven sons of Sceva were relying on a methodology. They were not relying on Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and they were not employing the Word of God in their spiritual warfare. As a result, they received a humiliating beating. May we learn from their bad example and conduct spiritual warfare as the Bible instructs.

In summary, what are the keys to success in spiritual warfare? First, we rely on God’s power, not our own. Second, we rebuke in Jesus’ Name, not our own. Third, we protect ourselves with the full armor of God. Fourth, we wage warfare with the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God. Finally, we remember that while we wage spiritual warfare against Satan and his demons, not every sin or problem is a demon that needs to be rebuked.

 **Overcoming Temptation:** : The Scriptures tell us that we all face temptations. [First Corinthians 10:13](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/First%20Corinthians%2010.13) says, “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man.” Perhaps this provides a little encouragement as we often feel that the world is bearing in on us alone, and that others are immune to temptations. We are told that Christ was also tempted: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin” ([Hebrews 4:15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Hebrews%204.15)).

Where, then, do these temptations come from? First of all, they do not come from God, although He does allow them. [James 1:13](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%201.13) says, “For God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.” In the first chapter [of Job](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), we see that God allowed Satan to tempt [Job](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), but with restrictions. Satan is roaming on the earth like a lion, seeking people to devour ([1 Peter 5:8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Peter%205.8)). Verse 9 tells us to resist him, knowing that other Christians are also experiencing his attacks. By these passages we can know that temptations come from Satan. We see in [James 1:14](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%201.14) that temptation originates in us as well. We are tempted when we are “carried away and enticed by our own lust” (verse 14). We allow ourselves to think certain thoughts, allow ourselves to go places we should not go, and make decisions based on our lusts that lead us into the temptation.

How then do we resist the temptations? First of all, we must return to the example of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness by Satan in [Matthew 4:1-11](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%204.1-11). Each of Satan’s temptations was met with the same answer: “It is written,” followed by Scripture. If the Son of God used the Word of God to effectively end the temptations—which we know works because after three failed efforts, “the Devil left him” (v. 11)—how much more do we need to use it to resist our own temptations? All our efforts to resist will be weak and ineffective unless they are powered by the Holy Spirit through the constant reading, studying, and meditating on the Word. In this way, we will be “transformed by the renewing of your mind” ([Romans 12:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Romans%2012.2)). There is no other weapon against temptation except the “sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” ([Ephesians 6:17](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%206.17)). [Colossians 3:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Colossians%203.2) says, “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.” If our minds are filled with the latest TV shows, music and all the rest the culture has to offer, we will be bombarded with messages and images that inevitably lead to sinful lusts. But if our minds are filled with the majesty and holiness of God, the love and compassion of Christ, and the brilliance of both reflected in His perfect Word, we will find that our interest in the lusts of the world diminish and disappear. But without the Word’s influence on our minds, we are open to anything Satan wants to throw at us.

We need to renew our thinking as we are told in [Romans 12:1-2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Romans%2012.1-2). We must no longer think as the world thinks, or walk in the same way that the world walks. [Proverbs 4:14-15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%204.14-15) tells us, “Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not proceed in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not pass by; Turn away from it and pass on.” We need to avoid the path of the world that leads us into temptation because our flesh is weak. We are easily carried away by our own lusts.

[Matthew 5:29](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%205.29) has some excellent advice. “If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw if from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.” That sounds severe! Sin is severe! Jesus is not saying that we literally need to remove body parts. Cutting out the eye is a drastic measure, and Jesus is teaching us that if necessary, a drastic measure should be taken to avoid sin. In other words we must avoid all forms of sin because sin is very deceitful and will destroy our relationship with the Lord Jesus and will eventually robs us of eternal life. Hebrews 3:11-13 So I declared on oath in my anger,
‘They shall never enter my rest. See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. 

**We believe in Church Discipline:** Church discipline is the biblical process of confrontation and correction carried out by individual Christians, church leaders, or the entire church body when a member of Christ's body is involved in a matter of open sin. Church discipline is meant specifically for believers involved in open sin. Scripture gives particular emphasis to Christians engaged in matters of [sexual immorality](http://christianity.about.com/od/Bible-Verses/a/Sexual-Sin.htm), those creating discord or strife between members of the body of Christ, those spreading false teachings, and believers in outspoken rebellion to the spiritual authorities appointed by God in the church. God desires his people to be pure. He calls us to live holy lives, set apart for his glory. 1 Peter 1:16 restates Leviticus 11:44: "Be holy, because I am holy." If we ignore blatant [sinfulness](http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/f/whatissin.htm) within the body of Christ, then we fail to honor the Lord's call to be holy and live for his glory.

We know from Hebrews 12:6 that the Lord disciplines his children: "For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." In 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, we see that he passes this responsibility on to the church family: "It isn’t my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, 'You must remove the evil person from among you.' " Another vital reason for church discipline is to maintain the testimony of the church to the world. Unbelievers are watching our lives. We are to be a light in a dark world, a city set on a hill. If the church looks no different than the world, then it loses its witness.

