MR. D'S NOTES ON THEOLOGY

Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.

MR. D'S NOTES ON THEOLOGY
INTRODUCTION

Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.

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DEDICATION: To Faith, my faithful help meet and best friend, as well as the many faithful believers that have supported us in prayer and finance over the years of our ministry.

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WELCOME to the wonderful world of theology on a computer. It had to come. I trust that it will be an asset rather than a liability!

This work is broken into ten volumes, one volume for each major division of theology.

Please read this introduction before you begin. It will only take a moment.

SIMPLE INDEX IS TOPIC 00050.

DETAILED INDEX IS TOPIC 00100.

Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.

A few items of introduction:

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In writing this book, I was interested in making information available for helping others in their work of the Great Commission. I have desired no profit from the effort and trust that each of you will use it to God's glory and honor. His glory and honor has been my life's work and I trust that it is your goal also.

The work has been gone over several times, but errors of spelling and grammar are going to be found. All such errors are yours free of charge.

I trust that the Lord will be able to use the efforts that have gone into this work for His glory and for the furtherance of the Great Commission!

A little information about the author so that you can know where he is coming from even if you can't figure out where he is going. HA!

I have pastored and copastored churches over the years. These have been self support type ministries. I taught at a Bible Institute for four years. This is where the title for this book came from. The school attempted to bring about a respect between student and teacher by upholding the tradition of the students addressing the faculty as Mr. Derickson, etc. In my first year of teaching, the students found that Mr. Derickson took to much time, so they shortened it to Mr. D. This title carried with it the same respect, yet to me, seemed to carry with it also a note of familiarity, which I desired.

My education is as follows: B.A./Denver Baptist Bible College and Seminary; Th.B./Western Baptist College, Salem, OR; Th.M. Toledo Bible College and Seminary; Ph.D./Trinity Seminary, Newburgh, IN.

My wife and I were on deputation for five years with WEFMinistries (Now Biblical Ministries Worldwide). We were unable to raise our support, and felt that the Lord was telling us that He wanted us to minister in the United States for this period of our life.

I will admit to you now that this work is very strong on missions and fundamentalism. I believe these are two topics that the fundamental churches of America have forgotten to teach to the present generation. I trust that you will be challenged by the work.

Stanley L. Derickson 9-24-92

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PROLEGOMENA

Theology at one time in our history was important in the Sciences, however this is not true in all circles today.

Thiessen in his systematic theology states, "Until rather recent times Theology was considered the queen of the sciences and Systematic Theology the crown of the queen. But today the generality of so-called theological scholarship denies that it is a science and certainly the idea that it is the queen of the sciences." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 23)

When they speak of the Sciences, what do they mean? Math, biology, chemistry, electronics, logic etc. are considered Sciences. What are the Arts? Psychology, language, history, art, philosophy, etc. are the Arts.

What are the Sciences based on? The Sciences are based on discoverable fact, known fact, systematic research, principles of fact finding, etc. Upon what are the Arts based? The Arts are based on thought, creativity of the mind and hand, philosophy, etc.

The study of Sciences in college leads to a Bachelor of Science degree, while the study of the Arts leads to a Bachelor of Arts degree. Since most Bible Colleges give B.A. degrees, they must feel that the study of the Bible and theology is in the area of thought and philosophy, or the Arts.

In the thinking of the world this classification is correct. However if we feel that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and correct in all that it says, then we would determine our study from the facts and not thought. This would technically place us within the idea of the Sciences. Indeed, I have run across a Bible college or two that offer the B.S. degree rather than the B.A.

James Orr in 1909 stated, "Every one must be aware there is at the present time a great prejudice against doctrine - or, as it is often called 'Dogma' - in religion; a great distrust and dislike of clear

and systematic thinking about divine things. Men prefer one cannot help seeing, to live in a region of haze and indefiniteness in regard to these matters. They want their thinking to be fluid and indefinite - something that can be changed with the times, and with the new lights which they think are being constantly brought to bear upon it, continually taking on new forms, and leaving the old behind." (Orr, James; "SIDELIGHTS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; London: p 3)

THIS WAS SPOKEN ALMOST 80 YEARS AGO! HOW MUCH MORE TRUE IT IS TODAY!

Does this sound like the electronic church of today - don't bug me with the facts - I want experience? One Charismatic mentioned that fundamentalists should box their brains up and shoot them into outer space - they let their minds control them. Let yourself go. Now, is he not in essence saying you have to be mindless to be like he is? Sounds somewhat like rationalism which we will see later.

In the past all sciences allowed for God within their ideas, however today very few sciences allow for God of any kind and have replaced Him with man. Does that remind you of any passages in Scripture? Rom. 1:21-23, "Because, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Americans have turned to humanism for their religion! How long before they turn to animals, beasts, and creeping things?

What does the word "PROLEGOMENA" mean? "PROLEGOMENA" comes from two Greek words. "pro" meaning before & "legein" which means to speak - "to say before" says, Webster. (4302 in Strong's is the base word "prolego". II Cor 13:2; Gal 5:21; I Thess 3:4. These are the only usages in the New Testament.)

Ryrie states of the prolegomena, "It furnishes the author with the opportunity to let his readers know something of the general plan he has in mind, both its extent and limitations, as well as some of the presuppositions of his thinking and the procedures he plans to use." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 13)

Prolegomena is a twenty-five dollar word for preface or introduction that allows you to impress people.

As we move along we need to understand some words.

DEFINITION OF TERMS:

PRESUPPOSITIONS: To suppose beforehand. Something which you presume to be true before

you enter into a study. The evolutionist presupposes that the Biblical account of creation is false, and presumes to know what they believe is truth.

In electronics there is a basic presupposition which the whole of television, radio, computer etc. is based. The presupposition is the fact that there is an electron flow through a substance. In a light bulb you must suppose that the electrons are flowing to explain the whole system of electricity and electronics. Without this supposition you have nothing, for you cannot prove there is an electron flow. For many years they supposed that electricity flowed from negative to positive.

We will have some presuppositions before we finish with the Prolegomena that will be used in our study of theology.

DOGMA: No, this term does not mean your dog's mother. It means according to Webster, "something held as an established opinion."

DOGMATICS: A study of things that can be held with all certainty. Some examples of dogmatics: Christ is God. Christ died, but rose again. These are dogmas of Christianity in general. (This is why the Roman Catholic Church is considered to be within the realm of Christianity.)

We don't use the term much in fundamental circles, probably because it is a term that the Roman Catholic Church and some Lutherans use extensively. Our non-use of the term may relate to the fact there aren't many things that evangelical Christianity holds as sure and certain. Many of the doctrines of the past have suffered and now are not certainties. Doctrines such as the pretribulational rapture, the premillennial return of Christ, the blood of Christ, and the two natures of man. We might be quick to add that some of these certainties were based on less than adequate study and evidence. There is evidence now that the "two natures of man" doctrine may not be technically correct. For the most part, however the lack of certainty is based on a lack of study rather than the certainty itself. The blood of Christ and His return are quite sure, as is the rapture.

THEOLOGY: This term comes from two terms - "theos" meaning God and "logos" meaning "rational expression" (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 13) In short, the rational expression of God. The study and expression of God, if you please.

Ryrie lists three elements in theology: 1. Theology can be understood by the human mind. 2. Theology requires explanation; thus one must study and systematize it to verbalize theology. 3. Theology is Bible based and thus theology will result from Bible study. "Theology, then, is the discovery, systematizing, and presentation of the truths about God." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 13)

Bancroft states, "Its aim is the ascertainment of the facts concerning God and the relations between God and the universe, and the exhibition of these facts in their rational unity, as connected parts of a formulated and organic system of truth." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Second revised edition Copyright 1976 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 13)

Theology can be classified in many ways: It can be classified by false and true. It can be classified by time frame: Early Church, reformation, modern etc. It can be classified by view: Calvinist, Armenian, liberal, evangelical, fundamental, etc.

TYPES OF THEOLOGY TO BE VIEWED:

Natural theology: That which man may know about God by viewing the creation of God. (Ps 19:1-5, Acts 14:17, and Rom. 1:20) What can we know of God from nature? God is a God of order (Examine flowers and their symmetry, examine the fungus and it's symmetry). God is a God of variety (The species, sunsets, human faces, etc.). God is a God of immenseness (The distance between the planets and the stars).

