

There are five different verbs in the Bible that define a faith decision to *obey the Gospel* (Romans 10:16). A verb is an *action word* defining what we are supposed to do with the fundamental information that the Gospel gives to us.

REPENT
BELIEVE
CALL
RECEIVE
CONFESS

These Bible action responses to the Gospel have been reduced to one or two of these verbs in the recent century. Evangelical churches are filled with people who have *prayed the prayer*, been dunked in a water tank, but who have no fundamental understanding of the affects of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Recovering the local church must involve recovering a fundamental understanding of what the Gospel affects and these five biblical responses to the Gospel.



LEARNING TO LEAD

KETCHUM



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LEARNING TO LEAD

Converting the Heart



The Five Verbs of Saving Faith

Dr. Lance T. Ketchum

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The Five Verbs of Saving Faith

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Disciple Maker Ministries
905 Golf Course Road N.W.
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612-750-5515

LanceKetchum@msn.com
www.disciplemakerministries.org

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Preface

By the late 1600's, liberal theological thought began a steady slide into apostasy when a reductionist philosophical notion known as *pluralism* came into religious circles. *Pluralism* is the teaching that says it really does not matter *what* you believe about God, as long as you believe in *God* or a *god* in some form.

Pluralism denotes any metaphysical theory claiming that reality consists of a multiplicity of distinct, fundamental entities. The term was first used by Christian Wolff (1679-1754), and later popularized by William James in *The Will to Believe* (1896). As a theological term, it refers to the belief that "god" exists with many different names and within all *religions*. These *religions* worship the same "god," only using different names and belief systems. These are commonly referred to as different *faiths*.

For this type of theological reductionism, Pluralism taught that *doctrine* (the teachings of various religions) is secondary (sometimes totally irrelevant) to "belief" in a *god*, whatever the form or practice that belief system takes. Communion between various *faiths* is based upon any ground of commonality while ignoring their doctrinal differences. In most cases, the only ground of commonality these *faiths* possess is belief in a *god* of some kind. Pluralism became the basis for *Ecumenicism*. Pluralism was based upon a religious philosophy of reducing theological requirements for salvation to the simplest common denominator; i.e., belief in a *god*, regardless of what this *god* was called.

Pluralism became the norm for those trained in classical Theological institutions (which were more *philosophical* than *theological*). Pluralism was merely one step away from Universalism. Classical theological education led to both Higher and Lower Criticism and, ultimately, to the theological liberalism of the early 1900's.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (who came to be known merely as Mahatma Gandhi, 1869-1948) was very influential in establishing Pluralism within Ecumenicism and the present-day *anathema* about proselytizing those of other *faiths*. Eastern Mystic religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Manchurian Gnosticism, and many theological liberals were being greatly

influenced during the late 1800's and early 1900's. Gandhi is quoted as saying¹:

After long study and experience, I have come to the conclusion that (1) all religions are true; (2) all religions have some error in them; (3) all religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism, in as much as all human beings should be as dear to one as one's own close relatives. My own veneration for other faiths is the same as that for my own faith; therefore no thought of conversion is possible. (underling added)

Although fundamental Christianity (and most of Evangelical Christianity) rejected both Pluralism and its illegitimate *child* called Ecumenicism, those declaring themselves *New Evangelicals* and holding to a Universalist Ecclesiology (*not the same as Universalist Soteriology*), began to *dialog* with the Liberals, arguing about seeking to maintain theological and cultural *relevancy* within the Christian *community*. This pursuit of *relevancy* by New Evangelicals has been the cause of their continuing and gradual compromise of truth. Because of this *dialog*, most of the participants began to try to find the most reducible form of the *Gospel* to which they could agree to have a degree of *unity*. This *Soteriological Reductionism* came forth in three main streams within Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism by the 1950's:

1. Easy Believism (New Evangelicalism)
2. Only Believism (Evangelicalism)
3. Easy Prayerism (much of Fundamentalism; *One, Two, Three, say it after me!*)

Paul's message in Galatians 1:6-9 is clear: **If the Gospel can be perverted in any way, evangelism is perverted as well as the necessary faith that brings genuine salvation and conversion.** These three forms of Soteriological Reductionism

¹ M. K. Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers: Life and Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi as Told in His Own Words*, (Paris, UNESCO 1958), 60.

have filled evangelical local churches with people masquerading as “born again” Christians when in reality, most of them are nothing more than “whited sepulchers.” This reality exists because all three forms of Reductionism are perversions in varying degrees of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Easy Believism (New Evangelicalism)

Easy Believism was the most extreme form of Reductionism within Evangelicalism emerging out this era. The *common denominator* within Easy Believism was that Jesus was the Son of God incarnate and that He died for the sins of mankind. If a person believed these basic truths about Jesus, regardless of any false beliefs to which he might hold, he could still claim to be “born again.” In most cases, few, if any, of the objective and definitive facts of the Gospel were required to be taught or understood before a salvation decision could be made.

