

FAITH:

A

Call

to

Action

Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger, D.A.

Table of Contents

Forward		3
Chapter 1	Believers should provide for the needs	4
Chapter 2	Believers have direct access to God	10
Chapter 3	Believers need to be unified	12
Chapter 4	Importance of helping new believers	16
Chapter 5	Gifts that God gives to believers	24
Chapter 6	The oneness of all believers	33

Forward

At times believers are separated because of minor differences in doctrine. But Paul shows those areas where Christians must agree to attain true unity.

When believers have this unity of spirit, petty differences should never be allowed to dissolve that unity.

It was everyone's responsibility to care for those less fortunate. Families were to help other family members, and towns were to help members of their community.

National laws protected the rights of the poor, but helping the poor was also an active part of religious life.

God counts on believers to provide for the needy, and we should use what God has given us to aid those less fortunate.

Perhaps you have helped someone believe in God?

Spend time teaching and encouraging others.

If you are you a new believer, remember, you are just beginning your Christian life. Your faith needs to grow and mature through consistent Bible study and teaching.

Throughout this study you will discover many of the hardships the early believers faced.

Even today throughout the world, many are still suffering supreme hardships.

As you pray and teach, teach only the word of God.

Chapter 1



Believers should provide for the needy.

Deut. 14:28-29

"At the end of every third year bring the tithe of all your crops and store it in the nearest town.

Give it to the Levites, who have no inheritance among you, as well as to the foreigners living among you, the orphans, and the widows in your towns, so they can eat and be satisfied. Then the Lord your God will bless you in all your work.

The Bible supports an organized system of caring for the poor. God told his people to use their tithe every third year for those who were helpless, hungry, or poor.

These regulations were designed to prevent the country from sinking under crushing poverty and oppression.

It was everyone's responsibility to care for those less fortunate. Families were to help other family members, and towns were to help members of their community. National laws protected the rights of the poor, but helping the poor was also an active part of religious life.

God counts on believers to provide for the needy, and we should use what God has given us to aid those less fortunate. Look beyond your regular giving and think of ways to help the needy. This will help you show your regard for God as Creator of all people, share God's goodness with others, and draw them to him. It is a practical and essential way to make faith work in everyday life.

Believers must trust God in adversity.

Job 1:9

Satan replied to the Lord, "Yes, Job fears God, but not without good reason!"

Satan attacked Job's motives, saying that Job was blameless and upright only because he had no reason to turn against God.

Ever since he had started following God, everything had gone well for Job. Satan wanted to prove that Job worshiped God, not out of love, but because God had given him so much.

Satan accurately analyzed why many people trust God. They are fair-weather believers, following God only when everything is going well or for what they can get. Adversity destroys this superficial faith.

But adversity strengthens real faith by causing believers to dig their roots deeper into God in order to withstand the storms.

How deep does your faith go? Put the roots of your faith down deep into God so that you can withstand any storm you may face.

All believers are God's chosen people.

Isaiah 41:8-10

"But as for you, Israel my servant, Jacob my chosen one, descended from my friend Abraham, I have called you back from the ends of the earth so you can serve me.

For I have chosen you and will not throw you away.

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

God chose Israel through Abraham because he wanted to, not because the people deserved it (Deut. 7:6-8; Deut. 9:4-6).

Although God chose the Israelites to represent him to the world, they failed to do this; so God punished them and sent them into captivity.

Now all believers are God's chosen people, and all share the responsibility of representing him to the world. One day God will bring all his faithful people together.

We need not fear because

- (1) God is with us ("I am with you"),
- (2) God has established a relationship with us ("I am your God"),
- (3) God gives us assurance of his strength, help, and victory over sin and death.

Have you realized all the ways God has helped you?

People will be judged by how they treat believers.

Obadiah 1:15

"The day is near when I, the Lord, will judge the godless nations! As you have done to Israel, so it will be done to you. All your evil deeds will fall back on your own heads.

Why will God's judgment fall on all the nations? Edom was not the only nation to rejoice at Judah's fall. All nations and individuals will be judged for the way they have treated God's people. Some nations today treat God's people favorably, while others are hostile toward them.

God will judge all people according to the way they treat others, especially believers (Rev. 20:12-13).