Revealed theology: That which man may know about God by viewing the Scriptures. (I Cor. 2:10 shows that God has revealed to man. How much can we know from the Revelation of God? A great deal can be learned from His Revelation. I have been studying the Word for more than twenty-five years. I have only studied about 26 books of the Bible personally. When I reread those books, I learn even more about them and the God that revealed them.

Historical theology: That which man believed to be knowledge of God in times past. This information may or may not be correct due to their limited time to study a particular topic.

One of the obvious doctrines that was previously held, but now is in decline, is "Creationism." At one time there was no doubt that the Genesis account was true, yet today the inroads of evolution, theistic evolution, etc. have caused their damage, even in conservative circles.

Historical theology is seen in the fact that the canon of Scripture was set many years after the day of Pentecost. Also it can be seen in the discussions of Christ's natures many years later.

Biblical theology: That which may be known about God from the study of the progression of doctrine in the Scriptures. In other words - progressive revelation. (What did Adam know of God? What did Abraham know of God? Did they know about the Rapture? No. God revealed Himself more and more through history, however all that was needed, to know God, was revealed at each and every stage so none were less knowledgeable about what God required of them than any other person in history. (see Ryrie p 14 for more.)

Systematic theology: That which may be known of God by collecting all Scriptures together on a given topic to show the teaching of the Bible on that topic.

Example: Concerning the inscription over Christ on the cross: Mk. 15:26 states, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." Lu. 23:38 states, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS." Mat. 27:37 states, "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS." John 19:19 states, "JESUS, OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." It takes four verses to know exactly what the Bible says on the topic.

Systematic theology is a systematic study and collecting of all information concerning God while it is also a system of belief. All information is gathered and then assembled into a system which is structured in such a way that it allows for all Biblical facts to fit into the system. Each fact is an integrated part of the system. If a fact does not fit into the system, then the system must be reformed to allow the fact to fit. It has always amazed me that most Bible Colleges and Seminaries wait until the students second or third year to teach them the system into which all of their knowledge is to fit. It seems much wiser to give an overview of the system at the beginning so the student can begin, immediately, to fit their new knowledge into their belief system. It also allows them to begin to evaluate the system to be sure it is within the teaching of the Scriptures.

Practical theology: That which may be used of God in the lives of man by applying the truths of Scripture to their life. When I was first saved I knew the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." (Ex 20:7) The knowledge did not translate into action. For a long time, this commandment had no affect on my language. Later in my life the Lord began to work in my life, and this was one of the first practical applications of theology that He brought my way.

There are also theologies which are called Biblical but contain false teaching. Do not trust a title - look at the contents. We will look at a number of these in the study of Future things. (Dominion theology, Kingdom theology, Reconstruction theology.)

There are also some other areas of theology today. Pastoral theology, Christian Education theology, and contemporary theology. These use the term in our current ecclesiastical circles, though they are not technically a part of Biblical theology.

THE NECESSITY OF THEOLOGY:

1. It is a means of expressing Christianity. This is being able to express beliefs in a logical, systematic order. This expression of belief is also termed "apologetic."

2. It is a means to define Christianity. The systematizing of the facts into a system will automatically define the system.

3. It is a means to defend Christianity. It makes it much easier to show the truth of the Word.

4. It is a means to propagate Christianity. Because it is a system which works, people will listen.

PRESUPPOSITIONS:

To study theology intelligently, we must presuppose that:

1. God exists and that He communicated to man His divine truth in the Scriptures.

We cannot prove God exists. We cannot prove He, if He exists, tried to call us on the phone. We cannot prove He communicated truth, if He called, and if He exists. Indeed, we cannot prove that God didn't call when we were out and leave a humorous message on our answering machine. HOWEVER, We believe God exists. We believe God communicated. We believe God communicated truth. We believe God communicated truth to man. Why do we believe these things? We must, based on the Word, presuppose it is true. We must believe it is true. We must act upon it as truth, by faith.

2. We must follow some precise methods to discover what that divine truth is. Laws of methodology are essential, in that if they aren't followed the result of the study of the theologian will be in error and will be imprecise. These laws of methodology, if they be correct laws, will result in a precise, meaningful drawing out of information which, when assembled, will make up a precise package of truth. This requires much labor. It is a systematic way of doing things and requires an attitude similar to that of a scientist in that each step is precisely completed. This means that no portion is overemphasized or underemphasized. To do either would be to distort the truth.

There are basically two methods of dealing with God's Word - deduction and induction. Deduction is basically drawing out facts and details from the passages, then assembling them into a meaningful message. Induction is drawing together from several Scriptures or sources and making one overall statement which fairly represents all the passages.

You must consider the context, grammar, historical setting, author and the recipients. In other words, systematic study. In electronics you can pick up two wires and have an experience. In Bible reading you can flop it open and have an experience. However, a study of the theories of electricity or a systematic study of the Bible will give GOOD knowledge.

3. God is an infinite Being, and as a result is communicating infinite things to us. This requires that we have understanding from an infinite source, for we are finite beings. (Infinite means immeasurable or non-ending, while finite means having measurable limits. Illustration: You cannot communicate the Gospel to a newborn child. Their knowledge and understanding are so limited that they cannot comprehend.) We have the help of the Holy Spirit in comprehending God's message to us. We must give diligence to our study and wait upon the Lord for the understanding that we need. We often label things as something that we cannot understand today, yet we have not really put forth the effort to see what all of Scripture has to say about it. We must study to seek those things which we, at first, do not understand.

4. We must understand that what is received in this, or any course of systematic theology, can be ruffly equivalent to receiving a hammer and nail and being ask to build a house. We are only skimming the surface of these great doctrines, and you will go forth in your future to study and study and study some more - hopefully to begin to understand properly, all of what God has communicated to us.

5. A complete faith in the above is also a presupposition that must be in place. If a person has doubts and fears there will be problems in producing a proper theology. Even before this, faith must bring the person to the point of regeneration at which time the Holy Spirit comes to dwell and illuminate. Without faith there can be no proper theology. That is why we have the theology of hope today. (I hope there was a Jesus - I hope that He died for me.) This theology grew out of a lost man's desperate attempt to understand Scripture. It is a good idea - except that it is wrong. He had no help from God to understand the message.

DIVISIONS OF THEOLOGY:

BIBLIOLOGY: A study of the Bible. (Comes from "biblos" meaning book.)

THEOLOGY PROPER: A study of God. (Comes from "theos" and "logos" meaning God and expression.)

CHRISTOLOGY: A study of Christ. (Comes from "Christos")

PNEUMATOLOGY: A study of the Holy Spirit. (Comes from "pneuma" meaning spirit.)

HAMARTIOLOGY: A study of sin. (Comes from "Hamartia")

ANTHROPOLOGY: A study of man. (Comes from "anthropos" meaning man.)

SOTERIOLOGY: A study of salvation. (Comes from "soteria" meaning salvation.)

ANGELOLOGY: A study of angels. (Comes from "angelos" meaning messenger.)

ECCLESIOLOGY: A study of the church. (Comes from "ecclesea" meaning assembly.)

ESCHATOLOGY: A study of end times events. (Comes from "eschatos" meaning last.)

REQUIREMENTS OF THE THEOLOGIAN:

1. SAVED: The natural man does not understand, nor appreciate the truths of the Scriptures, however the saved person can understand and appreciate what God is trying to communicate to him. I Cor. 2:14 states: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

2. SPIRITUAL: The theologian must not only be saved but he must be growing in the Lord and walking with the One that he seeks to know. (I Cor. 3:1 indicates that the understanding of the spiritual vs the carnal Christian is different. Heb. 5:11 also.) Growing AND walking are needed to be a good theologian.

3. STUDIOUS: II Tim. 2:15 states, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

There is labor to be given to the study of theology, and we must be willing to put forth that effort to understand fully and enjoy the truths that God has for us in this study.

I have gone through systematic theology in four colleges and seminaries. I have taught through the entire ten sections twice in a Bible Institute, yet I find that I am still playing with the surface of the topics involved.

SOME PRESENT DAY THOUGHT ON THEOLOGY:

1. Rationalism: Rationalism is a form of philosophy which seeks to understand Scripture in light of reason. The extreme rationalist will reject scripture and hold to some other philosophy. There are rationalists in the "Born Again" camp as well. They do not reject all of scripture but when the Word gives them trouble they will reject it.

