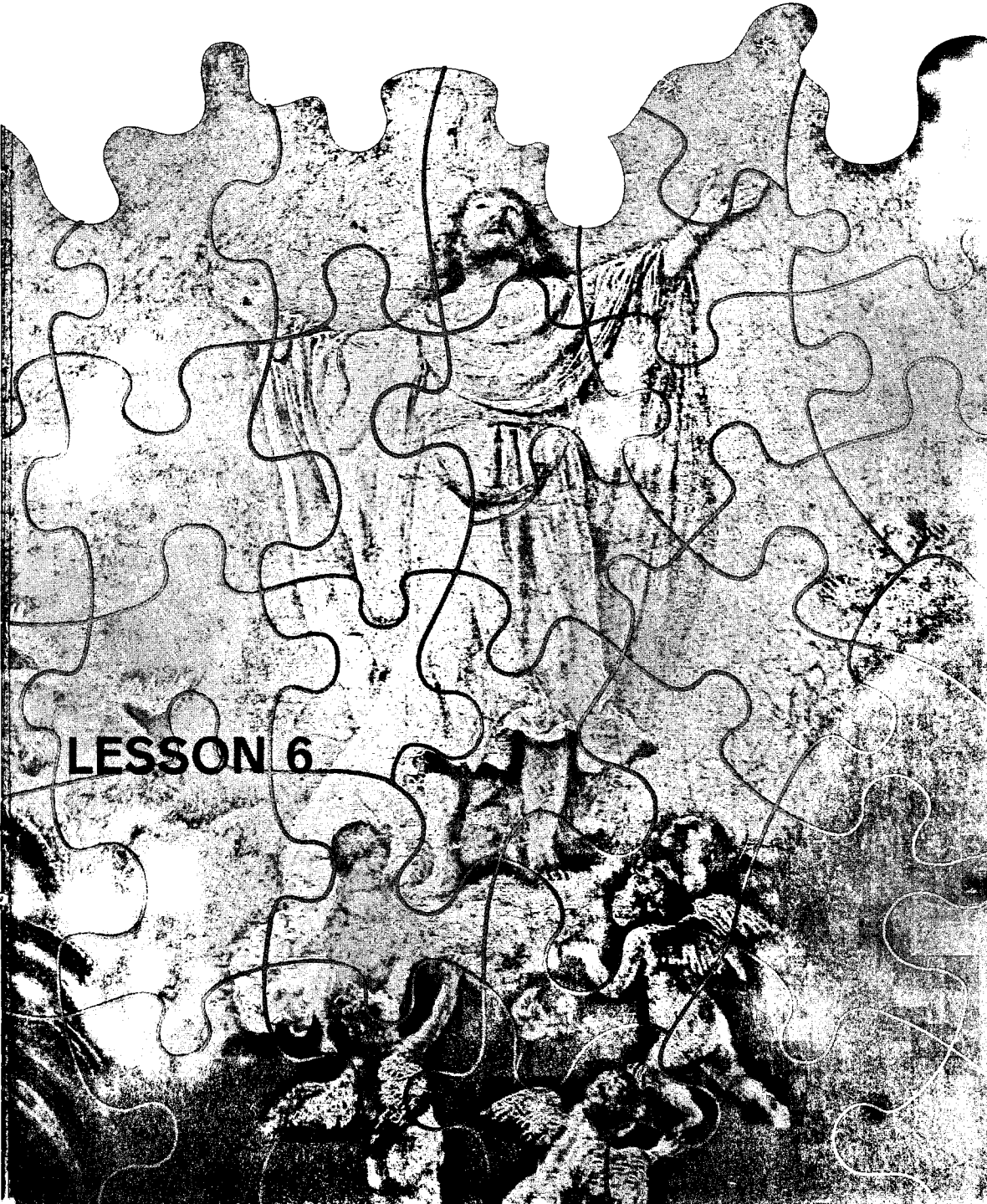


NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

CHRIST OUR MASTER

LESSON SIX

Christ our MASTER



LESSON 6

TOTAL COMMITMENT

When a Christian takes Jesus Christ as his master, his love is no longer divided; he is no longer torn in various directions at one time.

Jesus teaches, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other (Matthew 6:24-34).^{*} When one accepts Jesus Christ as his master he foregoes all other loyalties; his love is undivided. Paul's oneness of purpose is seen in his statement, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Galatians 2:20).

The Christian response to Christ as master is a response of love. As John says, "We love him, because he first loved us" (I John 4:7-21). God's love is a giving love, the kind of love He expects from us. Jesus did not propose that life in Him would be one of

^{*} Read the text of all scriptural references. All quotations in this lesson are taken from the King James Version. For those using other versions, the words may differ but the meanings are the same.

ease with no problems. In fact He stated, "... and he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:24-39).