Jesus talked about this in Matthew 25:31-46.

God will reject many who claim to be believers

Matthew 5:21

"You have heard that the Law of Moses says, 'Do not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.'

When Jesus said, "But I tell you," he was not doing away with the law or adding his own beliefs. Rather, he was giving a fuller understanding of why God made that law in the first place.

For example, Moses said, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13);

Jesus taught that we should not even become angry enough to murder, for then we have already committed murder in our heart.

The Pharisees read this law and, not having literally murdered anyone, felt righteous.

Yet they were angry enough with Jesus that they would soon plot his death, though they would not do the dirty work themselves.

We miss the intent of God’s Word when we read his rules for living without trying to understand why he made them.

When do you keep God’s rules but close your eyes to his intent?

Killing is a terrible sin, but *anger* is a great sin too because it also violates God’s command to love.

Anger in this case refers to a seething, brooding bitterness against someone. It is a dangerous emotion that always threatens to leap out of control, leading to violence, emotional hurt, increased mental stress, and spiritual damage.

Anger keeps us from developing a spirit pleasing to God. Have you ever been proud that you didn’t strike out and say what was really on your mind?

Self-control is good, but Christ wants us to practice thought-control as well. Jesus said that we would be held accountable even for our attitudes.

Believers must coexist with unbelievers.

Matthew 13:3

Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds and burn them and to put the wheat in the barn.' "

Jesus used many illustrations, or *parables*, when speaking to the crowds. A parable compares something familiar to something unfamiliar. It helps us understand spiritual truth by using everyday objects and relationships.

Parables compel listeners to discover truth, while at the same time concealing the truth from those too lazy or too stubborn to see it.

To those who are honestly searching, the truth becomes clear. We must be careful not to read too much into parables, forcing them to say what they don't mean. All parables have one meaning unless otherwise specified by Jesus.

Chapter 2



Believers have direct access to God.

John 16:23-27

At that time you won't need to ask me for anything. The truth is, you can go directly to the Father and ask him, and he will grant your request because you use my name.

You haven't done this before. Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.

"I have spoken of these matters in parables, but the time will come when this will not be necessary, and I will tell you plainly all about the Father.

Then you will ask in my name. I'm not saying I will ask the Father on your behalf, for the Father loves you dearly because you love me and believe that I came from God.

Jesus is talking about a new relationship between the believer and God. Previously, people approached God through priests. After Jesus' resurrection, any believer could approach God directly.

A new day has dawned and now all believers are priests, talking with God personally and directly (see Hebrews 10:19-23).

We approach God, not because of our own merit, but because Jesus, our great high priest, has made us acceptable to God.

Why the world hates believers.

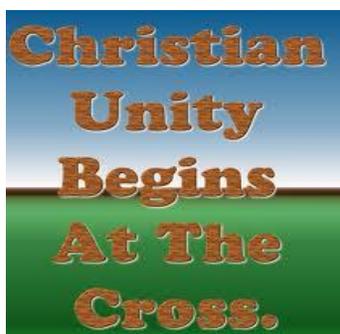
John 17:14

I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not.

The world hates Christians because Christians' values differ from the world's values. Because Christ's followers don't cooperate with the world by joining in their sin, they are living accusations against the world's immorality.

The world follows Satan's agenda, and Satan is the avowed enemy of Jesus and his people.

Chapter 3



Essential for believers to be unified

John 17:21-23

My prayer for all of them is that they will be one, just as you and I are one, Father—that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me

.

“I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are— I in them and you in me, all being perfected into one. Then the world will know that you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me.

Jesus’ great desire for his disciples was that they would become one. He wanted them unified as a powerful witness to the reality of God’s love.

Are you helping to unify the body of Christ, the church? You can pray for other Christians, avoid gossip, build others up, work together in humility, give your time and money, exalt Christ, and refuse to get sidetracked arguing over divisive matters.

Jesus prayed for unity among the believers based on the believers' unity with him and the Father.

Christians can know unity among themselves if they are living in union with God. For example, each branch living in union with the vine is united with all other branches doing the same.

Secret believers.

John 19:38-42

Afterward Joseph of Arimathea, who had been a secret disciple of Jesus (because he feared the Jewish leaders), asked Pilate for permission to take Jesus' body down.