Example: During the Carter presidential campaign Mr. Carter was ask how he felt about women preaching. He replied that he thought that it was all right. (After all, his sister was a charismatic evangelist.) The reporter mentioned that Paul seems to forbid it. Carter's reply was that this was one place where he would disagree with Paul. That is rationalism - if you don't like it you don't do it.

This is where the homosexual "Christians" are, if they are indeed Christians. They have rejected the clear statements of Scripture and hold to what they want to hold to.

Fundamentalists even do the same thing when they don't want to follow the Word. We find a rational reason to say no I don't have to follow that. Example: "That is cultural" we don't have to do that anymore. Example: "That was for the age of the law when Christ was still on the earth." We don't have to do that. Be very careful what you declare to be cultural, or what you declare to be for another dispensation.

2. Mysticism: Mysticism has had several outworkings in people's lives. Some have beaten themselves, some have given up food, some have given up intimate relationships, and some have even sat long periods of time on top of flag poles. Mysticism is found in two forms, true and false. The false teaches that by working very hard to become holy, sooner or later you will become pious enough to come into a direct relationship with God. This relationship varies as to the how of it according to the philosophy followed. Some see it as a contact with God while

others view it as contact with the Holy Spirit. With this close relationship the person has direct contact with, and revelation from, God.

True mysticism is supposed to be the enlightening which comes from the Holy Spirit to the believer. It is this connection with God that the Scriptures teach and none other.

3. Romanism: Romanism is also called "Traditionalism" by some, however it should be viewed as a separate category. Romanism places the Scripture on a very high level, yet they place other things on the same level, which is not proper. (Example: The words of Christ and the apostles which aren't recorded in Scripture carry the same weight as Scripture.) What the Church says also carries the same weight as Scripture. The Pope as well, when he speaks officially, speaks with the authority of Scripture. (This is only at special times when he is commenting on doctrine and dogma.) This allows the Romanist hierarchy to accept or reject anything they want to, and their people will accept it as right and proper.

Frank Eberhardt, a missionary to Catholics in Philadelphia, who is a graduate of a Jesuit school in the East, stated that the normal priest gets about 49% of his information from Scripture and 51% from tradition. In the mass they use about 5% of Scripture in a three year cycle. This is the only Scripture read in mass.

In an article on devotions, Pope Paul II mentioned that he read a certain percentage from tradition, a percentage from Scripture and a percentage from a good Christian book.

4. Traditional or cultic: These people are similar to the Romanist, however are not Catholic. They have a similar idea. They elevate their own teachings to the level, or above the level of the Bible. Some in this category would be the Mormons, the Christian Scientists, and some of the cults that place their leaders teaching before, or equal to, the Scriptures.

5. Orthodoxy: The orthodox protestant position holds to certain things concerning the Scriptures. a. The Bible is accepted as the infallible Word of God. b. It is the ONLY rule for faith and practice. c. All information, be it scientific or philosophical, must become subject to the Scriptures. d. There is no super enlightenment, or informing, or any further revelation given. The Scripture is complete as it exists. e. The Scriptures are the truth and no man, nor organization, has been given authority to expand that truth.

LIMITATIONS OF THEOLOGY:

Pardington lists six items that limit theology. I will list these with a few comments. (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 18ff)

1. "In the finiteness of the human mind: Job 11.7; Rom. 11.33."

We as finite beings cannot fully understand an infinite Being [God] or His infinite message. This is the reason the Lord has given us the Holy Spirit to illuminate and lead us into the truths of the message.

2. "In the imperfect state of science:"

Science and revelation come from the same creative hand [God], so must coincide. If the two contradict it must result from the improper understanding of science. This has been proven over and over in history. Man has had a misunderstanding of the scientific evidence so assumes that the Scripture is in error. This is backwards to the one that believes the Bible to be true. We would assume that the scientific evidence is in error.

3. "In the inadequacy of human language: I Cor. 2.13; II Cor. 3.5,6; 12.4."

God revealed to man, and man placed those thoughts into writing. These writings were correct. The problem comes when man reads those writings and misunderstands what he has read. Language is imprecise, so we must be very careful in our study.

4. "In the incompleteness of our knowledge of the Scriptures: Psa. 119.18; Luke 24.32, 45."

We cannot know the entirety of the Scriptures, thus we cannot really have a complete knowledge of the Scriptures. As we learn from the Word, we add that information to what we already know. If the new information conflicts with previous knowledge, then we must evaluate our understanding of the new and the old and determine how the two fit together.

5. "In the silence of the written revelation: Deut. 29.29; Luke 13.23, 24; John 13.7; I Cor. 2.9."

Many things might come to mind to support this thought. The little information concerning Mary the mother of Jesus; the origin of evil; the state of the dead; etc. We would like more information, yet the Lord did not choose to reveal it to us.

6. "In the lack of spiritual discernment caused by sin:"

Some great strides in theology were made after the reformation because the people were truly seeking after God and His righteousness.

If you wonder why churches in America are dead and complacent take a look at the pastors of the Churches of America. There may be a relationship.

The growing churches of this country are quite often those with pastors that are on fire for the Lord. This is not to say that all dead churches have dead pastors for there are live wire pastors that are in dead churches trying to stir things up. I had a friend that pastored a church for three years without pumping any life into it. They were not interested in missions, nor evangelism.

They were together as a church for the social interaction among themselves. The pastor finally left after his district director recommended that he move on before he became a part of the deadness.

We aren't producing any great new thought spiritually today. Indeed, the books that I have been reading are just restatements of past truths in new ways. This is why our churches are weak. They have no new meat coming from the pulpits of our churches.

In viewing book stores recently, I have noticed the commentary section is no only Bible study books - very few commentaries. The reference book sections are only a small shelf if that big. Our churches are not spuring believers on to study for themselves.

It is our responsibility as theologians to reduce the effect of these items on our study. We must be constantly on guard to be precise and complete in our studies of the Word.

Chafer mentions how important theology is on pp 16-17 ov Volume I. He stresses that the theologian must major on theology as the lawyer majors on law. He quotes Dr. Dick in this area of theology. "It should be your ambition to excel."

BIBLIOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

As we begin this study of the Bible we need to look briefly at some short topics.

1. SUPERNATURAL: Why do we value the Bible so highly? Because it is the Word of God, because it is His Revelation to us, and because it is supernatural in nature.

The supernaturalness of the Word is seen in the fact that there is a complete unity of thought throughout the book. It is a self declaration of God, not man's view of Him. It is a system of life that works. This has been testified to through all generations. Finally, there is no way that man could have come up with the thoughts and principles of the Bible. (Examples: God dying to save man. Sin. The Trinity.)

2. AUTHENTICITY: The Bible is trustworthy, credible and authentic. Christ authenticated the Old Testament in His use of it.

If the Scriptures are true and credible then we can take, and stand on the promises of God no matter what the doubters might say. We can believe in each miracle and each supernatural occurrence which the Bible reports. We can find assurance about our future destiny. We can be certain of eternity with God.

3. GENUINENESS: This relates to the questions of dating and authorship. Were the books of the Bible written by the man that the book states, and at the time indicated? If not they are not genuine, yet if they are, then they are genuine.

If we know a book is genuine, then we can study secular history of the period and apply that knowledge to the facts that we gain from the book. In this way we can gain a more complete picture of the situation. If the book is genuine, then we can know that the history contained in it is also true history. (If secular history contradicts the Biblical history, then the Biblical history should be held as true.) If the books of the Bible are genuine, then we have no need to doubt or question what they say. If we do not understand a passage we do not need to doubt the Bible, only realize that we need further study.

We will see in this section of our study that the Bible is the revealed word of God. We will see that it is complete, trustworthy, and genuine. We will see that we can, and should understand the Bible as we study. We will see that it is the only guide for our life here on earth.

The strong warning that needs to be given by the author, and then heeded by the reader is this; Do not give up Bible study on a personal basis, because you are studying the Bible in this area of study. There is no type of Bible study that will substitute for personal, devotional Bible study.

The time alone with God, for Him to speak to you, is of great importance to your spiritual life. To set it aside and assume that He will speak to you through a study of theology is error. This is not to say that He will not speak to you from your study of theology, but the personal, devotional study of the Word is required as a prerequisite for further study in other areas.