While church discipline is never easy or desirable—what parent enjoys disciplining a child?—it is necessary for the church to fulfill its God-intended purpose on this earth. The goal of church discipline is not to punish a failing brother or sister in Christ. On the contrary, the purpose is to bring the person to a point of godly sorrow and [repentance](http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/a/Repentance.htm), so that he or she turns away from sin and experiences a fully restored [relationship with God](http://christianity.about.com/od/topicaldevotions/a/relationshipwithjesus.htm) and other believers. Individually, the intent is [healing](http://christianity.about.com/od/prayersverses/a/Healing-Bible-Verses.htm) and restoration, but corporately the purpose is to build up, or edify and strengthen the entire body of Christ. [Matthew 18:15-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2018:15-17&version=NLT) clearly and specifically sets forth the practical [steps](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) for confronting and correcting a wayward believer.

First, one believer (usually the offended person) will meet individually with the other believer to point out the offense. If the brother or sister listens and confesses, the matter is resolved. 

Second, if the one-on-one meeting is unsuccessful, the offended person will attempt [to meet](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) with the believer again, taking with him one or two other members of the church. This allows the confrontation of sin and resulting correction to be confirmed by two or three witnesses.

Third, if the person still refuses to listen and change his behavior, the matter is to be taken before the entire congregation. The whole church body will publicly confront the believer and encourage him to repent.

 Lastly, if all attempts to discipline the believer fail to bring change and repentance, the person will be removed from the fellowship of the church. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 5:5 that this final step in church discipline is a way of handing the unrepentant brother "over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord." So, in extreme cases, it is sometimes necessary for God to use the devil to work in a sinner's life to bring him to repentance. [Galatians](http://christianity.about.com/od/newtestamentbooks/a/Galatians.htm) 6:1 describes the correct attitude of believers when exercising church discipline: "Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself."

Gentleness, humility, and love will guide the attitude of those who wish to restore a fallen brother or sister. Spiritual maturity and submission to the Holy Spirit's leading are needed too.

Church discipline should never be entered into lightly or for minor offenses. It is a very serious matter calling for extreme care, godly character, and a true desire to see a sinner restored and the purity of the church maintained. 

When the process of church discipline brings about the desired result—repentance—then the church must extend love, comfort, [forgiveness](http://christianity.about.com/od/faqhelpdesk/a/What-Is-Forgiveness.htm) and restoration to the individual. **Bible References for Church Discipline** [Matthew 18:15-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2018:15-17&version=NLT)Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-8; 2 Thessalonians 3:3-7; Titus 3:10; Hebrews 12:11; 13:17; James 5:19-20.

 **We Believe in modest dress for Christians**

In describing the mode of dress appropriate for women in church, the apostle Paul exhorts them to dress “modestly” with “decency and propriety” then goes on to contrast immodest dress with the good deeds which are appropriate for those who profess to be true worshipers of God ([1 Timothy 2:9-10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Timothy%202.9-10)). Modesty in the way we dress is not just for church; it is to be the standard for all Christians at all times. The key to understanding what constitutes modesty in dress is to examine the attitudes and intents of the heart. Those whose hearts are inclined toward God will make every effort to dress modestly, decently, and appropriately. Those whose hearts are inclined toward self will dress in a manner designed to draw attention to themselves with little or no regard for the consequences to themselves or others.



A godly woman endeavors to do everything with a “God-ward” perspective. She knows that God wants His people to be concerned for His glory and the spiritual state of their brothers and sisters in Christ. If a woman professes to be a Christian yet she [dresses](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) in a way that will unduly draw attention to her body, she is a poor witness of the One who bought her soul by dying for her on the cross. She is forgetting that her body has been redeemed by Christ and is now the temple of the Holy Spirit ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Corinthians%206.19-20)). She is telling the world that she sees her own worth as purely physical and that her attractiveness to others depends on how much of her body she reveals to them. Further, by dressing in an immodest fashion, displaying her body for [men](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) to lust after, she causes her brothers in Christ to sin, something condemned by God ([Matthew 5:27-29](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%205.27-29)). [Proverbs 7:10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%207.10) mentions a woman “dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent.” Here we see the description of one whose heart condition is displayed by her manner of dress.

The Scripture says that a woman is to dress modestly, but what exactly does that mean in modern society? Does a woman have to be covered from head to toe? There are cults and religions in the world that demand this of women. But is that the biblical meaning of modesty? Again, we have to go back to the matter of the attitudes of the heart. If a woman’s heart is inclined toward godliness, she will wear clothing that is neither provocative nor revealing in public, clothing that does not reflect negatively upon her personal testimony as a child of God. Even when everyone else in her circle is dressing immodestly, she resists the temptation to go along with the crowd. She knows these types of [clothes](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) are designed to draw attention to her body and cause men to lust, but she is wise enough to know that type of attention only cheapens her. The idea of causing men to sin against God because of her dress is abhorrent to her because she seeks to love and honor God and wants others to do the same. Modesty in dress reveals a modesty and godliness of the heart, attitudes that should be the desire of all women who live to please and honor God.