Iain Murray, in *Revivals and Revivalism*², says that the Presbyterian Evangelist Charles Finney (1792-1875) “believed that all that was needed for conversion was a resolution signified by standing, kneeling, or coming forward, and because the Holy Spirit always acts when a sinner acts, the public resolution could be treated as ‘identical with the miraculous inward change of sudden conversion’.”

Easy Believism has four basic tenets:

1. A conversion *experience* is the *only* thing necessary for genuine salvation (whatever defines that *experience*). If a person can testify to a time he *accepted/received* Christ *into his heart*, that person has eternal security and should be given assurance of salvation. Therefore, a testimony of such an *experience* was sought to give *assurance* that salvation had taken place. Many types of *experiences* are accepted for this assurance.

² Ian Murray, **Revivals and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism**, (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994).

2. There are no rules or standards expected within the Christian life after one was saved. Anyone saying that such things existed *under grace* was a *legalist*.
3. Once saved and having received the Holy Spirit, the Christian is at *liberty* to make decisions according to the Holy Spirit's leading of his conscience. The Word of God is not the *only way* God directs believers to His will. *Dogmatic applications* of doctrine should be avoided and *personal liberty* should be allowed free expression.
4. Not every Christian will live a godly life, therefore the genuineness of his conversion should not be *judged* by outward circumstances or by external evidences of habitual carnality.

Only Believism (Evangelicalism)

Although Only Believism is less Reductionism than Easy Believism, it is equally perverting. Only Believism reduces the the believer's *response to Gospel* to *only believing*. In other words, all responses to obey the Gospel (Romans 10:16) such as repentance, receiving, confessing, and calling upon the name of Jesus are all the *same as*, and are encapsulated in *only believing*. These various responses are not individual acts and are all merely *aspects* of believing that need not be expressed individually.

All the other verbs describe *aspects* of a salvation decision, but these *aspects* cannot be reduced to *only believing*. In other words, repenting of sin (Luke 24:7) and "dead works" (Hebrews 6:1), understanding (Matthew 13:23), believing the objective facts of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:37; 16:31-32), publicly confessing one's belief that Jesus is Jehovah (Romans 10:9; "LORD," see Joel 2:32), calling on the name of Jesus to save (Romans 10:13), and receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 1:12) are all aspects of a proper response to the Gospel in a genuine salvation decision and should be explained in the presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. True Evangelism involves both the explanation of the objective facts of the Gospel and the objective required responses to the Gospel in order for true, supernatural "conversion" to be created. This is exemplified in Paul's dealing with the Philippian jailer and his household.

²⁷ And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. ²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. ²⁹ Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. ³² And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. ³³ And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. ³⁴ And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house (Acts 16:27-34).

Only Believers would stop at Acts 16:31. However, verse 32 clearly states, “And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.” In other words, there was a thorough explanation of the Gospel, the necessary responses to the Gospel involved in a faith decision, and even the expectations of a believer once that believer trusted Christ for salvation. We know this latter fact because the Philippian jailer and “all that were in his house” believed and were “baptized.” Aquila and Priscilla did this same thing with a man named Apollos (Acts 18:24-28).

Only Believers did not reduce the necessary *objective facts* of the Gospel to the degree Easy Believers did. Only Believers reduced the necessary *responses* to those objective facts of the Gospel to *only believing*.

Easy Prayerism (much of Fundamentalism)

This has come to be known as *One, Two, Three, say it after me!* In this evangelism methodology the evangelists give a quick *run through* the Gospel (five or six verses called the *Roman's Road*). The person is asked if he understands and believes he is a sinner, understands and believes he needs to be saved, and if he is willing to pray and ask God to save him. If the sinner says the

Sinner's Prayer (repeat these words after me), he is told he is eternally saved and given assurance of salvation.

Those instructed in this methodology are told to avoid any discussion outside of the few verses in the *Roman's Road* and move the person as quickly as possible to *praying the prayer*. Everything else can be dealt with after *praying the prayer* and *getting saved*.