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REVELATION

DEFINITION:

1. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary: "1 a: an act of revealing or communicating divine truth b: something that is revealed by God to man....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

2. Pardington: "Revelation may be defined as a supernatural communication from God to man, either oral or written. The term is usually understood of a written communication." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 29)

3. Bancroft, "Revelation simply means the 'disclosure of truth.' It is initiated in the divine love

and grace of God on behalf of His creatures. Revelation can be defined as the demonstration and sharing by God of His person, will, and redemptive activity." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permisssion of Zondervan Publishing House. p 13)

4. Bancroft, "Horne says revelation is 'a discovery afforded by God to man of Himself, or of His will, over and above what He has made known by the light of nature, or reason.'" (Taken from the book, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Second revised edition Copyright 1976 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 25)

5. Buswell, "The word 'revelation' is of Latin derivation and means 'unveiling' It is the translation of the Greek 'apokalypsis'." Usually the word 'revelation' refers not to the unveiling, or making visible, of an object or a person, but to the making known of a truth. In Christian theology the doctrine of revelation is the doctrine of God's making Himself, and relevant truths about Himself, known to man." (Buswell, "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; p 183)

REVELATION CAN BE VIEWED IN VARIOUS WAYS:

Through nature: (Rom 1) This is probably the major source of revelation aside from the written word.

Through our intellect: We can know something of Him by looking at nature and comprehending that information.

His activities among the nations: As we see nations rise and fall we can know that some higher power is working. During the 1990's when the communist block fell into pieces, it was evident that something far above, economics, politics, or freedom was in progress.

The revelation from intellect and God's working with the nations is quite subject to man's faulty reasoning, so should be relied upon lightly.

Might I combine some of the thoughts from the previous definitions into one definition? Revelation is God's gracious showing of Himself to mankind through nature and the written Word.

TYPES OF GENERAL REVELATION:

1. GOD REVEALED THROUGH VOCAL COMMUNICATION: Samuel heard the Lord. He thought it was Eli speaking, thus it must have been audible, I Sam. 3:1-14. Several others in the Word are mentioned as having vocal communication with God as well. I will just list some of these with references for your further study. Adam, Gen 3:9-19; Abraham, Gen 12:1-3; Moses, Ex 20:1-17; Joshua, Joshua 1:1-9.

2. GOD REVEALED THROUGH DREAMS: Daniel 2:1-2 where Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which Daniel interpreted for him. It was a prophecy from the Lord via a dream. Consider Jacob, Gen 28:12; Solomon, I Ki 3:5 & 9:2; Joseph, Matt 1:20; 2:13,19,22; Wisemen, Matt 2:12.

3. GOD REVEALED THROUGH VISIONS: The vision is similar to the dream, however the person having the vision seems to be awake. Again, I will just list people and references. Jacob, Gen 46:2; David, I Chron 21:16; Daniel, Daniel 2:19 where he receives the interpretation for Nebuchadnezzar's dream; Ezekiel, Ezek 1; Cornelius and Peter, Acts 10:3-16; Paul, Acts 16:9; John, Rev 1:1.

4. GOD REVEALED THROUGH TRANCES: The trance seems to be a supernaturally-imposed sleep during which information is given. Acts 10:10 and 11:15 mention the trance of Peter when the sheet of animals came down to the rooftop, indicating that it was right and proper to accept Gentiles into the church.

5. GOD REVEALED THROUGH INNER COMMUNICATION: This is a communication between God and man without auditory information. We pray - He directs and reveals Himself to us by prayer and Bible study. Phil 3:15 "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." There is indication of this communication in the Old Testament as well. The workmen that were moved to work on the tabernacle would be one example.

6. GOD REVEALED THROUGH APPEARANCES: These were appearances or manifestations of God accompanied by an audible voice. Ex. 2:1-4:17 where Moses records the incident of the burning bush.

7. GOD REVEALED THROUGH WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: This takes on two forms. a. The handwriting of the Lord. Dan. 5:5 where the man's hand wrote on the wall for Belshazzar's benefit. The Ten Commandments also would fit into this category. b. The written word of the Old Testament was quoted at times in the New Testament to show the fulfillment of prophecy.

8. GOD REVEALED THROUGH EVENTS: I'm sure that the people heard a very clear warning when Ananias and Sapphira died, as well as when Herod was eaten by worms. (Acts 5 & 12:20ff respectively.)

Other examples of this: History as recorded in the Word; History (Biblical) as it is being proven by archaeologists; As God directs history, Alexander fell - Hitler fell - only God's help allowed the west to win WW II.

There are some other items that probably fit here that could be classified as nonverbal revelation. Moses, burning bush; Moses/Israelites, thunder and quakes at Sinai; Israel, darkness and quake at

the cross; Aaron, budding rod; Elijah, calling down fire from heaven; etc..

9. GOD REVEALED THROUGH THEOPHANIES: A theophany is an appearance of God to man. We tend to view these as in the form of man or angel, though the burning bush, the pillar of fire, the pillar of smoke and others were also theophanies. Abraham, Gen 17:1,22; 18:1; Isaac, Gen 26:2; Jacob, Gen 32:30; Moses, Ex 3:2-6; 33:11; Gideon, Jud 6:12,14-18; Elijah, I Kings 19:7.

10. GOD REVEALED THROUGH NATURE: I have never seen a good study done on this subject. We know from the Word that it is true, but a listing of some of the ways we can see God in nature has some good possibilities for witnessing to the doubter of God. A few items that might help someone get started on this study: The infiniteness of God can be seen in the vastness of the universe, the creativity of God can be seen in the symmetry of nature, the variety of God can be seen in the millions of different faces we have seen. All of these shadow a higher power that must exist.

Nature declares His handiwork, Ps 19:1-3; declares invisible things of God, Rom 1:20; and is God's witness, Acts 14:17

11. GOD REVEALED THROUGH ANGELS: They announce things to man, and direct people, thus making God known. This shows one of the functions of the angelic host. Lot, Gen 19:1ff; Mary, Lu 1:26-37; Peter, Acts 12:7-10.

12. GOD REVEALED THROUGH THE CONSCIENCE: Man has a conscience and knows right from wrong. This must come from God - man wouldn't devise such a thought system on his own. He would consider all things right so he could indulge himself in all things.

13. GOD REVEALED THROUGH MIRACLES: These reveal the presence and power of God. They accomplished good. They were "Practical or benevolent" according to Thiessen. (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 36)

14. GOD REVEALED THROUGH MAN: Rom 1:18,19 Our very construction indicates God, as does the inner consciousness of God. It must be a great struggle for the atheist, before their heart is hardened to fight against that inner consciousness that God has placed within all of mankind.

15. GOD REVEALED THROUGH PRESERVATION: Chafer mentions that the preservation of the creation is a display of His power, love, concern and plan. Col 1:16; Heb 1:10.

16. GOD REVEALED THROUGH PROVIDENCE: He is working on His plan and is carrying that plan to its end. This is seen when someone comes to the Lord for salvation; this is seen when we see a kingdom crumble; and this is seen when we see a baby born and grow into a man

or woman of God.

17. GOD REVEALED THROUGH OTHER WAYS: Lots and the Urim and Thummin were methods of knowing God's will, in the Old Testament.

TYPES OF SPECIFIC REVELATION:

1. GOD REVEALED THROUGH THE WRITTEN WORD: The entirety of the Bible is God's revelation to man, so that man can know God and know about God. It is given that we might know God's will for our everyday lives. I Tim 3:16; Rom. 15:4

2. GOD REVEALED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST: The direct expression and manifestation of God in physical form. Jn 1:1-5; Heb 1:2

3. GOD REVEALED THROUGH THE PROPHETS: They warned and warned and warned of God's coming destruction. They also gave information of the judgments, of God's longsuffering, of God's righteousness, of His love for His name, of His love for His people and many other items concerning God. All of the Old Testament prophetic books; Heb 1:1; Num 12:6-8; Jn 9:29

4. GOD REVEALED THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT: He is our Help, Jn 14:16,17; He is our Guide, Jn 16:7-15; He was the link between God the Father and the authors of Scripture when the Bible was given.

THE MANNER OF REVELATION

1. IT WAS PROGRESSIVE: God in Heb. 1:1,2 tells us that He communicated to man through the prophets, and now through His Son. Since the apostles stopped receiving revelation, there has been no further revelation.

Adam did not know all that we know, nor does the Old Testament contain all that the Lord has for man. The revelation has been progressing through time, from Adam unto the close of the Revelation given to John. Noah knew more than Adam, and Paul certainly knew more than both Noah and Adam.