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Philippians 1:9-10 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ. The Bible does not contain a formal dress code such as, "The hem of the woman's skirt will rise no higher than 3 inches below the knee...", etc. Instead, God gives us **principles** which we are to use to make our own judgments on what to wear, what not to wear, how to wear, etc. If we know these principles, we can use them in regard to any article of clothing, and, with confidence, be able to "test what is best"--to make mature decisions about what clothing will or will not be pleasing to God. Now, why is it so important to want to please God, even in an area of our living such as the [clothes](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) we wear? 2 Corinthians 5:15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. We live to please **God**, not ourselves; pleasing **God** should be our number one desire, and this includes pleasing Him with proper clothing.

We know that God sees nakedness as immodest--when Adam and Eve sinned in Gen. 3, God clothed them with animal skins because He was not satisfied with the clothing they had made to cover their nakedness. And here it's important to remind ourselves of this principle: the purpose of clothing is to **conceal, not reveal--**conceal **nakedness.** This is why short dresses, short skirts, "peek-a-boo" slits in skirts, spaghetti tops or shorts that are revealing to much and 

 etc., are sinful--and men do not wear shorts that are revealing, skimpy tops, or go bare-chested in public as some people do--this is nakedness and it is shameful. I hope that in this immoral age we live in. That our people do not become so accustomed to the nakedness around them that they lose their own sense of modesty.

**We believe as Christians that we are to help the poor and needy.** In both the Old and New Testaments, we see God’s desire for His children to show compassion to the poor and needy. Jesus said that the poor would always be with us ([Matthew 26:11](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2026.11); [Mark 14:7](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark%2014.7)). He also said that those who show mercy to the poor, the sick and the needy are in effect ministering to Him personally ([Matthew 25:35-40](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2025.35-40)) and will be rewarded accordingly.

There is no doubt that poverty’s reach is both widespread and devastating today. God’s people cannot be indifferent toward those in need, because His expectations for us in regard to taking care of His poor are woven throughout the entirety of Scripture. For example, look at the Lord’s words about the goodness of King Josiah in [Jeremiah 22:16](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jeremiah%2022.16) “He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me, declares the LORD?” And Moses instructed his people how to treat the poor and needy: “Give generously to [them] and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your [work](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) and in everything you put your hand to” ([Deuteronomy 15:10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Deuteronomy%2015.10)).This sentiment is perfectly captured in [Proverbs 14:31](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2014.31): “whoever is kind to the needy honors God.”



Conversely, there is another part to this verse: “He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker.” Proverbs is in fact filled with Scripture clearly showing that God loves the poor and is offended when His children neglect them ([Proverbs 11:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2011.4),[17:5](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2017.5), [19:17](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2019.17), [22:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2022.2), [9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2022.9), [16](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2022.16), [22-23](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2022.22-23), [28:8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2028.8), [29:7](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2029.7), [31:8-9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2031.8-9)). The consequences for ignoring the unfortunate condition of the poor are also made clear in Proverbs: “If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered” ([Proverbs 21:13](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2021.13)). And note the strong language in [Proverbs 28:27](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Proverbs%2028.27) “he who closes his eyes to [the poor] receives many curses.” Among the many sins of Sodom described in [Genesis 19](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Genesis%2019), her people were “arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy” ([Ezekiel 16:49](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ezekiel%2016.49)).

The New Testament is equally clear as to how we are to take care of the poor. One verse that nicely summarizes our expected selflessness is found in the first epistle of John:

 “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear [children](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) let us not love with words or tongue but with action and in truth” ([1 John 3:17-18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%203.17-18)). Equally important is [Matthew 25:31-46](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2025.31-46). Now, this judgment precedes Christ’s millennial reign and is often referred to as the “judgment of nations,” in which those assembled before Christ will be divided into two groups—the sheep on His right side and the goats on His left. Those on the left will be sent to the “eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (v. 41), whereas those on the right will receive their eternal inheritance (v.34). Noteworthy, however, is the language Christ used in addressing these separated groups. The sheep were basically commended for taking care of the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, and the weak. The goats, on the other hand, were punished for their lack of concern and action toward them. When the righteous asked Him when they did these things, Christ responded by saying “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”



Now, we are not to misinterpret this as meaning the good works of the sheep factored into their gaining salvation; rather, these good works were the “fruit” or evidence of their having been saved by grace ([Ephesians 2:8-10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%202.8-10)), further evidencing that a commitment to Christ will indeed be accompanied with undeniable evidence of a transformed life. Remember, we were created to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do, and the “good works” Christ spoke of in [Matthew 25](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2025) included taking care of the poor and suffering.