When Pilate gave him permission, he came and took the body away. Nicodemus, the man who had come to Jesus at night, also came, bringing about seventy-five pounds of embalming ointment made from myrrh and aloes.

Together they wrapped Jesus' body in a long linen cloth with the spices, as is the Jewish custom of burial.

The place of crucifixion was near a garden, where there was a new tomb, never used before. And so, because it was the day of preparation before the Passover and since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

Four people were changed in the process of Jesus' death. The criminal, dying on the cross beside Jesus, asked Jesus to include him in his kingdom (Luke 23:39-43). The Roman centurion proclaimed that surely Jesus was the Son of God (Mark 15:39).

Joseph and Nicodemus, members of the Jewish council and secret followers of Jesus (John 7:50-52), came out of hiding. These men were changed more by Jesus' death than by his life.

They realized who Jesus was, and that realization brought out their belief, proclamation, and action. When confronted with Jesus and his death, we should be changed—to believe, proclaim, and act.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were secret followers of Jesus. They were afraid to make this allegiance known because of their positions in the Jewish community.

Joseph was a leader and honored member of the Jewish council. Nicodemus, also a member of the council, had come to Jesus by night (John 3:1) and later tried to defend him before the other religious leaders (John 7:50-52).

Yet they risked their reputations to provide for Jesus' burial. If you are a secret believer, do not hide your faith from your friends and fellow workers. This is an appropriate time to step out of hiding and let others know whom you follow.

This tomb was probably a cave carved out of the stone hillside. It was large enough for a person to walk into, so Joseph and Nicodemus carried Jesus' body into it. A large stone was rolled in front of the entrance.

As they buried Jesus, Nicodemus and Joseph had to hurry to avoid working on the Sabbath, which began Friday evening at sundown.

Why believers didn't join apostles at first.

Acts 5:13

No one else dared to join them, though everyone had high regard for them.

Although many people greatly respected the apostles, they did not dare join them in the temple or work beside them. Some may have been afraid to face the same kind of persecution the apostles had just faced (Acts 4:17), while others may have feared a similar fate as the one that fell on Ananias and Sapphira.

Chapter 4



Importance of helping new believers

Acts 11:26

When he found him, he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching great numbers of people. (It was there at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians.)

With the exception of Jerusalem, Antioch of Syria played a more important role in the early church than any other city.

After Rome and Alexandria, Antioch was the largest city in the Roman world. In Antioch, the first Gentile church was founded, and there the believers were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).

Paul used the city as his home base during his missionary journeys. Antioch was the center of worship for several pagan cults that promoted much sexual immorality and other forms of evil common to pagan religions.

It was also a vital commercial center—the gateway to the eastern world. Antioch was a key city both to Rome and to the early church.

Barnabas gives us a wonderful example of how to help new Christians. He demonstrated strong faith; he ministered joyfully with kindness and encouragement; he taught new believers further lessons about God (see Acts 9:26-30). Remember Barnabas when you see new believers, and think of ways to help them grow in their faith.

Saul had been sent to his home in Tarsus for protection after his conversion caused uproar among the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-30).

He stayed there for several years before Barnabas brought him to help the church at Antioch.

The young church at Antioch was a curious mixture of Jews (who spoke Greek or Aramaic) and Gentiles. It is significant that this is the first place where the believers were called Christians (or “Christ-ones”), because all they had in common was Christ—not race, culture, or even language. Christ can cross all boundaries and unify all people.

Barnabas and Saul stayed at Antioch for a full year, teaching the new believers.

They could have left for other cities, but they saw the importance of follow-through and training.

Perhaps you have helped someone believe in God? Spend time teaching and encouraging that person. Are you a new believer? Remember, you are just beginning your Christian life. Your faith needs to grow and mature through consistent Bible study and teaching.

Philemon 1:17-19

So if you consider me your partner, give him the same welcome you would give me if I were coming. If he has harmed you in any way or stolen anything from you, charge me for it.

I, Paul, write this in my own handwriting: "I will repay it." And I won't mention that you owe me your very soul!

Paul had an amazingly selfless attitude. He knew that some were preaching to build their own reputations, taking advantage of Paul's imprisonment to try to make a name for them.