Rom 16:25,26 state, "Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:" For new information to be made known then there had to have been progressive revelation.

2. IT IS PERMANENT: I Cor. 13 speaks of when the "perfect" is come. Many believe this to be the Word of God and more specifically the canon after revelation ceased. Isa 40:8 declares, "The

grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever." There have been societies and political systems that have attempted to wipe the Bible and knowledge of God from the face of the earth, yet none have succeeded. In Communist Russia it is reported that the cross was still evident on the landscape, even though the government tried to eliminate God from their system that did not allow for a supreme being.

REVELATION IS NOT REASON

To understand revelation we must use our thinking ability. We must analyze the facts of revelation and reason out what we are studying. Reason, however, can be had apart from revelation. Revelation brings you to God while reason can only bring you to knowledge of what you study, or to a knowledge of God. Reason alone cannot produce a moral man nor a godly man. Revelation alone, on the other hand, can most certainly produce a moral man and a godly man.

THE REVELATION IS NOT INSPIRATION

The Word of God is God's message to mankind. The content of this message is the revelation of God. This content was revealed in different ways. As the writers of Scripture penned their message they were inspired, or moved along in their work, by the Holy Spirit. Inspiration was the vehicle by which the information was transmitted from God to the writer and ultimately to mankind. We will see inspiration in detail later in the study of Bibliology.

THE NEED OF REVELATION

Strong mentions, "Man's intellectual and moral nature requires, in order to preserve it from constant deterioration, and to ensure its moral growth and progress, an authoritative and helpful revelation of religious truth, of a higher and completer sort than any to which, in its present state of sin, it can attain by the use of its unaided powers." (Strong, Augustus H.. "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907, P 111. Strong p 111ff has a very detailed study on revelation and deals extensively with miracles as a type of revelation.)

THE DIVINE REVELATION IS:

1. FULL OF VARIETY: There is poetry, there is prophecy, there is history, there is doctrine and there is devotional information. All types of information, given within the context of almighty God and His value system.

2. PARTIAL: An infinite God could never reveal all that He knows to finite beings in the first place, and the volumes it would take to hold even a small portion of God's knowledge would send the earth out of orbit. We have the information that He desired for us to have. It is sufficient for our daily lives and our knowledge of Him.

3. COMPLETE CONCERNING INFORMATION COVERED: It is complete as far as it goes on those facts, but certainly not complete on what God knows of the subject.

4. PROGRESSIVE: The Lord revealed His Word in steps which mankind could handle. He didn't just dump everything on Adam at once, for Adam had no need of much of the information. Just one example of unnecessary information would be the tribulation. Can you imagine the stress Adam would have had if God had started talking about the tribulation on one of those garden walks?

5. REDEMPTIVE IN NATURE: The Word is an account of man bringing on a need for redemption, and God preparing a way of redemption.

6. FINAL: There will be no further revelation until we see Christ, and He again begins to reveal things to us. The new revelations, of the Mormons and other isms, are not really revelations to add to the Bible but perversion to lead people astray.

7. WITHOUT ERROR: The Bible is without error. Many over the years have attempted to cast doubt upon the Word by using improper scientific information. This information was believed by many, yet science has proven itself wrong many times over, and in the process proven the Bible to be correct many times over. For years the Genesis account of Sodom and Gomorrah was questioned, because the cities had not been found, yet in recent years they have found ruins under the Dead Sea that may well be these two cities.

8. A GIFT OF LOVE: God in His great love did us a great favor! Can you imagine the frustration of looking into the night sky and knowing there was a God - a creator - and never in your life knowing anything else about Him? His revelation allows us to know Him on a personal basis!

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

We can know what God wants of us because He has communicated to us through the Bible - His revelation of Himself to us. If the Bible is His revelation to us, then we should study the Word so that we may know what He has said.

God can be known! We have the Word of God for all of mankind - why don't we give it to them the world over? One of the great sins of Israel was not giving forth the knowledge of God to the nations around them. This was the great sin of the Church for many years until the modern missionary movement. The sad commentary now, in this day, is that we are reverting to the premodern missionary movement mind set. Missions is in a serious decline today in our churches.

He desires that we know Him, other wise why would He have bothered revealing Himself to us? If His Word is final, and we know it has the answers, why do we go to the books and the super

preachers for our answers? The Sword of the Lord sent out over one million pounds of books in 1988 or 1989. That cost over a million dollars in postage plus all of the retail prices of all those books that probably have never been read, and that are probably drawing dust on the shelf.

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INSPIRATION

We decided that God has revealed information to man in our study of revelation. Now we must go a step further and study inspiration. The question might come up as to why inspiration is important. It is important to us because we know there is revelation, but we don't know what part of the information is revealed and what part is man's writings. Inspiration helps us distinguish between revelation and non-revelation.

Those writings that are inspired are from God Himself, while other writings are from all other sources. Before I am classed a heretic, let me explain that all of the Bible is inspired, is the Word of God, while all other books are the non-revelation.

We will look at the method of inspiration as well as the extent of inspiration.

DEFINITION

1. Inspiration is the divine influence which renders a speaker or writer of scripture infallible in the communication of the scripture from God to man.

2. "The theological use of the term inspiration is a reference to that controlling influence which God exerted over the human authors by whom the Old and New Testaments were written. It has to do with the reception of the divine message and the accuracy with which it is transcribed." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol I, p 61)

3. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary states, "a divine influence or action on a person believed to qualify him to receive and communicate sacred revelation" (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) Note "believed to qualify" - that is some statement of doubt!

We need to understand that inspiration was caused by the Holy Spirit via the human author's, and that it resulted in a revelation of God to man.

John R. Rice sets forth probably one of the wisest pieces of logic that I have run across to this point in time on this topic.

"There are only two honest and intelligent positions to take: 1. That the Bible is what it claims to be, dictated by the mouth of God, the infallible and perfect Word of God that cannot be broken. 2. That the Bible is merely the work of men, claiming to be what it is not, that the Bible is false and not true, and with no binding authority on mankind, no direct and authoritative revelation from God." (Rice, John R., "VERBAL INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE AND ITS SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY"; Wheaton: Sword of the Lord Pub., 1943, p 5)

The term "inspiration" is found twice in the Bible: Job 32:8, "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."; II Tim. 3:16, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

The term means "God-breathed": It is the Greek word theopneustos - "theo/God, pneus/breath, tos/the "tos" ending indicates the end result of what precedes it. Thus the result of the process is God breathed. Possibly a more technical way to put it would be OUTSPIRATION, for God breathed it out.

THE WHOLE OF THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED:

1. At the writing of II Tim 3:16 the Old Testament was certainly indicated. The Old Testament was complete at this time and Paul was attributing inspiration to it.

2. II Timothy would also relate to any New Testament books written prior to II Timothy. This covers all but John I, II, III, Revelation, Jude and possibly Hebrews. (It depends on who you believe wrote Hebrews and when you think that it was written.)

3. II Pet. 3:16 states that Paul's writings were scripture. "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

4. Paul validates Luke by quoting Luke with Deut 25:4 in I Tim. 5:18. "For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the grain; and, The laborer is worthy of his reward." Deut 25:4 mentions, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the grain" is a quote from Deut. 25:4 and Luke 10:7 states, "The laborer is worthy of his reward."

5. II Pet. 3:2 mentions, "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior;" This places the words of the apostles on the same plain as the prophets. This includes the writings of Matthew, John, Peter and Paul. That includes the following: The entire Old Testament; All books written before II Timothy; All of Paul's writings; Luke; Matthew; John; Revelation, I & II Peter; Since Mark was one of the earlier books it would be validated; and if Paul wrote Hebrews it would be included.

James and Acts are the only books not given validity by Scripture itself. If Luke is valid it would be assumed that Acts, written by Luke would also be valid.

Thus we see that the Scriptures declare themselves to be the Word of God and all is inspired by Him. Now, let us move on to the discussion of inspiration.