Now, with all of these scriptural truths in mind, we are to obey them and act on them, because “faith without works is dead” ([James 2:26](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%202.26)). As James stated “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” ([James 1:22](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%201.22)). Similarly, John said “The man who says, ‘I know Him,’ but does not do what He commands is a liar and the truth is not in him…Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did” ([1 John 2:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%202.4),[6](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%202.6)). And the words of Christ Himself: “If you love me, you will obey what I command” ([John 14:15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2014.15)).

Jesus commanded us to love one another ([John 13:34-35](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2013.34-35)). And what better way to demonstrate the love and kindness and compassion of Jesus Christ than by reaching out to the “least of these” among us! 

**Understanding the True Church on Earth** - which denomination of Christianity – is the “true church”? Which church is the one that God loves and cherishes and died for? Which church is His bride? The answer is that no visible church or denomination is the true church, because the [bride of Christ](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5Cbride-of-Christ.html) is not an institution, but is instead a spiritual entity made up of those who have by grace, through faith been brought into a close, [intimate relationship](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) with the Lord Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 2:8-9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%202.8-9)). Those people, no matter which building, denomination, or country they happen to be in, constitute the true church.

In the Bible, we see that the local (or visible) church is nothing more than a gathering of professing believers. In Paul’s letters, the word “church” is used in two different ways.

 There are many examples of the word “church” being used to simply refer to a group of professing believers who meet together on a regular basis ([1Corinthians 16:9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1Corinthians%2016.9); [2 Corinthians 8:1](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Corinthians%208.1), [11:28](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Corinthians%2011.28)). We see Paul’s concern, in his letters, for the individual churches in various cities along his missionary journey. But he also refers to a church that is invisible—a spiritual entity that has close fellowship with Christ, as close as a bride to her husband ([Ephesians 5:25](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%205.25), [32](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%205.32)), and of which He is the spiritual head ([Colossians 1:18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Colossians%201.18); [Ephesians 3:21](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%203.21)). This church is made up of an unnamed, unspecified group of individuals ([Philippians 3:6](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Philippians%203.6); [1Timothy 3:5](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1Timothy%203.5)) that have Christ in common. 

The word “church”, comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* meaning "a calling out." The word describes a group of people who have been called out of the world and set apart for the Lord, and it is always used, in its singular [form](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), to describe a universal group of people who know Christ. The word *ekklesia*, when pluralized, is used to describe groups of believers who meet together. Interestingly enough, the word “church” is never used in the Bible to describe a building or organization.

It is easy to get ensnared by the idea that a particular denomination within Christianity is “the true church,” but this view is a misunderstanding of Scripture. When choosing a church to attend, it is important to remember that a gathering of believers should be a place where those who belong to the true church (the spiritual entity) feel at home. That is to say, a good local church will uphold the Word of God, honoring it and preaching faithfully, the gospel will be proclaimed steadfastly, and the sheep will be fed and tended and cared for by godly leaders. A church that teaches heresy or engages in sin will eventually come under Judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 2:18-28). Those people that belong to the true church—the sheep will hear the voice of the Shepherd and follow Him ([John 10:27](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2010.27)).

Members of the true church always enjoy agreement in and fellowship around [Jesus Christ](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), as He is plainly revealed in His Word. This is what is referred to as Christian unity. Another common mistake is to believe that Christian unity is just a matter of agreeing with one another. Rather than speaking the truth in love and spurring one another on to unity in Christ, this encourages believers to refrain from speaking difficult truths. It sacrifices true understanding of God in favor of a false unity based on disingenuous love that is nothing more than selfish tolerance of sin in oneself and others. 

The true church is the bride of Christ ([Revelation 21:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2021.2), [9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2021.9), [22:17](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Revelation%2022.17)) and the body of Christ ([Ephesians 4:12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ephesians%204.12); [1 Corinthians 12:27](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Corinthians%2012.27)). It cannot be contained, walled in, or defined by anything other than its love for Christ and its dedication to Him. May we at Mount Zion Ministries follow what a true church really looks like.

**Understanding the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit or the unpardonable sin:** The case of the “unpardonable sin/unforgivable sin” or “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit” is mentioned in [Mark 3:22-30](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark%203.22-30) and [Matthew 12:22-32](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2012.22-32). The term “blasphemy” may be generally defined as “disodedient.” We would [apply](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) the term to such sins as cursing God or willfully degrading things relating to Him. It is also attributing some evil to God, or denying Him some good that we should attribute to Him. This case of blasphemy, however, is a specific one called “the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit” in [Matthew 12:31](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2012.31). In this passage, the Pharisees, having witnessed irrefutable proof that Jesus was working miracles in the power of the Holy Spirit, claimed instead that He was possessed by the demon Beelzebub ([Matthew 12:24](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2012.24)). In [Mark 3:30](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark%203.30), Jesus is very specific about what exactly they did to commit “the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.”