Regardless of the motives of these preachers, Paul rejoiced that the gospel was being preached.

Some Christians serve for the wrong reasons. Paul wouldn't condone, nor does God excuse, their motives, but we should be glad if God uses their message, regardless of their motives.

This was not Paul's final imprisonment in Rome. But he didn't know that. Awaiting trial, he knew he could either be released or executed.

However, he trusted Christ to work it out for his deliverance. Paul's prayer was that when he stood trial, he would speak courageously for Christ and not be timid or ashamed.

Whether he lived or died, he wanted to exalt Christ. As it turned out, he was released from this imprisonment but arrested again two or three years later. Only faith in Christ could sustain Paul in such adversity.

How other believer's life experiences can help you better know how God works.

Acts 10:45

The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles, too.

Cornelius and Peter were very different people. Cornelius was wealthy, a Gentile, and a military man.

Peter was a Jewish fisherman turned preacher. But God's plan included both of them.

In Cornelius's house that day, a new chapter in Christian history was written as a Jewish Christian leader and a Gentile Christian convert each discovered something significant about God at work in the other person. Cornelius needed Peter and his gospel to know the way to salvation.

Peter needed Cornelius and his salvation experience to know that Gentiles were included in God's plan. Believers may also need each other to understand how God works!

Do people know you as a believer?

Acts 23:2-5

Instantly Ananias the high priest commanded those close to Paul to slap him on the mouth.

But Paul said to him, "God will slap you, you whitewashed wall! What kind of judge are you to break the law yourself by ordering me struck like that?"

Those standing near Paul said to him, "Is that the way to talk to God's high priest?"

"I'm sorry, brothers. I didn't realize he was the high priest," Paul replied, "for the Scriptures say, 'Do not speak evil of anyone who rules over you.' "

Josephus, a respected first-century historian, described Ananias as profane, greedy, and hot-tempered. Paul's outburst came as a result of the illegal command that Ananias had given.

Ananias had violated Jewish law by assuming that Paul was guilty without a trial and ordering his punishment (see Deut. 19:15).

Paul didn't recognize Ananias as the high priest, probably because Anania's command broke the law he was pledged to represent.

As Christians, we are to represent Christ. When those around us say, "I didn't know you were a Christian," we have failed to represent him as we should. We are not merely Christ's followers; we are his representatives to others.

How to know if you are a believer

Romans 8:9

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them are not Christians at all.)

Have you ever worried about whether or not you really are a Christian? A Christian is anyone who has the Spirit of God living in him or her.

If you have sincerely trusted Christ for your salvation and acknowledged him as Lord, then the Holy Spirit has come into your life, and you are a Christian.

You won't know that the Holy Spirit has come if you are waiting for a certain feeling; you will know he has come because Jesus promised he would.

WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WORKING WITHIN YOU:

You will believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and that eternal life comes through him (1 John 5:5);

You will begin to act as Christ directs (Romans 8:5; Galatians 5:22-23);

You will find help in your daily problems and in your praying (Romans 8:26-27);

You will be empowered to serve God and do his will (Acts 1:8; Romans 12:6ff); and

you will become part of God's plan to build up his church (Ephes. 4:12-13).

Some act more like an unbeliever

1 Cor. 6:9-11

Don't you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God?

Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in:

Sexual sin,
Idol worshipers
Adulterers,
Male prostitutes,
Homosexuals,
Thieves,
Greedy people,

Drunkards, Abusers, and Swindlers

None of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God.

There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God. You have been made right with God because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have done for you.

Paul is describing characteristics of unbelievers. He doesn't mean that idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, slanderers or swindlers are automatically and irrevocably excluded from heaven.

Christians come out of all kinds of different backgrounds, including these.

They may still struggle with evil desires, but they should not continue in these practices. In 1 Cor. 6:11, Paul clearly states that even those who sin in these ways can have their lives changed by Christ.

However, those who say that they are Christians but persist in these practices with no sign of remorse will not inherit the kingdom of God. Such people need to reevaluate their lives to see if they truly believe in Christ.

In a permissive society it is easy for Christians to overlook or tolerate some immoral behaviors (greed, drunkenness, etc.) while remaining outraged at others (homosexuality, thievery).

