

Personal/Small Group Study

Week of February 4, 2024 A.D.

Am I a Pharisee? Or, Do I Know and Love Jesus?

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read Genesis 17:1-4; 9-14

1. Prior to God's covenant with Abraham, had any nation of people been chosen to represent the Kingdom of God on earth? When a man is wearing clothing, is circumcision noticeable to himself and/or to others? According to these verses, what was the reason and purpose for the requirement of circumcision?
2. Do all nations of the world acknowledge the God of Abram to be the one and only true god? If not, why not? If so, how?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:4-6

3. Who is "the god of this age"? How does "the god of this age" blind the minds of unbelievers and why?
4. Without the presence of Christ and His church, are the people of the world capable of (a) knowing goodness and righteousness and/or (b) knowing the God of the Bible? Would the church exist if God had not made His covenant with Abram and Abram's "descendants for the generations to come"?

Read Genesis 12:1-3

5. Is Christ Jesus a direct lineal descendant of Abram? Would the church exist without the sinless life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus? Is Jesus a Jew? Is the physical act of circumcision a requirement for salvation through faith in Christ?

Read Romans 2:25-29

6. Does physical circumcision bring salvation to: (a) a lineal descendant of Abram and/or (b) any man? Must those who are lineal descendants of Abram receive Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord in order to have eternal life?

Read Romans 3:27-31 & Philippians 3:2-3

7. To this present day, do the non-Christian Jews rely on their obedience to the rituals of the law (including circumcision) as the basis for pleasing God? Do the non-Christian Jews "worship by the Spirit of God"? Do the non-Christian Jews go to heaven or to hell after they die?
8. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Because the people of Israel continued to put their "confidence in the flesh" for salvation (despite the forgiveness of sin accomplished by the death of Christ), God allowed the nation of Israel to be destroyed and the people of Israel to be disbursed throughout the world."

Read Philippians 3:3-7

9. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "It was essential for Paul to renounce his reliance on his personal accomplishments, human achievements, and self-righteousness before Paul could acknowledge faith in Christ as his only way to receive eternal life."
10. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Unfortunately and sadly, far too many people who attend church services in America place their confidence in the flesh for practically every decision that they make in their daily life."

Read Philippians 3:7-11

11. Is it required of every follower of Christ to consistently crucify the desires of the flesh? Does Jesus expect your relationship with Him to receive the highest priority over and above every person, activity, and desire that you have in your life?

Read Matthew 22:34-40

12. Does your motive for obedience to these two commandments fall into the category of "legalistic righteousness"? Can you experience a personal relationship with Christ if you are not willing to obey these two commandments?

Consider: If I practice Christianity as a religion, then I will remain dead in my trespasses and sin. If I choose to love Christ and I acknowledge Him as my Savior and Lord, then I will have life - and have it to the full. "You think about that." Amen.