This blasphemy then has to do with accusing [Jesus Christ](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) (in person, on earth) of being demon-possessed. There are other ways to blaspheme the Holy Spirit (such as lying to Him, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira in [Acts 5:1-10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%205.1-10)), but the accusation against Jesus was the blasphemy that was unpardonable. This specific unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit cannot be duplicated today. 

The only unpardonable sin today is that of continued unbelief. There is no pardon for a person who dies in unbelief. [John 3:16](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%203.16) tells us, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” The only condition in which someone would have no forgiveness is if he/she is not among the “whoever” that believes in Him. Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” ([John 14:6](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2014.6)). To reject the only means of salvation is to condemn oneself to an eternity in hell because to reject the only pardon is, obviously, unpardonable.

Many people fear they have committed some sin that God cannot or will not forgive, and they feel there is no hope for them, no matter what they do. Satan would like nothing better than to keep us laboring under this misconception. The truth is that if a person has this fear, he/she needs only to come before God, confess that sin, repent of it, and accept God’s promise of forgiveness. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” ([1 John 1:9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%201.9)). This verse assures us that God is ready to forgive any sin—no matter how heinous—if we come to Him in repentance. If you are suffering under a load of guilt today, God is waiting with His arms open in love and compassion for you to come to Him. He will never disappoint or fail to pardon those who do.



**We believe in fasting and Prayer:** In the Old Testament, God commanded Israel to observe several set times of fasting. For New Testament believers, fasting was neither commanded nor forbidden in the Bible. While early Christians were not required to fast, many practiced [prayer](http://christianity.about.com/od/prayersverses/a/basicstoprayer.htm) and fasting regularly. Jesus himself affirmed in Luke 5:35 that after his death fasting would be appropriate for his followers. Spiritual fasting clearly has a place and a purpose for God's people today. The book of Acts records believers fasting before they made important decisions ([Acts 13:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2013.2); [14:23](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2014.23)). Fasting and [prayer](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) are often linked together ([Luke 2:37](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%202.37); [5:33](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%205.33)). Too often, the focus of fasting is on the lack of food. Instead, the purpose of fasting should be to take your eyes off the things of this world to focus completely on God. Fasting is a way to demonstrate to God, and to ourselves, that we are serious about our relationship with Him. Fasting helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God.

Although fasting in Scripture is almost always a fasting from food, there are other ways to fast. Anything given up temporarily in order to focus all our attention on God can be considered a fast ([1 Corinthians 7:1-5](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Corinthians%207.1-5)). Fasting should be limited to a set time, especially when fasting from food. Extended periods of time without eating can be harmful to the body. Fasting is not intended to punish the flesh, but to redirect attention to God. Fasting should not be considered a “dieting method” either. The purpose of a biblical fast is not to [lose weight](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), but rather to gain deeper fellowship with God. Anyone can fast, but some may not be able to fast from food ([diabetics](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), for example). Everyone can temporarily give up something in order to draw closer to God.

**The Purpose of Spiritual Fasting**

While many people fast to [lose weight](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C), dieting is not the purpose of a spiritual fast. Instead, fasting provides unique spiritual benefits in the life of the believer.

Fasting requires self-control and discipline as one denies the natural desires of the flesh. During spiritual fasting, the believer's focus is removed from the physical things of this world and intensely concentrated on God. Put differently, fasting directs our hunger toward God. It clears the mind and body of earthly attentions and draws us close to God. So, as we gain spiritual clarity of thought while fasting, it allows us to [hear God](http://christianity.about.com/od/womensresources/a/hearingfromgod.htm) more clearly. Fasting also demonstrates a profound need for God's help and guidance through [complete](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) dependence upon him.

By taking our eyes off the things of this world, we can more successfully turn our attention to Christ. Fasting is not a way to get God to do what we want. Fasting changes us, not God. Fasting is not a way to appear more spiritual than others. Fasting is to be done in a spirit of humility and a joyful attitude. [Matthew 6:16-18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%206.16-18) declares, “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” We know from this verse that God's purpose for fasting is not for us to lord it over others or prove how much we are willing to suffer for God, but simply to grow nearer to Him and experience the peace and joy that is our reward.