We must not participate in sin or condone it in any way, nor may we be selective about what we condemn or excuse.

Staying away from more “acceptable” forms of sin is difficult, but it is no harder for us than it was for the Corinthians. God expects his followers in any age to have high standards.

Paul emphasizes God’s action in making believers new people.

The three aspects of God’s work are all part of our salvation:

Our sins were washed away,

We were set apart for special use (“sanctified”), and

We were pronounced not guilty (“justified”) for our sins.

Chapter 5



Gifts God gives to believers

2 Cor. 1:21-22

It is God who gives us, along with you, the ability to stand firm for Christ.

He has commissioned us, and he has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment of everything he will give us.

Paul mentions two gifts God gives when we become believers:

- (1) a *seal of ownership* to show who our Master is, and
- (2) the Holy Spirit, who guarantees that we belong to him and will receive all his benefits (Ephes. 1:13-14).

The Holy Spirit guarantees that salvation is ours now, and that we will receive so much more when Christ returns.

The great comfort and power the Holy Spirit gives in this life is a foretaste or down payment (“deposit”) of the benefits of our eternal life in God’s presence. With the privilege of belonging to God comes the responsibility of identifying ourselves as his faithful servants. Don’t be ashamed to let others know that you are his.

Be wary of binding partnerships with unbelievers.

2 Cor. 6:14-18

Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can goodness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness?

What harmony can there be between Christ and the Devil? How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever? And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said:

**"I will live in them and walk among them.
I will be their God, and they will be my people.**

Therefore, come out from them and separate yourselves from them, says the Lord.

Don't touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you.
And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters,
says the Lord Almighty."

Paul urges believers not to form binding relationships with nonbelievers, because this might weaken their Christian commitment, integrity, or standards. It would be a mismatch. Earlier, Paul had explained that this did not mean isolating oneself from nonbelievers (see 1 Cor. 5:9-10). Paul

even tells Christians to stay with their nonbelieving spouses (1 Cor. 7:12-13).

Paul wants believers to be active in their witness for Christ to nonbelievers, but they should not lock themselves into personal or business relationships that could cause them to compromise the faith. Believers should do everything in their power to avoid situations that could force them to divide their loyalties.

Belial is a name that Paul uses for Satan. For those who have discovered God's light, there can be no fellowship or compromise with the darkness (1 Cor. 10:20-21).

Separation from the world involves more than keeping our distance from sinners; it means staying close to God (see 2 Cor. 7:1-2). It involves more than avoiding entertainment that leads to sin; it extends into how we spend our time and money.

There is no way to separate ourselves totally from all sinful influences. Nevertheless, we are to resist the sin around us, without either giving up or giving in.

No barriers should separate believers

Philip. 4:22

And all the other Christians send their greetings, too, especially those who work in Caesar's palace.

There were many Christians in Rome; some were even in Caesar's household. Perhaps Paul, while awaiting trial, was making converts of the Roman civil service! Paul sent greetings from these Roman Christians to the believers at Philippi.

The gospel had spread to all strata of society, linking people who had no other bond but Christ.

The Roman Christians and the Philippian Christians were brothers and sisters because of their unity in Christ.

Believers today are also linked to others across cultural, economic, and social barriers. Because all believers are brothers and sisters in Christ, let us live like God's true family.

All believers are our brothers and sisters.

Philemon 1:16

He is no longer just a slave; he is a beloved brother, especially to me. Now he will mean much more to you, both as a slave and as a brother in the Lord.

What a difference Onesimus's status as a Christian made in his relationship to Philemon.

He was no longer merely a slave, but he was also a brother. That meant that both Onesimus and Philemon were members of God's family—equals in Christ.

A Christian's status as a member of God's family transcends all other distinctions among believers. Do you look down on any fellow Christians? Remember, they are your equals before Christ (Galatians 3:28). How you treat your brothers and sisters in Christ's family reflects your true Christian commitment.

Believers need companionship of other believers.

Hebrews 10:25

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near.

To neglect Christian meetings is to give up the encouragement and help of other Christians.

We gather together to share our faith and to strengthen one another in the Lord. As we get closer to the “Day” when Christ will return, we will face many spiritual struggles, and even times of persecution. Anti-Christian forces will grow in strength.