VERBAL PLENARY INSPIRATION

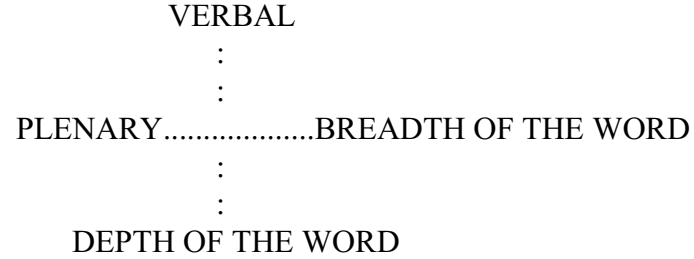
Verbal, plenary inspiration is a very necessary doctrine. Verbal indicates that every single word is inspired. Plenary means that every part is from God. Every word and every part of the Word of God is the inspired Word of God.

II Pet. 1:21 states, "For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Moved is the term "Phero" which means to "bear" or "uphold." It is used in Acts 27:17, "Which, when they had hoisted it, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, struck sail, and so were driven." In this verse the term driven is used of a ship driven by the wind.

I have always been drawn to pictures of the old Tea Clipper ships that roamed the Seas many years ago. They are so graceful being driven by the wind under full sail. The sailers worked with the wind to produce the transportation of their product. The authors of Scripture were borne along by the Holy Spirit to set down the record that God desired us to have, yet within the confines of their own writing style, time and emphasis.

The tense of the term in II Peter is passive showing that the ship was driven by the wind - something that was acting on the ship, thus when we apply this to the authors of Scripture, we can see that they had nothing to do with the influence. They were carried along as the sailors of the ship were driven by the wind. The sailors were free to do what they would on the ship but the wind and the sea determined their course. The authors of scripture were carried along and their course was determined by the Holy Spirit yet they were free to use their own style and language.

The fact that God and man were involved in the production of the Bible gives us the term of "dual authorship" which you may run across from time to time.



Some might wonder what difference it makes if we have a verbal plenary inspiration. We need to consider this for a moment.

1. Some today would have us believe that there are new revelations being given. Verbal Plenary

Inspiration must be proven for them, or we can not know they are false.

2. Some today would have us believe that the Bible has mistakes and errors in it. Again, Verbal Plenary Inspiration refutes that thought.

3. Some today would have us believe the Bible is only the work of intelligent men who tricked the world with a hoax. Again, the Verbal Plenary Inspiration refutes that thought.

THE FACT OF INSPIRATION: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. 3:16,17

THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." II Peter 1:21

Not by private interpretation. It isn't from the writer's thoughts, nor is it from their own research, although both may be involved in the gathering of the information. The gathering of information is not the end result however (Luke the historian, for example gathered information for his writing). It was by the words of men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

THE RESULT OF INSPIRATION: I would like to list a quote from Unger. (It is broken into paragraphs for ease of presentation and understanding.)

In speaking of the "verbal, plenary inspiration" he mentions the "dynamic view." Beware! Dynamic view according to some is the same as the mystical view. Use Verbal plenary.

"This view holds that the superintendency of the Holy Spirit rendered the writers of Scripture infallible in their communications of truth and inerrant in their literary productions." This is required for the Scriptures to be the very Word of God.

"Yet it leaves room for the fullest play of the personality, style and background of the individual authors." This is needed because of the vast difference in writing style and even languages involved in the entirety of the Word. (There are three languages involved, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.)

"By verbal inspiration is signified that in the original writings the Holy Spirit led in the choice of each word used (cf. I Cor. 2:13; John 10:34-36)...." ("the choice of each word," may make some nervous. If this is the case then how can style of the individual come into play? To say that the Holy Spirit chose each word, you would have to state that the Spirit, understanding the author's style assisted in the choice of each word.)

"By plenary inspiration is meant that the accuracy which verbal inspiration insures is extended to every portion of the sacred revelation, so that it is as a whole and in all its constituent parts,

infallible as to truth and final as to divine authority."

"This is the traditional teaching of the Church, and is that doctrine set forth by Christ and the apostles." This teaching preserves the dual authorship of Scripture (the divine and the human) in perfect balance, ascribing to each that consideration which is accorded in the Bible." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 528)

THEORIES OF INSPIRATION:

1. DICTATION THEORY: When I consider this theory, I am reminded of the idea of padlocking someone's mouth so that they can say nothing.

In this line of thinking, they tell us that the Holy Spirit took the message from God and imposed it upon the writer, and that the writer just recorded the words, much as a stenographer would record the words of an employer.

In short, man opened brain, and God poured it in. It then flowed out through the man's hands. This is disproven by the many styles of writing that we have in the Scriptures. The styles fit the life and times of the author. Not only are there different styles but there are different historical backgrounds involved in the scriptures.

If dictation were the method, then the texts that speak of the author's great love, or remorse over sin would become phoney and empty if the person penning the words weren't involved (The Psalmist, Daniel in his prayers, etc.).

Fundamentalists are accused of holding to this mode of inspiration but most do not. Most hold to verbal, plenary inspiration. There may be a few very strong "sovereignty of God" men that hold to the dictation theory.

2. PARTIAL INSPIRATION THEORY: This theory allows my mind to imagine the Sunday School teacher getting up to teach the class and presenting an overlay of Scripture. He has marked only three verses in red and mentions that these are the only verses that are inspired in that portion of the Bible, and that is what will be studied for the day. Ridiculous? Yes.

This theory originated in answer to the problem that many think that the Bible has errors of history and nature in it. They felt that they had to devise a theory that would allow for those errors. (Heaven forbid that they take the Bible by faith and prove the historian and scientist incorrect - which has been done in most if not all of those "error" passages.)

This position holds to two authors as we believe, however is limited to only the doctrinal parts of scripture, and not the other areas such as history and science.

If only the doctrinal parts are inspired then why carry all the uninspired around with us? Let's just rip all that uninspired stuff out and have smaller Bibles.

The problem arises - which sections are doctrinal and which are not. When Christ turned water into wine - was this section doctrinal or historic? It could be teaching miracles thus doctrinal, or trying to explain science, and not inspired. Who is the judge?

This view and the concept view are held by New and Young evangelicals. These people are probably Christians, however they are far afield of fundamentalism, and in reading some of their writings they seem more political than spiritual in emphasis.

3. CONCEPTUAL THEORY: The concept that God wanted to communicate was given to the author and the author was then free to put the concept into his own words and record those words as the Scriptures. This position even allows for the author to make up a story to show the concept. This is the basis for the thought of some that Jonah is "just a story".

This idea that God gave a concept and the man put it to words, is not a logical theory. How can one being communicate with another being without the words being important. They suggest that Jonah being in a fish, or not being in a fish is not the point. It was a story. It needn't be true - only that the reader know that he was punished for his wrong doing.

The Jews killed after David's sin of numbering the people is only to show the result of sin. It didn't really happen. No one really died.

Example: I want to communicate something to you. There was a man driving down the road and his car suddenly swerved out of control into a deep lake. The car began to sink. Luckily he was able to climb out of the window. What point was I trying to make? If you guessed that the building is on fire and you should climb out a window, you are right. Wouldn't the phrase "FIRE" have communicated the facts more readily? This theory can only lead to great confusion.

4. INTUITION THEORY: The men that authored the scriptures were functioning only on insight which they had, and there is no divine author or interference.

Now, to put that into perspective, let's assume that I have great insight into things, and indeed I feel that I do. In fact I think that I should author a book based on my great intellectual insight. Now, how many of you would like to base your eternal destiny on that book when it is written?

5. ILLUMINATION THEORY: The men were inspired and given much illumination and they recorded their own thoughts and words as they saw fit.

6. DYNAMIC THEORY: Some list this as the same as mystic, while others as verbal plenary, and some believe that both the men and words were inspired. God supernaturally inspired the man to write the words.

7. LIMITED INSPIRATION THEORY: This is the theory held by many Young Evangelicals. The Bible is inerrant in the matter of salvation, but it has errors in the historical and scientific areas. The next logical step is to question the Bible in the matters of salvation. If part is false then how can we determine which is true?

8. NEOORTHODOX THEORY: The Bible gives witness to God, however it has errors due to the infallibility of it's writers.

9. NATURAL INSPIRATION THEORY: This view would have us believe that God sought out gifted men to write His message to man. Some men are great writers of poetry, some are great artists, some are great politicians and some are just great writers of things that inspire people to do things. The writers of scripture were only men gifted in this area.

If this theory be true then we can look to the great novels of man such as Giant, the Caine Mutiny or Hawaii for general guides for our lives.

Indeed, if this theory be true then there are no guides for our lives.