**How often can I fast?**

New Testament Christians practiced prayer and fasting regularly. Since there is no biblical command to fast, believers should be led by God through prayer concerning when and how often to fast. Even though the Christian is not commanded to fast. Christian should realize that He or She cannot attain intimate relationship without Fasting and Prayer, because through prayer and fasting are we brought to point where we see in this life that not only are physical needs important but also the spiritual needs are important and through fasting and prayer are we able to overcome the attack of the enemy and greatest victory are won over the enemy which is the devil. It become our choice do we want more of God! Do we want more of Jesus! Do we want more of the Holy Spirit! Do we want Jesus Christ to be Lord over our lives, over our family, over our church, over our nation. If we want Jesus Christ to be Glorified to live and reign over us than do not neglect Fasting and prayer so if this your desire than Fasting and Prayer will become apart of your Christian Life. We must remember fasting without prayer has little affect on our outcome of our circumstance. The word of God say in James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. **The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.**

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**Some Examples of Fasting in the Bible**

**Old Testament**

Moses fasted 40 days on behalf of Israel’s sin: Deuteronomy 9:9, 18, 25-29; 10:10.

David fasted and mourned the death of [Saul](http://christianity.about.com/od/oldtestamentpeople/a/King-Saul.htm): 2 Samuel 1:12.

David fasted and mourned the death of Abner: 2 Samuel 3:35.

David fasted and mourned the death of his child: 2 Samuel 12:16.

[Elijah](http://christianity.about.com/od/oldtestamentpeople/a/JZ-Prophet-Elijah.htm) fasted 40 days after fleeing from [Jezebel](http://christianity.about.com/od/oldtestamentpeople/a/JZ-Jezebel.htm): 1 Kings 19:7-18.

Ahab fasted and humbled himself before God: 1 Kings 21:27-29.

Darius fasted in concern for Daniel: Daniel 6:18-24.

Daniel fasted on behalf of Judah's sin while reading Jeremiah’s prophecy: Daniel 9:1-19.

Daniel fasted regarding a mysterious vision from God: Daniel 10:3-13.

[Esther](http://christianity.about.com/od/oldtestamentbooks/a/Book-Of-Esther.htm) fasted on behalf of her people: Esther 4:13-16.

Ezra fasted and wept for the sins of the returning remnant: Ezra 10:6-17.

 Nehemiah fasted and mourned over the broken walls of Jerusalem: Nehemiah 1:4-2:10.

The people of Nineveh fasted after hearing the message of Jonah: [Jonah](http://christianity.about.com/od/oldtestamentbooks/a/Book-Of-Jonah.htm) 3.

**New Testament**

Anna fasted for the [redemption](http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/a/Redemption.htm) of Jerusalem through the coming Messiah: Luke 2:37.

Jesus fasted 40 days before his temptation and the beginning of his ministry: Matthew 4:1-11.

The disciples of John the Baptist fasted: Matthew 9:14-15.

The elders in Antioch fasted before sending off Paul and Barnabas: Acts 13:1-5.

Cornelius fasted and sought God’s plan of salvation: Acts 10:30.

Paul fasted three day fast after his [Damascus Road encounter](http://christianity.about.com/od/biblestorysummaries/a/Conversion-Of-Paul.htm): Acts 9:9. Paul fasted 14 days while at sea on a sinking ship: Acts 27:33-34.

 **Baptism of the Holy Spirit:** Mark 1:8, I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that the early church was so accustomed to, that it was fit to tell everybody [to pray](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20)! When the early church found believers who hadn't yet received the gift of the Holy Spirit, they made it a priority to get them baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17, When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The early church was full of healings, deliverances, people being raised from the dead, even people being transported from one location to another (Acts 8:39-40)! Many of us wonder why today's churches are so dry and lifeless... many of them lack POWER... the power that we receive when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit!! This baptism is SO important, Jesus waited His entire lifetime to receive the Holy Spirit before He entered the ministry! And He told His disciples to wait until they received it too before entering their ministries: Luke 24:49, I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” I believe it's pretty clear that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is essential to receiving the other gifts of the Spirit. How many people do you know who don't pray in tongues, yet are manifesting the gifts of the Spirit such as prophecy, interpretation of tongues, gifts of healing, etc.?

we believe in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the utterance of speaking in tongues. This baptism is important as it is foundational and brings the Believer to more intimate and empowers the believer for the work that Lord has called him or her to do. Acts 1:8 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

An important place in Scripture we find the mentioning of the Holy Spirit being given, comes from our Lord Jesus' teachings in ***Luke 11:9-13*.** He is teaching on prayer. Jesus gives the model prayer, then gives an example of an intercessory prayer and why it is answered. Then our Lord explains more, “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

11 “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Here, He brings into being that when the Father's children ask for the Holy Spirit, they will be given Him or Her. To understand Scripture, one must understand that Jesus is the very Word of God. God, our Father, does not speak the way we speak. His Word is the very life of the Word spoken, forming into being the very understanding of the definition of the Word given. You have to understand that when Jesus speaks, He speaks in this manner!

(As a note, a great hindrance to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit is unforgiveness. One MUST forgive, to receive Him.)

John 6:63The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.

Only to the Believer, does the Scripture reveals spirit and life, for only to the heirs of salvation does the Holy Spirit speak. In ***I Corinthians 2:12-16*** , the Spirit of the Lord inspired Paul the Apostle to write:

12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. 14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15 The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16 for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ. Another place our Lord Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit is found in ***John 7:37-39.*** Here, He speaks of the Holy Spirit as "living water".

