**Fundamentals of Christianity: A Bible Study and Guide (Fourth Edition)**

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Description:

What is truth? Who is God? Who is Jesus Christ? Who am I? What is the meaning of life, and death? Answers to these questions can be found in Dr. Andrew Barber’s book, Fundamentals of Christianity. Christian principles, ethics, doctrines, and beliefs are explored, examined, and explained using the Bible as the authoritative source.

Biblical cross-referencing of topics guides the reader through the essentials of the one true faith. A keyword index enables rapid search of subjects and scriptures. Learn about God, His works, and His will, and teach others. Increase in knowledge and discover the mysteries revealed in God’s sacred Word, where you will find answers to your questions, problems, desires, hopes, and dreams (sola scriptura). Topics, definitions, scriptures, and discussions have been derived directly from God’s Word, the Holy Bible in the King James Version. You will discover after each Bible reading that your understanding grows. You become increasingly certain of its accuracy, reliability, and verity, and are better prepared to counter arguments of those who distort or dismiss biblical truth.

Now in its fourth edition, this book was first published in 1999. After twenty years and three upgrades the book has grown from 500 to 800 pages, representing over four decades of biblical research.

A Kirkus reviewer wrote the following about the previous (3rd) edition. “What do Christians actually believe? Barber, himself a practicing Christian, lays it all out in this study guide, which is meant to be used in conjunction with the Old and New Testaments as a resource for ‘anyone and everyone who seeks God’s knowledge and truth’. The book’s organization makes it an easily consulted reference, providing introductions to—and thorough investigation of—major topics such as God, Jesus Christ, living as a Christian, and the nature of evil and sin, as well as the Bible itself. Barber’s guide manages to bring together various passages, relating to concepts like the Trinity or the Second Coming, and compare them. As a result, the guide provides more digestible descriptions of these ideas than one would receive from reading the Bible alone. Each chapter concludes with a series of lessons that summarize the main points, allowing readers to review and internalize key concepts.”

Keywords: Christian apologetics; spirituality and growth; biblical research; scriptural analysis; Bible study; family Bible guide; Christian beliefs; Christian Fundamentals; proof Holy Bible is true; essential doctrines of faith; Holy Trinity; Jesus is God; Christian oriented books; Christian education; motivational speaking; faith based counseling; clinical consulting; body, mind, and spirit; fiction and nonfiction books; mental and spiritual health

Subjects:

RELIGION/Christian Education/General

RELIGION/Christian Living/Inspirational

RELIGION /Christian Living/Spiritual Growth

Themes:

Philosophy and Religion

Spirituality and Religious Experience

Christianity

Bible Readings, Selections, and Meditations

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INSIDE LOOK

**Lesson: Holy Week**

Holy Week is a good time to reflect on God’s Covenant, which He promises to all who seek Him. A covenant is an agreement or contract; you can bet that when God makes a contract, He will never break that contract. God offers people salvation for free if they will be faithful to Him; and that faith leads to eternal life. It is the greatest deal anyone will ever offer you. Only a fool would reject such an offer.

In the Old Testament, God made covenants with Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David. Through these prophets, God also promised a New Covenant: His Messiah. The New Covenant was further confirmed through Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah, Micah, and other great prophets. The Old Covenant was based on faith in God as demonstrated by obedience to God’s Law which required sacrificial offerings. God knew all along that humans were incapable of remaining obedient due to their sinful nature (ROM 3:20; ROM 7:7,14; JAM 2:10), so He promised a more perfect covenant based on faith in Christ’s self-sacrifice (ROM 16:25–26; GAL 3:13–23; HEB 7:15–19; HEB 8:6–13).

Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Redeemer, the New Covenant (LUK 1:68–79). Christ came to earth to perfectly fulfill the Law on our behalf (MAT 5:12–19), as well as to assume the punishment for our noncompliance with the Law (ISA 53:1–12; PHP 3:11–12). His sufferings and death paid the price of sin which is death (ROM 6:23), thereby conquering sin (1 JO 2:2). His resurrection from the dead brought with it the resurrection of all people (ROM 8:11), thereby conquering death (2 TI 1:10). By redeeming our bodies from the grave and washing our souls clean, we have been made spotless and unblemished like Christ (1 CO 1:8), making us acceptable to live with our perfect God in His kingdom forever (COL 1:29; HEB 10:14).