10. MYSTICAL INSPIRATION THEORY: This idea might be called the mystical zap theory as well. God mysteriously zapped the authors of Scripture and they wrote. God empowered the authors to write. This was some mystical empowerment to record God's Word. I personally don't feel comfortable using the results of a persons "mystical high" to guide and pattern my life. Indeed, I do not want to trust my eternal destiny to such theories.

11. DEGREES OF INSPIRATION THEORY: Some parts are more inspired than others. When God spoke from the burning bush, or wrote the ten commandments - that's really inspired! When Luke records the remembrances of Mary there was much less inspiration involved. If this be true then who is the judge of which is the "really inspired" and which is the "not so inspired"? There would be no basis for truth if this theory were true. Can we sin a little if its not "really inspired" then sin lots when its not so inspired? If this theory was true I'd probably use the not so inspired part of the Scripture for devotions!

12. VERBAL PLENARY INSPIRATION: God in some manner moved the author along as he wrote. The author used his own style of writing, yet the Holy Spirit was moving him along so that the result is God's Word - true and complete. There were a number of methods by which He communicated with man. We have discussed these but will mention them again. Verbal communication, Dreams, Visions, Trances, Theophanies and Written communications.

The doctrine of inspiration would seem to be directly related to that information which the writer put into writing from verbal communication, however Scripture would also bear out the fact that other forms of communication were also inspired, and were also God's own message.

This is the only view that allows for differences of style and language. It is the only view that

allows God to communicate with man in a logical, real manner.

THE IMPLICATION OF INSPIRATION:

The Bible is the Word of God: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven." Ex. 20:22 The words of God Himself! God has spoken to man!

The Bible is perfect, settled, and eternal: "The law of the Lord is perfect..." Ps. 19:7; "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119:89; "Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." Ps. 119:160

The Bible is from God: "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Jer. 1:9; "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book." Jer. 30:1,2

The Bible is a message to man: "But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God" Ezek. 3:27

The Bible is a unit: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Mat. 5:17,18

The Bible will stand: "The scripture cannot be broken." Jo. 10:35

The Bible is inspired: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." II Tim. 3:16

The Bible is not from man: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." II Peter 1:21

Miscellaneous texts that relate to the subject: II Sam. 23:1,2; I Kings 16:1; Jer. 13:1; Ezek. 1:3; Eph 3:1-10 indicates Paul considered that he spoke from direct revelation; Heb. 1:1,2; John 10:34-36; Matt. 1:22; 2:15,23; 4:4,7,10; 8:17;12:17.

SOME THAT HAVE HELD TO THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE:

John R. Rice, Charles H. Spurgeon, B. H. Carroll (Who said, "Any talk about revelation without inspiration of the words is fool's talk,"), D. L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, Wesley, Finney, A.J. Gordon, Chapman, Billy Sunday, and many others.

Application of the doctrine of inspiration:

1. This is God's complete word and revelation. Nothing else will follow so we shouldn't look for it, nor desire it.

EVEN THOUGH you may have seen the commercials on television that there is more information about the life of Jesus. It is called another testament of Jesus, and is available by calling an 800 number. Yes, it is the Mormon's. They are not the only group that feel inspired revelation continues. Many Charismatics feel that the messages while speaking in tongues is revelation.

2. This is God's complete word and we have no need of psychology nor the other ologies of our day to be able to live and walk with our God.

3. The word is complete and trustworthy. When a seeming contradiction comes up in your study, you may have confidence that it isn't a mistake. You may have a confidence that you will find an answer to the problem if you are diligent and seek after an answer. Example: II Sam 24:1 mentions that God moved David to number the people. This numbering resulted in the loss of life for many Israelites. The term "moved" can be translated tempted. With James 1:13 we might see a contradiction. "Let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." The answer: Read I Chron 21:1 and see that God allowed Satan to tempt David. Add to this the information from Job that God allows Satan to test man, and you have no hint of contradiction.

4. If this is the complete word then we can find many things that will help us with everyday life situations. If it were only concepts then why bother.

5. A proper view of inspiration will lead to a proper theology and doctrine.

Example: If you hold to Verbal, plenary inspiration you will hold to a literal six day creation. If you hold to some of the other theories you will hold to other ideas. (Six days, six ages, or just that God created.)

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, our trusted companion in life. (Yes, the double meaning was intended.)

00350

CANONICITY

Canonicity is the aspect of Scripture that determines which books of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, are actually the Word of God revealed to man through inspiration.

The importance of this study is in the fact that there are many other books that were written

within the same time frame as the Bible. Some of these books have been set forth as equal to, if not part of Scripture. The believer needs to know why the Books we have in our Bible are there, and why other books written at the same time are not in the Bible.

DEFINITION:

1. Pardington states, concerning the term canon, that it is a "rule of life or doctrine." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 33)

2. Theissen states, "It means, in the first place, a reed or rod; then a measuring-rod; hence a rule or standard. In the second place it means an authoritative decision of a Church council; and in the third place, as applied to the Bible, it means those books which have been measured, found satisfactory, and approved as inspired of God." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 102)

3. Bancroft mentions, "By the canonicity of the Scriptures is meant that, according to certain and fixed standards, the books included in them are regarded as parts of a complete and divine revelation, which is therefore authoritative and binding in relation to both faith and practice." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permisssion of Zondervan Publishing House. p 20)

Bancroft lists a doctrinal statement which bears reading. "The books of the Old and New Testament as we have them today are shown to have been accepted very early by the church as comprising the complete revelation from God and as having been written by the human authors to whom they are accredited." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permisssion of Zondervan Publishing House. p 26)

Canon comes from the Greek term "kanon" which is a reed or measuring rod. This is Strong's number 2583, and it is used in Gal. 6:16, "And as many as walk according to this rule" The term probably came from the Hebrew term "kaneh" which means rod or measuring rod.

The term canon was used by Athanasius in reference to the Bible in A.D. 367 in a document called the Easter Letter, but the idea was around much earlier. The canon was set in A.D. 397 at the Council of Carthage.

The term canon does not mean that the authority or genuineness of the book came from some designation placed upon it by man or council, but that by the book's very nature, it was RECOGNIZED by the church as authoritative and genuine.

The books that are in the canon today are there because God inspired them, and from the day of their being set down, were The Word of God. God also guided the church in the recognition

process so that the proper books were found to be authoritative. The councils and people only recognized the fact they were the Word of God on an official basis.

This is a summary of guidelines that were used in determining the canonicity of the books of the Bible.

Old Testament guidelines:

1. The book must have been written, edited, or endorsed by a prophet.

2. The Old Testament books were endorsed by Christ and Paul. Christ, Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39. Paul, II Tim. 3:16.

3. The New Testament quotes all but seven of the Old Testament books. (Obadiah, Nahum, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Some list only Esther, Ecclesiastes & Song of Solomon.)

The Apocrypha, those books included in the Roman Catholic Canon, were never quoted in the New Testament. The Apocrypha was accepted as part of the Catholic Canon at the Council of Trent in A.D. 1546.

Jewish tradition tells us that Ezra gathered the Old Testament canon together. The Old Testament canon was not settled until the Council of Jamnia in A.D. 90, and then there was discussion until A.D. 200. Most feel that Ezra's time was the actual beginning of the canon even though it wasn't set by a council until later.

FOR YOUR FURTHER STUDY: I recently received an email concerning the Council of Jamnia from Dr. Andrew E. Steinmann, Ph.D. in which he states "I noticed you mention the Council of Jamnia. Such a council never met, but was the invention of 19th century scholars. While the Talmud does mention some discussions about certain books of the canon at the academy of rabbbis that was located at Jamnia and some of these can be dated ca. 90, there was no formal council that adopted or affirmed the canon. This was disproved as long ago as 1963 by Jack Lewis in his article "What Do We Mean By Jabneh?" Journal of Bible and Religion 32 (1964) 125-32."