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. Here, we see very clearly that the Holy Spirit is "indwelling" in a Believer. For the "living water will flow from within him."

Finally, the Lord Jesus spoke these words to His disciples in ***Acts 1:7-8:*** "He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Very plainly stated by our Lord is that the Believer will receive power when they receive the Holy Spirit.

The demonstration of this is shown in ***Acts 2:1-4:*** When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. In the times before our Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit was given only to certain men and women to fulfill certain purposes of God. This is termed as the "former rain". ***In Joel 2:28*** , we see the outpouring of the "latter rain", upon all the Believers who ask for the Holy Spirit. It does not mean all flesh, everyone regardless whether they are born again or not. The Lord always speaks of ONLY the children of God. "All flesh" means all those Believers all over the world who are born again. In ***Acts 4:31*** , it is recorded: After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. 

In ***Acts 9:17*** , it is recorded: Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” And in ***Acts 19:6*,** it is recorded: When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. The Acts is the first recordings of the Church in action. Here we see the Holy Spirit given upon the Believers in various ways and under various conditions. Why? Well, now let us look into Scripture to see what the Spirit has to say.

The sign of the Holy Spirit upon someone is the "tongues", unknown language as some Bibles call it. There are two mentioning of tongues. One, in the place of assembly, or in a gathering, to be interpreted for all to hear the Word of the Lord. Two, the Believer's personal prayer language to God, understandable ONLY to God. It is this latter tongue of which we speak. ***I Corinthians 14:2,4,14,15,*** it is recorded: 2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. 4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding. These Scripture points clearly that there is a real purpose of having the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the utterance of speaking in tongues.



We find recorded in ***Romans 8:26-27*** an insight into the supernatural: 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. It is recorded in ***Jude 20*** these very important words: 20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit. This statement opens the way into the supernatural. It speaks of something greater than something of man. Our faith is called "holy", (something separated unto God). We are called to build ourselves up, separating ourselves unto God. And to speak to God in the Holy Spirit. Why does the Holy Spirit inspire the writer to say such a thing? Our minds are unable to fathom such understanding. It requires the Spirit's revelation to comprehend such a statement.

We are going to open the door to your understanding into this matter, and it is going to change you forever. We are going into the battle ground of the supernatural, into the spiritual realms to see why it is so important for each of us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and speak in these "tongues", our prayer language.

First, into ***Ephesians 3:10*** we enter boldly: 10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. Look at ***Ephesians 6:10*** *:* 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. The Lord spoke in ***Acts 1:7-8*,** that we would receive power from on high when the Holy Spirit comes on us. This is the power Ephesians speaks. The utterance in tongues is a sign unto the heavens, of those who receive the gift of the Holy Spirit! It tells the rulers and authorities that the Believer has been given the "mighty power of God"! Why is this so? For what reason is this so? ***Ephesians 6:12*** tells us: 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Now, do you see? We live our lives for another purpose entirely, than for this world. This world is only an instrument, a place of training, to prepare us for our spiritual lives when we leave these vessels. We are to fight the good fight of faith, reach the high calling, the mark we are to obtain, then join our Lord at his side to rule and reign with Him! A child cannot fight, only one trained is able to obtain maturity in the use of weapons.



***Ephesians 6:17-18*** concludes: 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. When we speak in "tongues", the Spirit speaks. It builds our faith. We speak unto our Father the right request. We stand against the forces of evil in our prayers in "tongues". We speak supernatural! We become a supernatural people, taking on the very nature of Christ and we begin fulfilling ***John 14:12:*** 12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. We are to receive the Power of our Father, the gift of the Holy Spirit. We are to speak in tongues and build our holy faith. Tearing down strongholds and destroying the works of the devil is our supernatural calling in this life. We are to set the captives free; loose the chains of darkness that binds; heal the sick; free the oppressed, and overcoming all the power of the enemy. It is only in building up holy faith can this be possible, for our minds are transformed to the mind of Christ. And then, with this built up faith, we can speak to the forces of this world and the forces of the heavenlies! Our Father has given us a good purpose, to become the very enemy of the very nature that born us! Become born again of the Spirit. Become filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking in other tongues unto our Father, God. Having the Power of God to overcome the forces of darkness that tries to hinder our walk with the Lord, and our brother's and sisters walks with the Lord.



We have a grand task, to have a part to [play](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) in the Body of Christ, to destroy the works of the devil in people's lives! We are called to be supernatural witnesses of God's great LOVE for everyone, that all are able to enter into the Kingdom of God if they will only believe! We are to show such love that everyone will see the Father's desire that none would perish, but all have the free gift of everlasting life with the Father God!