What is the priesthood of believers?

1 Peter 2:9

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God's holy nation, and his very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

Christians sometimes speak of “the priesthood of all believers.”

In Old Testament times, people did not approach God directly. A priest acted as intermediary between God and sinful human beings.

With Christ's victory on the cross, that pattern changed. Now we can come directly into God's presence without fear (Hebrews 4:16), and we are given the responsibility of bringing others to him also (2 Cor. 5:18-21).

When we are united with Christ as members of his body, we join in his priestly work of reconciling God and man.

People often base their self-concept on their accomplishments.

But our relationship with Christ is far more important than our jobs, successes, wealth, or knowledge.

God has chosen us as his very own, and we have been called to represent him to others.

Remember that your value comes from being one of God's children, not from what you can achieve.

You have worth because of what God does, not because of what you do.

Elements that should characterize believers

1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, love one another with tender hearts and humble minds.

Peter lists five key elements that should characterize any group of believers:

- (1) Harmony—pursuing the same goals;
- (2) Sympathy—being responsive to others’ needs;
- (3) Love—seeing and treating each other as brothers and sisters;
- (4) compassion—being affectionately sensitive and caring; and
- (5) Humility—being willing to encourage one another and rejoice in each other’s successes.

These five qualities go a long way toward helping believers serve God effectively.

Peter developed the qualities of compassion and humility the hard way. In his early days with Christ, these attitudes did not come naturally to his impulsive, strong-willed personality (see Mark 8:31-33; John 13:6-9 for examples of Peter’s blustering).

But the Holy Spirit changed Peter, molding his strong personality to God’s use, and teaching him tenderness and humility.

How God seals believers in the end times.

Rev. 7:4-8

And I heard how many were marked with the seal of God. There were 144,000 who were sealed from all the tribes of Israel:

From Judah — 12,000
From Reuben —12,000
From Gad — 12,000
From Asher — 12,000
From Naphtali 12,000

From Manasseh-12,000
From Simeon —12,000
From Levi — 12,000
From Issachar 12,000
From Zebulun 12,000
From Joseph — 12,000
From Benjamin -12,000

The number 144,000 is $12 \times 12 \times 1,000$, symbolizing completeness—*all* God's followers will be brought safely to him; not one will be overlooked or forgotten.

God seals these believers either by withdrawing them from the earth (this is called the Rapture) or by giving them special strength and courage to make it through this time of great persecution.

Even though many believers have to undergo persecution, the seal does not necessarily guarantee protection from physical harm—many will die (see Rev. 6:11)—but God will protect them from spiritual harm.

No matter what happens, they will be brought to their reward of eternal life. Their destiny is secure. These believers will not fall away from God even though they may undergo intense persecution.

This is not saying that 144,000 individuals must be sealed before the persecution comes, but that when persecution begins, the faithful will have already been sealed (marked by God) and they will remain true to him until the end.

This is a different list from the usual listing of the 12 tribes in the Old Testament, because it is a symbolic list of God's true followers.

- (1) Judah is mentioned first because Judah is both the tribe of David and of Jesus the Messiah (Genesis 49:8-12; Matthew 1:1).

- (2) Levi had no tribal allotment because of the Levites' work for God in the temple (Deut. 18:1), but here the tribe is given a place as a reward for faithfulness.
- (3) Dan is not mentioned because it was known for rebellion and idolatry, traits unacceptable for God's followers (Genesis 49:17).
- (4) The two tribes representing Joseph (usually called Ephraim and Manasseh, after Joseph's sons) are here called Joseph and Manasseh because of Ephraim's rebellion.

Chapter 6

THE ONENESS OF ALL BELIEVERS



At times believers are separated because of minor differences in doctrine. But Paul shows those areas where Christians must agree to attain true unity.

When believers have this unity of spirit, petty differences should never be allowed to dissolve that unity.

How to be saved

Romans 10:9-10

For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.

Romans 10:13

For "Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Please pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus

I believe you are the Christ,
The son of the Living God
I ask you to come into my life

Forgive me of my sins
And save me now.
I pray in the name of Jesus.

Amen

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation.

**Additional comments and charts are taken from:
Life Application Study Bible. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print**