This methodology got a lot of people to *walk the isles*, get baptized, and join local churches. However, the biggest task was keeping more *coming in the front door than were going out the backdoor* because most these people made only quasi and pseudo salvation decisions. This is what Christ dealt with in the parable of the Sower and the Soils (Matthew 13:1-23; take careful note of the word "understandeth" in verses 19 and 23).

There **MUST BE** clear understanding of the objective facts of the Gospel *and* the objective required verb responses to the Gospel before conversion can take place in the heart (Matthew 13:15).

The Crossless Gospel

The *Crossless Gospel* is a merging of various aspects all three of these forms of Soteriological Reductionism. The three basic tenets of the *Crossless Gospel* are:

1. The only fact necessary to faith is a belief in the *historical Jesus*. In other words, believing He is God, or any of the other objective facts of the Gospel are not necessary to either understand or believe in order to believe in Jesus and be saved. This is as close to Universalism as possible.
2. Therefore, only belief in Jesus is necessary to the Gospel proclamation.
3. Easy Prayerism is taken to a whole new level. The person must just believe in Jesus. He does not need to even ask God to save him. A *mental acquiescence* to the historical Jesus is all that is necessary. This *mental acquiescence* need not be expressed in any tangible, empirical, or external way.

Learning to Lead

Chapter One

Five Verbs of Salvation

UNDERSTANDING

Matthew chapter thirteen is one of the most significant teachings of Jesus in the Gospels because it is in these three parables that He teaches who will be part of the “Kingdom of heaven.” The first parable reveals who will be part of the “Kingdom of heaven.” It defines the essentials to a genuine *conversion* experience and what is involved in *understanding with the heart* (Matthew 13:15).

¹ The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. ² And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. ³ And he spake many things unto **them in parables**, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; ⁴ And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: ⁵ Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: ⁶ And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: ⁸ But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. ⁹ **Who hath ears to hear, let him hear** (Matthew 13:1-9).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ gives the believer God’s specific instructions for responding to the Gospel message in order to receive God’s gift of salvation. **The believer must first understand what each aspect of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection accomplishes in His work of redemption and THEN respond according to God’s specifications of faith in five verbs.**

There are three essential elements within the parable of the *Sower and the Soils* that must work together before a sinner can be brought to the conviction of sin, understand the Gospel, and be “born again” . . . “by grace through faith.”

1. The “seed” is the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the specific, objective facts **detailing what Christ has accomplished** for sinners through His death, burial, and resurrection/glorification. These facts **MUST BE UNDERSTOOD!**
2. The “Sower” is the Holy Spirit of God Who works to illuminate (give understanding to) the Gospel to the sinner’s heart. The Holy Spirit works in *synergism* (partnership) with the Spirit-filled soul-winner as he preaches and explains the details of the Gospel (illumination can also happen as the sinner *reads* the Scriptures).
3. The various “soils” are primarily the various *conditions of the hearts* of those in whom the *seed* is being sown. The *conditions of the heart* define the *heart’s* relationship to various worldly influences.

Preparing the heart to receive the “seed” is perhaps the greatest essential to a genuine conversion experience. Therefore, the Apostle Paul uses almost three full chapters of his Epistle to the Romans to explain the doctrine of condemnation **BEFORE** he begins to explain the doctrine of salvation. This is preparing the “soil” of the heart for conversion. The sinner must understand the holiness of God and the sinfulness of sin. *Preparing the heart* is picking up the rocks that hardened a person to their sin and harden a person to the work of the Holy Spirit. Preparing the heart is clearing away the thorns and thistles of worldly ambitions that will grow and choke away any possibility for new life to generate to fruition in the heart.

Preparing the heart to receive the “seed” is what biblical repentance is all about. Many have come to think that repentance is merely an intellect change of the mind about sin, worldliness, and false doctrine. Genuine repentance effects the **mind** (how we think about sin, worldliness, and false doctrine), the **emotions** (how we feel about sin, worldliness, and false doctrine), and **practice** (how we live what we know or believe).

Changing practice is the outcome of genuine repentance and is progressive towards godliness AFTER CONVERSION due to numerous volitional choices. In other words, the way we live our lives should progressively be changed by varying degrees as we *grow* to know the Word of God and the God of the Word. However, **until** there is a change of mind that *agrees* with the revealed will of God AND a change of heart that *feels* about sin, worldliness, and false doctrine that corresponds with the way God feels about sin, worldliness, and false doctrine, **repentance is not happening.**

There are varying degrees of this failure revealed in the parable of the Seed and the Soils. **The central focus is that improperly prepared minds and improperly prepared hearts will result in false conversions due to failure to understand what the Gospel of Jesus Christ accomplishes on the sinner's behalf. False conversions are equally probable without preparation of the sinner's heart through biblical repentance.** Just rushing sinners through the *Romans Road* to get them to *pray the prayer* is a gross injustice against God's redemption.