And with the Power of the Holy Spirit being present in our lives, we go and stand against the forces of evil, against the rulers, against the authorities, against the principalities and against the wickedness in the heavenly realms, destroying their works and setting the people free from their controls and influences.

Our battle ground is not against the people. It lies in our "prayer closet"! This is where the battle takes place. It is not like the battles fought in this world. It takes place in secret places, where the people do not see or hear what is taking place. They are only changed in their ways and thoughts, not understanding why they have changed. The highest [form](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbeck6312%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5C%20%5C) of prayer is praying in the Spirit. The highest form of praise and worship is praising and worshiping in the Spirit. This form of prayer and praise brings the Believer into the "inner circle". For the Believer has a closer walk with the Lord, and can hear the voice of the Spirit of the Lord much clearer than before. So, the Believer is able to follow instructions in the war zone, or battlefield, where there is sometimes great confusion and distraction.

In the battle lines, the Believer needs to hear the instructions of the Lord clearly, so as to know what to pray for and when to pray for it.

We know we are our brother's keeper, helping each other reach their high calling, keeping them from falling in their struggles. It is only in the spirit realm does this take place. We have to be sensitive to the Spirit speaking to us concerning not only ourselves, but one another as well. The Believer's walk is a very serious walk with the Lord. And it is only by the Power of God, the Holy Spirit, can the Believer walk that pathway that leads to that narrow door of eternal life, bringing as many with them as will follow. It is through many hours of praying in the spirit can the Believer obtain the measure of faith to perform the work of the Lord! And, remember, the work of the Lord is destroying the work of the devil. The Believer's task from the beginning is against the devil. When the Believer becomes "born again", the forces of darkness sees and watches with caution. Then, when they see the Believer enters into the spiritual realm without the power of God, they rest and do not concern themselves with that person. But, when they see one seeks the gifts of God, and receives the "Power from on High", they tremble and shudder for they know this person is able to stand against, and destroy their works!

Receiving the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, is quite different than the normal "non-spirit filled Christian". The Believer who is baptized in the Holy Spirit is a person the powers of darkness has to contend with and lose! It is for this reason that the powers of darkness has entered many churches to discourage the gifts and the receiving of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is these Believers that have the Power of God to destroy the works of darkness, to heal the sick, to cast out the devils, and to raise the dead!

**Is tongues the initial sign of a person receiving the Holy Ghost?**

Acts 2:4, 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 10:44-46, While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Acts 19:6, When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all.

Some will argue that, not every time someone in the Bible was baptized in the Holy Spirit, they are said to have spoken in tongues. One of the stories where somebody received the Holy Spirit, but it didn't necessarily say that they spoke in tongues is when Paul himself received the Holy Spirit. Later on though, it is obvious that he did speak in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:18). So even if the Bible doesn't say that they spoke in tongues, doesn't mean that they didn't. The Bible makes it clear that when somebody received the Holy Spirit, that the sign was with speaking in tongues. How did the people know if somebody has received the Holy Spirit? In Acts 10:45-46, they knew the Holy Spirit had been received, because they spoke in tongues.

I believe that the personal prayer tongues is received as the first manifestation when a person receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I've never seen anybody manifesting any of the nine spiritual gifts without being able to pray in tongues. There are some people who believe that the proof of a person receiving the Holy Spirit is when they produce the fruit of the Spirit. However, the Bible says that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man (1 Corinthians 12:7), and you rarely see those people operating in ANY of the gifts (manifestations) of the Spirit that are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11.

It may be possible for somebody to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and not actually pray in tongues simply because they aren't using their new ability to pray in tongues. I believe that all those who are baptized have the ability to pray in tongues, but some people may not be using it.

Mark 16:17 says that those who believe will speak in tongues, "And these signs shall follow them that believe... they shall speak with new tongues..."

**How do you receive the Holy Spirit?**

**Repent and believe on Jesus for the remission of your sins:** Acts 2:38-39, Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

**Ask:** Luke 11:13, If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

**Believe:** Galatians 3:14, He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. Also, Acts 19:2-6 and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”3 So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?” “John’s baptism,” they replied. 4 Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied

Galatians 3:2-6 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? 4 Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? 5 So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? 6 So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

**Laying on of hands:** 1 Timothy 4:14,Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you and Acts 8:14-17 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

**Hearing the gospel:** Acts 10:44, While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

(Remember, faith comes by hearing, and hearing of the Word of God (Romans 10:17). When you believe, you can receive (Galatians 3:14)

**Act of God:** Acts 11:14-15 As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Not everyone receives the gift the same way. Some people don't even have to ask for it, and God comes down and blesses them with it. Others may receive it when another believer (who is Spirit-filled) lays hands on them. Others may ask for it and thereby receive it.

So let us believe and seek the Baptism on the Holy Spirit! Ask, and you shall receive! Seek, and you shall find! Knock, and it shall be opened unto you! Come, Believer, today is your day to receive the Power from on High. Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!