Interestingly, the Old and New Covenants have several things in common and this is not a coincidence. God’s plan was repeatedly announced during Holy Week and upon God’s holy mountain in the City of David which was Jerusalem.

Abraham was visited by King Melchizedek, an early manifestation of the pre-incarnate Christ. Abraham communed with Melchizedek, the great High Priest and the King of Salem (meaning peace), sharing bread and wine, and giving tithes of all he owned to the Lord (GEN 14:18–20). Later, Abraham was sent by God to the holy mountain to sacrifice his only son Isaac (GEN 22:1–8). Of course, Isaac was spared because Abraham remained faithful; a ram was sacrificed in Isaac’s place (GEN 22:9–13). This ram represents the Sacrificial Lamb, God’s firstborn and only Son, who was offered for the sin of the world (JOH 1:29).

Isaac’s son Jacob slept on that same holy mountain and dreamed of a ladder to heaven with angels (GEN 28:10–22); this ladder represents Jesus Christ, who is the Way to the Father (JOH 14:6), and upon whom the angels in Jacob’s dream were ascending and descending (JOH 1:51). This holy mountain (Zion) became the center of King David’s holy city of Jerusalem (2 SA 5:7), and the site of the original temple built by his son Solomon.

God used Moses as a messenger of the Law as well as a messenger of the New Covenant (EXO 24:7–8). During the first Passover, God spared the firstborn of all who obeyed His commandment and sacrificed an unblemished young ram (EXO 12:3–13). Again, Christ is that Passover Lamb (1 PE 1:19), whose sacrifice saves us from the power of death. There are numerous references to Christ in the OT; each of these examples illuminates Christ who shined the light of God for all living souls to see. If you cannot see the light you will lose your way and end up in darkness.

God commanded His people to remember forever His great works when He freed them from the bondage of Egyptian oppression. This is the purpose of the Old Testament Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits (LEV 23:5–10), which the Jews celebrate during Holy Week to this day. During these feasts, God’s mighty deeds were celebrated by fasting, feasting, sacrificing, and tithing.

During this same Holy Week, Christians celebrate the breaking of Christ’s body on the cross (Feast of Unleavened Bread), the shedding of His blood (Feast of Passover), and His Resurrection from the tomb on Easter Sunday (Feast of First Fruits). In accordance with Christ’s commandment, we commemorate these wonderful acts of God every time we partake of Holy Communion (1 CO 11:25–26), in which we share the bread and wine in a spiritual communication with God’s Holy Spirit just as Abraham did so long ago. This we do to remember forever that God has freed us from the slavery and bondage of sin (LUK 22:19–20).

As we reflect on the sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection, we cannot help but be moved. What a great time to express our gratitude by giving to the Lord the first fruits of our increase (2 CH 31:5; PRO 3:9; 1 CO 16:2). Christ is the first fruits of those who have been raised to live forever on God’s holy mountain of Zion (1 CO 15:20–23,44). All believers will follow Christ in death, and be resurrected to live forever with Him and our heavenly Father in the New Jerusalem (EZE 34:12,23–24; EPH 1:10–11; PHP 3:20–21). What a marvelous gift God has given us; He gave us everything He owned, even Himself! And all He requires in return is gratitude. This we show by offering our worship and gifts through faith (LEV 27:30; DEU 14:22; MAL 3:6–8). Plus, God promises that if we give him our first fruits (tithe), He will further bless us with increased prosperity, so how can we lose (MAL 3:10; LUK 6:38)? Is there any limit to God’s goodness, grace, and mercy? No, there is not (PSA 100:1–5)! Read or sing the following hymns of joy and celebration for everything the Lord has done for you.

Short Biography: Andrew V Barber PhD is a counselor, educator, analyst, author, publisher, apologist, biblical scholar, and lifetime Christian. He has worked as a research psychologist, professor, program manager, department director, consultant and mentor in psychiatric, university, and research settings. He operated a private practice specializing in faith-based counseling, and authored *Faithbook for Christian Counselors*. Find more Information about his biography and publications at *www.andrewvbarberphd.com*.