Parables are simple examples and are not always perfect examples. Parables seek to explain very deep spiritual truths by using common physical examples. These physical illustrations can never fully convey the full depth of the spiritual truth they seek to explain.

¹⁸ Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and **understandeth it not**, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. ²⁰ But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; ²¹ Yet hath he not root in himself {*no depth of understanding*}, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. ²² He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. ²³ But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and **understandeth**

it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty (Matthew 13:18-23).

In other words, inward transformation/regeneration can never take place without this *understanding*. **The critical detail here is that *understanding* with the head must become *understanding* with the heart before saving faith is produced through the operations of the Holy Spirit of God (i.e., germination of the Seed or regeneration).** The proper response to the Gospel is what defines *believing*, or what is more commonly referred to as *saving faith*.

The first verb in a faith decision to be “born again” is the verb REPENT. There MUST be repentance of sin (Romans 1:18-32). There MUST be repentance of one’s trust in his own moralism (Romans 2:1-29). There MUST be repentance of one’s trust in sacramental rituals as means of conferring the grace of God in salvation (Romans 3:1-20). Perhaps the simplest way to explain repentance is that genuine repentance is *birthed* out of the knowledge of two basic Bible truths. If we want true Bible repentance produced in our lives, we must understand these two basic Bible truths and pursue that understanding from the revelation of God’s Word.

1. We must understand how vile and disgusting our sinfulness is in the eyes of God.
2. We must understand the holiness and sanctity of God.

¹⁰ As it is written, There is **none** righteous, no, **not one**.¹¹ There is **none** that understandeth, there is **none** that seeketh after God. ¹² They are **all** gone out of the way, they are **together** become unprofitable; there is **none** that doeth good, no, **not one**.¹³ Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: ¹⁴ Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness: ¹⁵ Their feet *are* swift to shed blood: ¹⁶ Destruction and misery *are* in their ways: ¹⁷ And the way of peace have they not known: ¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:10-18).

Until you see yourself the way God sees you, you will never repent the way God expects you to repent! Genuine repentance sees ourselves just as God sees us. There are no meritorious qualities about us that make us lovely to God or even loveable. We are horrible, wicked, vile, puss-buckets of putridity. God does not love us because we are loveable. God loves us because He is love. Yet, God sees **what we can be** if we get ahold of genuine repentance, get “born again,” and begin to live by His enabling grace.

The Greek word *epistrefho* (ep-ee-stref'-o), translated “converted” in Matthew 13:15, literally means *to be turned around*. This “conversion” cannot happen apart from genuine repentance. Repentance is the beginning point of that *turning around*. Peter made this distinction in Acts 3:19; “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out . . .” Each of the other four verbs in a faith decision also reflect a turning around regarding what we think and believe.

The second verb involved in a faith decision to be “born again” is the verb BELIEVE. Is this just believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, or is this believing in what the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus accomplishes? The word believe reflects a *turning away* from false beliefs about religious “works” (Moralism and Ritualism) so as to believe **solely** in what Christ Jesus accomplished in His death, burial, and resurrection. This *turning away* from “works” is crucial to defining the meaning and practical intent of the word “believe.”

To believe the Gospel is to believe **with UNDERSTANDING** what the Gospel accomplishes God-ward in **propitiation** and man-ward in **justification**. To present the Gospel is to present what the Gospel accomplishes first in satisfying God’s wrath upon sin (propitiation) and the impartation of God-kind righteousness to the believing sinner in the indwelling Spirit of God (justification).

¹ Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. ² For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge {*full discernment or complete understanding*}. ³ For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness {*God-kind righteousness*},

and going about to establish their own righteousness {*man-kind righteousness*}, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Romans 10:1-4).

We can find a *straight-line pattern* in Romans 10:1-13 of God's expectations (responses) to an understanding of the details of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Romans 10:9-13, we find three of the five verbs defining a faith decision to be "born again."

1. **Believe** in thine heart
2. **Confess** with thine mouth
3. **Call** on the Name

⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness {*imparted*}; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. ¹² For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. ¹⁴ How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? ¹⁷ So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:1-17).

There is considerable theological depth in the statement of Paul to the question of the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:31 ("Sirs, what must I **do** to be saved?). There Paul says, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Believe is the verb describing the **action** upon the subject "the Lord Jesus Christ." To understand the meaning of

the word *believe*, we must return to the Hebrew word *aman* (aw-man'). To *believe* is more than a mere intellectual assent to the facts of the Gospel. The basic idea is to *identify with a certainty*. Therefore, the implication of the word *believe* means *to rest* in the accomplishments of Jesus Christ on our behalf in His finished work of redemption as a *certainty*.