The person in Christ has a cross to bear, but it is an easy cross because He bears it with us and because it leads to eternal life. The master said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:25-30). The person outside Christ also bears a cross. But he bears his cross alone and in the end it leads nowhere, or to death (Romans 6:16).

A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

When we take Christ as our master, we attempt to walk in His steps. Our life is to be a demonstration of His death and resurrection. Paul described our acceptance of Jesus Christ in this manner (Romans 6:1-11). As Christ died, so we die, our old sinful self is destroyed — the self mastered by its ambitions and passions. From the death of this old self we rise to walk a new life in Christ. According to Paul we are "... dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:11). Our life is now an open response to the will of God — we are productive workers in the kingdom of God as Jesus so often taught in his parables. Our work is a work of love in appreciation of Christ giving His life for us. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). But it is also a life of activity in anticipation of the greater hope which awaits, the assurance of which is the resurrection of Christ.

What does it mean for Christ to live in me? It means that life is a daily response of love to God and love to man. We no longer live for ourselves, but for God and others. Jesus was not willing to separate the love of God and the love of man. The first commandment was to love God, but He went on to the second, though it was not requested: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:36-40). In Christ our relation is not only with God, but with His other children or the church. As we work with our brothers in Christ, self-conceit and envy are gone, and we bear their burdens. We have the mind of Christ, who emptied Himself

and took the form of a servant (Philippians 1:27-2:18). So we empty ourselves of self-desire and live a life of service to others.

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

The Christian life is many things:

- It is a life begotten, nourished, and sustained by the Word of God (I Peter 1:23;2:2).
- It is a life of strength and optimism and abounding faith (Philippians 4:13).
- It is a life of soberness, righteousness, and godliness (Titus 2:12) — these characteristics bearing on one's conduct respecting himself, his fellowman, and God.
- It is a life of compassionate concern for the needs of others (James 1:26,27).
- It is a life devoted to good works (Ephesians 2:10).
- It is a life of deep spiritual worship (John 4:24).
- It is a life in which the Spirit of God dwells and produces the "fruit" of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Galatians 5:22,23).

As Christians we are to do good especially to fellow Christians, but also to all men as we have opportunity (Galatians 6:10). We do not fulfill our works of love by ourselves, but together with others who are in the Lord.

THE JOY OF SHARING

In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul uses the beautiful analogy of the human body to indicate how Christians should labor together in the body of Christ. Christians have one master or one head, Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-31). We are in one body, Christ's body, because of our one baptism. In His body, His church, we each have a function, a work to do, for as in the human body each member has its work so in like manner in the body of Christ. In this work we labor together preferring one another in honor, for we are not working to glorify ourselves, but to glorify Christ. The chief work of the body of Christ is to proclaim the good news

of Christ, and to instruct men how to live in the Lord's kingdom (I Corinthians 12:27-30). The work of the body of Christ is to announce to those in guilt and despair that there is a way out . . . that even though they are sinners, Christ died for them.

Because we have been forgiven and are now in fellowship with God we delight to tell others of this new life. The fellowship which John had with Christ was so meaningful that he had to tell others (I John 1:1-10). As a person relishes introducing two good friends, so John desired to introduce all those with whom he came in contact to Jesus Christ.

That is also our desire when we have accepted His love.

IF YOU DESIRE TO CONTINUE . . .

your study of the Word of God, we shall be happy to enroll you in other courses without cost. Indicate this on your review page in the appropriate space.

LESSON SIX: REVIEW

The questions below are based on the following passages in the Word of God: Matthew 6:24-43; Galatians 2:20; I John 4:7-21; Matthew 10:24-39; 11:25-30; Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 22:36-40; I Corinthians 12:12-31; I John 1:1-10. Read each passage carefully and thoroughly before completing the exercise. The questions are designed for brief answers — sometimes only one word, or a few words, or a sentence at the most.

1. How does Jesus describe his disciples who fret and worry?

2. What illustration does Jesus use to teach that God will provide his children with the means of daily sustenance?

3. What is promised to one who seeks first the kingdom of God?

4. In describing his total commitment, who did Paul claim to have living in him?

5. How was the love of God manifested toward us?

6. How should the love of God influence our feelings towards our neighbors?

7. Why should a man love God?

8. What is the supreme word given as the definition of God?

9. What will happen to those who deny Jesus?

10. What will happen to those who would rather please parents, relatives, or friends?

11. Must one bear a cross (or burden) to follow Jesus?

12. How can man find true rest for his soul?

13. What kind of life should one exhibit after rising from the watery grave of baptism?

14. How did Jesus rank the commandment to "love the Lord thy God"?

15. What physical description does Paul use to indicate how Christians should labor together and with Christ?

16. With whom do Christians have fellowship?

17. When does the behavior of Christians become a lie?

18. How is true spiritual fellowship achieved?

19. On what condition does God forgive the sins of Christians?

20. How is God made a liar?

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