

Genesis 1 verse 1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1 verse 26

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

There are a number of basic things which these scriptures establish.

1. God created everything, when He said *Let us* it happened. We can see the Godhead at work right in this first chapter of Genesis. **Us** = The Godhead or the Trinity. The Godhead has always been in existence.

John 1 verse 1-2

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.

Genesis verse 24-31

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so. 25 God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. 26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

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27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; 30 and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so. 31 God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2. God had a plan and purpose in mind, that it is very clear in the above scripture that Adam and Eve were to procreate, to multiply and subdue the earth and rule it on His behalf. He walked in the garden to fellowship with Adam and Eve.

3. He made provision for His plan and purpose to be worked out.

4. He gave promises to His creation.

God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He does not change, it is still His intention that there will be a willing people with whom He can fellowship, a chosen, holy people.

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1 Peter 2 verse 9-10

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

There were also angels and cherubim serving God and amongst those was satan who became known as the fallen angel.

Isaiah 14 verse 12-17

"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! 13 But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' 15 Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit. 16 Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you, saying, 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, 17 Who made the world like a wilderness and overthrew its cities, who did not allow his prisoners to go home?'

He thought that he was equal with God and first showed his true self when he deceived Eve. From that day on sin was brought into being and was totally unacceptable to a Holy God. Mankind was now under the curse of God, He was angry with satan and Adam and Eve.

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Genesis 3 verse 13-24

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." **14** The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life; **15** and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." **16** To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." **17** Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. **18** "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; **19** By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." **20** Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. **21** The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. **22** Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" - **23** therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

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24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

God's anger consequently caused the natural birth that brings us all into this world, known as the Adamic birth which leads to death. To escape from death Jesus Christ the Son of God, came 2000 years ago to defeat satan and death that we might have everlasting life as God intended in the very beginning. This is the plan of **salvation** available to all who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. It is the salvation that is the very foundation of the Christian life, we become Christians not by going to church, but by being born again, yes born all over again by full immersion water baptism and in the Spirit of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

There are several important steps that have to be taken, these are the only steps that qualify you to become a member of the church of Jesus Christ.

1. Repentance From Dead Works and Faith Towards God.

2. Water Baptism.

3. Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Let us take these one at a time.

1. Repentance From Dead Works and Faith Towards God.

The word *repentance* does not simply mean saying *I am sorry*, but is an active step in the opposite direction in your life. Repentance comes by the grace of God, our response to His word into our hearts. There has to be real evidence of a changed life, from self government to Jesus being Lord of your life. Fruit of this needs to be seen as you really mean business with God.

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Matthew 3 verse 8-9

Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

Acts 2 verse 37-38

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter preached the word at Pentecost and the people were convicted in their hearts. Here are the three steps in one short sentence - Repent, Baptism and Holy Spirit. The people were laying down their old lives for a new one, with their faith towards God, not in themselves.

Mark 11 verse 21-23

Being reminded, Peter said to Him, "Rabbi, look, the fig tree which You cursed has withered." 22 And Jesus answered saying to them, "Have faith in God. 23 Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him.

Romans 5 verse 1-2

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

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2 Corinthians 5 verse 6-8

Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord - 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight - 8 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

Hebrews 11 verse 5-6

By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

2. Water Baptism.

Genesis 6 verse 17

Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish.

God had become angry with the people who continued to sin and he dealt with them by flooding the whole earth with water. He saved only Noah and his family along with the provision that He knew Noah would need. Water baptism is simply a burial service, my old self having died goes down into the watery grave and I rise up a new person, now baptised into the body of Jesus Christ. To be born again I had to die.

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Mark 16 verse 16

He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

John 1 verse 32-33

John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

John 3 verse 23-24

John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized - 24 for John had not yet been thrown into prison.

1 Peter 3 verse 18-22

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you - not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience - through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

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Romans 6 verse 1-11

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

3. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Matthew 3 verse 11-17

"As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." 13 Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him.

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14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" 15 But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him. 16 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.

Matthew 3 verse 11-17 above speaks of baptising in water for repentance and forgiveness of sins, but He who comes after me (referring to Jesus) will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Luke 3 verse 16-17

John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

We need not only to be saved from our old nature but to be equipped to serve the Lord. There are two purposes for us to receive the Holy Spirit.

1. The refining fire within us will change our character. We are to become more like Jesus and there is much work to be done in us.
2. To defeat the works of the enemy, to be as Jesus was in victory.

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1 John 3 verse 7-8

Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

The Holy Spirit brings the supernatural gifts and abilities to deal with all spiritual warfare that we will face. Our fight is is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers and we need to be equipped to do battle.

Ephesians 6 verse 12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

We shall look at the gifts later on, see 1 Corinthians 12 verses 4-14 in Part 3 of 3 page number 1 onwards.

Malachi 3 verse 1-4

"Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts. 2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. 3 He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness. 4 Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

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John 1 verse 12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Acts 11 verse 15-18

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. 16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" 18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

Acts 8 verse 14-17

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, 15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19 verse 6

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

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Ephesians 5 verse 17-21

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Ephesians 1 verse 13-14

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation - having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

Once these foundations are established in your life you are a member of the Body of Christ, there is no other way of becoming a Christian. Your next step is to know which Church Jesus wants you to be joined to. How will you know? There are two questions to ask yourself.

1. Where am I joined to in heart?
2. Where do I get my Spiritual food from?

God will show you where He wants you to be when you can answer these two questions, they will not be in more than one place although we may receive from other sources, our commitment would be as in our natural family, we may have parents and brothers and sisters under one roof, but also aunts and uncles.

END OF PART 1 OF 3, CONTINUED AT PART 2 OF 3

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