The third verb defining a faith decision to be “born again” is the word CONFESS. Confessing Jesus as LORD dictates the way we receive Him. Confessing Jesus as LORD has more to do with a public announcement or proclamation than it does with a mere assent to Who He is. This was a common practice in ancient times. It was also commonly practiced in certain social circles of yesteryear. For instance, when guests were invited to a ball or large affair, they would enter, hand their invitation with their name and station in life to the servant at the entrance, and their name and station in life would be announced to everyone present. This was to ensure that everyone present knew who they were and that they were to be properly received and treated with the respect and dignity due to their social status in life. In the court of kings, when a dignitary or royalty from another nation or kingdom came as his entourage passed through the crowds, a town crier would publicly announce who it was and what position in life the person held.

Confessing Jesus as LORD certainly would not be considered a private matter. Confessing Jesus as LORD has to do with proclaiming our belief in Who He is before our peers and attaching ourselves to His cause. Confessing Jesus as LORD is a public proclamation of faith in both what Jesus accomplished for sinners through His death, burial, resurrection, and glorification and in Who Jesus is as the incarnate Son of God. He is LORD! To call Jesus LORD means He is the incarnate, eternal, sinless Son of God, Creator of heaven and earth. If Jesus is not LORD, His death, burial, resurrection, and glorification has no merit because He could not fulfill the prophetic proclamations regarding the Promised One beginning with Genesis 3:15. Therefore, His death would merely be the death of another very good, moral prophet of God.

Thus saith the LORD, the King of Israel, and his redeemer,

the LORD of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God (Isaiah 44:6; see also 41:4 and 48:12).

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia: (Revelation 1:11; see also 1:17; 2:8 and 22:13).

The fourth verb defining a faith decision to be “born again” is the word CALL. This word defines that moment that culminates in the **event** of salvation. Romans 10:13 is a quote from Joel 2:32. Although the truth and application is relevant to all sinners (the intent of the word “whosoever”), Paul’s instruction in Romans 10:13 is directed primarily to national Israel (Romans 10:1). The vast majority of these individual Jews needed to be saved in order to become part of true Israel (spiritual Israel). Our understanding of Romans 10:13 must come from our understanding of Joel 2:32. Our understanding of these two texts cannot be *contradictory*. Our understanding of these two texts must be *complimentary*. The word “call” from Joel 2:32 is translated from the Hebrew word *qara'* (kaw-raw'). The primary meaning of the word simply is to address someone by their name. The purpose of calling on the Name of Jesus is to be saved from God’s eternal condemnation in Hell.

The last of the five verbs defining a faith decision to be “born again” is the word RECEIVE. To “receive” the Lord Jesus Christ is to receive His indwelling presence in the Person of the Holy Spirit. This is explain in detail in chapter ten of this book.

“¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not. ¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: ¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:11-13).

Questions for Discussion

1. Discuss the importance and significance of the word *understanding* in Matthew 13:1-9 as this relates to ensuring a true conversion of the heart.
2. Discuss what is involved in preparing the heart to receive the *seed*.
3. Discuss what is specifically necessary to understand to ensure biblical *repentance* comes forth from the heart.
4. Discuss the two doctrines that must be understood before a person can *believe/rest* in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
5. Define the meanings of the verbs *confess*, *call*, and *receive* as they define a *faith decision* to be “born again.” Then discuss the *action* that defines each of these verbs in their relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Learning to Lead

Chapter Two

Biblical Examples of Repentance in Conversion

The first aspect of a genuine conversion experience is to comprehend who we are before God and what we have done that deserves God's condemnation of our souls. There are three parables in Luke chapter fifteen detailing the importance of repentance to God. The parables are taught as a response to the questioning of the "Pharisees and scribes" (Luke 15:2) of why Christ "receiveth sinners." We need only read Matthew chapter twenty-three to find out Christ's evaluation of the scribes and Pharisees as self-righteous hypocrites. Therefore, it is easy to see that the purpose of these three parables in Luke chapter fifteen is to deal with the inability of the self-righteous moralist to see himself as a sinner before God even condemned as the worst of sinners.

¹¹And he said, A certain man had two sons: ¹² And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living. ¹³ And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. ¹⁴ And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. ¹⁵ And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. ¹⁷ And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, ¹⁹ And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. ²⁰ And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said