The following reasons are presented. "(1) The testimony of Josephus that the canon was completed in the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus in the life-time of Ezra; (2) Ezra was especially concerned with the sacred books. He is called 'the scribe' (Neh. 8:1, 4, 9, 13; 12:26, 36), 'a ready scribe in the law of Moses' (Ezra 7:6), and 'a scribe of the words of the commandments of Jehovah, and of his statutes to Israel' (Ezra 7:11); (3) the character of Ezra's time was such that the collection of the sacred books may appropriately have been made in it. After the Exile the people were founding anew the religious institutions of the nation. What could be more natural than to gather the volumes of the sacred library?" (Theissen, p 103)

The Dead Sea Scrolls are also important to show that the canon was pretty much set between the testaments. These scrolls have information from all the Old Testament canon except for Esther. Along with scrolls from the canon there are other scrolls as well. Some of these are commentaries. The commentaries are only on the books that are in the canon. This indicates that the people collecting these scrolls saw a difference between the canon books and other books. Through the Dead Sea Scrolls we have authentication of all Old Testament books except Chronicles, Esther and the Song of Solomon.

The Church fathers held to the canon which we have, with the exception of Augustine. Augustine accepted the Apocrypha, though some writers state that he did not fully accept the Apocryphal books as authoritative.

New Testament guidelines:

Different men through the ages have used different criteria for determining canonicity. Luther held that if a book could teach Christ it was acceptable as scripture.

1. "...must have been written or endorsed by an Apostle, or received as divine authority in the Apostolic Age." (Pardington p 35)

Theissen expands on this and lists four criteria: a. "was the book written by an apostle" or "did the author of the book sustain such a relation to an apostle as to raise his book to the level of the apostolic books?" (Mark, Luke, Acts and Hebrews were decided with this section of the question.) b. "were the contents of a given book of such a spiritual character as to entitle it to this rank?" (This rule eliminated the Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha) c. "was the book universally received in the church?" (This test was the delay in accepting of the antilegomena books.) d. "did the book give evidence of being divinely inspired?" (Theissen, p 104)

The New Testament canon was drawn together by the church and ratified, or accepted as such, at the council of Laodicea in A.D. 363. The church worked many years prior to this to decide which books should be included in the canon.

"...the canon of the New Testament was formed gradually under the providence of God, the Holy Spirit in the churches, we believe, giving the needed discernment to accept the genuine and reject the spurious. The fact that certain books were for some time held in doubt, but later were accepted simply shows what care was exercised." (Pardington p 35)

Thiessen quotes Salmon's A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, "It is a remarkable fact that we have no early interference of Church authority in the making of a Canon; no Council discussed this subject; no formal decisions were made. The Canon seems to have shaped itself...Let us remember that this non-interference of authority is a valuable topic of evidence to the genuineness of our Gospels;

for it thus appears that it was owing to no adventitious authority, but by their own weight, they crushed all rivals out of existence." (p 121 quoted in Theissen p 103)

We must remember that the books of scripture were read in the churches, I Thes 5:27; the books of scripture were circulated among the churches, Col. 4:16; the churches were warned of forgeries, II Thess. 2:2. This would indicate that the books involved were held as more important and valuable than other books of the period. They felt that these were the Word of God.

There were basically only seven books held in question. They were called "antilegomena," or that which is spoken against. Hebrews, James, II Peter, II John, III John, Jude, and Revelation

There are three manuscripts from the A.D. 170-350 era that need to be mentioned. a. The Muratorian canon is a Latin manuscript which has our present canon with the omission of Hebrews, James, and I & II Peter. The manuscript is torn so these books may have been there at one time. This listing was discovered by Ludovico Antonio Muratori in 1740 b. The Old Syriac version Lacked only II Peter, II & III John Jude and Revelation. The rest are as they are today. c. The old Latin version (A.D. 200) lacked II Peter, James, and Hebrews.

The important part of these texts is that the person assembling them did not add other books that were in existence. Even though they left out some books that were under discussion, they did limit themselves only to books in the present canon. This shows the books were recognized as Scripture.

THE APOCRYPHA:

Apocrypha simply means something that is hidden or covered. These are Old Testament books that are accepted by the Roman Catholic Church, but rejected by Jewish and Protestant people. These are books that were written around 200 B.C. to A.D. 100.

A secondary usage of the term is the listings of books that are technically listed as Pseudepigrapha. (Kauffman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967)

The Dictionary of Religious Terms lists the following books as the Apocrypha: I Esdras, II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Esther 10:4 -16:24, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Daniel 3:24-90, 13-14, The Prayer of Manasses, I Maccabees, II Maccabees.

The Catholic Bible lists the following books over and above the usual Canon: I Esdras, II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Esther 10:4 -16:24, The Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, The Letter of Jeremiah, The Prayer of Manasseh, I Maccabees, II Maccabees. (Some list I & II Esdras as four separate books, since these are four books combined into two.

The Additions to Daniel are also entitled and listed in some listings. Also listed at times are the

PRAYER OF AZARIAH and THE SONG OF THE THREE YOUNG MEN, SUSANNA, and BEL AND THE DRAGON. These books are not found in the Hebrew Old Testament, however they are found in the Septuagint (LXX) and the Latin Vulgate.

The Roman Catholic Church accepts the Apocrypha as scripture while most of protestantism reject them. The Lutheran and Episcopalian churches do not view them as adequate for doctrine, but some do use them for illustrative purposes in the Christian life.

The non canon books have many problems within themselves which kept them from being considered part of the canon. They do have historical information which may be of value to the Bible scholar and to the Historian. Example: The book of Acts records the death of Herod in 12:23, "And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and died." We don't know if the Maccabean account of a similar death is the same, however it sheds some light on what Acts might have been speaking of.

Barnes mentions, "A similar disease is recorded of Antiochus Epiphanes, in the Apocrypha, II Mac. ix. 5, "But the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an invisible and incurable plague; for a pain in the bowels that was remediless came upon him, and sore torments of the inner parts (v 9), so that worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man," Probably this was the disease known as "morbus pedicularis." This has to do with being infested with lice. (Barnes, Albert, "NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, p 196, commenting on Acts 12:23)

Josephus in Antiq.,b. xvii. ch. vi. 5 states that Herod the Great, grandfather of Herod Agrippa, died of the same disease. In one place it is described as a slow, smelly, and painful death. It affects the mental faculties before death comes. (Whiston, William, Translator, "JOSEPHUS - COMPLETE WORKS"; Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1960, p 364-365)

REASONS FOR REJECTING THE APOCRYPHA:

Adapted from "GENERAL BIBLICAL INTRODUCTION" by Rev. H.S. Miller, for your interest and study. The author lists a total of twenty reasons.

1. It is understood by almost everyone that they never appeared in the Hebrew canon.

2. NeitherChrist, the apostles, nor any other writer, quoted the apocrypha in the New Testament, even though the books were in existence at the time of the New Testament's writing.

3. Josephus the Jewish historian rejected them.

4. Philo a Jewish philosopher of Alexandria wrote multitudes of information, and within that writing, quoted the Old Testament, yet never quoted, or even mentioned, the apocrypha.

5. The apocryphal books are listed in no catologue of Old Testament books within the first four centuries A.D.

6. Jerome rejected the apocrypha and stood solidly for the Hebrew canon. (Jerome lived ca. 347-419)

7. Inspiration is not claimed by any of the authors of the apocryphal books.

8. The books contain errors in the areas of geography and history. They contradict themselves, the Bible and history.

9. They teach and uphold beliefs that contradict the canonical books. Miller lists: "Lying is sanctioned, suicide and assassination are justified, salvation by works and by almsgiving, magical incantations, prayers of the dead for the dead, etc....."

10. There is a noticeable style and flow difference between these books and the books of the canon.

11. The books contain many absurdities.

12. When reading the Bible and then reading the apocryphal books there is a noticeable difference. The two do not belong together.

13. Most of the books were written much later than the Old Testament books were written. Some were probably written in the time of Christ.

14. The books were not held as canonical until the Roman Catholic Council of Trent in 1546 announced them a part of the canon and condemned anyone that disagreed.

15. The use of terms like "the Scriptures" in the New Testament would indicate that the writers and Christ were referring to a completed set of books, or Old Testament canon.

THE PSEUDEPIGRAPHA:

This is a group of writings that have been set forth as Scripture as well. They differ from the Apochrapha in that they claim to be authoritative. "Writings wrongly attributed to worthies such as Enoch, Moses, Solomon, etc. They are both Jewish and Christian. Examples of Christian epigrapha are the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Thomas, the Apocalypse of Peter, and the Ascension of Isaiah." (The Dictionary of Religious Terms.)

The Hebrew canon of the Old Testament breaks the books into three divisions, with the final division being broken into three subdivisions: I. THE PENTATEUCH: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. II. THE PROPHETS: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations,

Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Malachi (These men were in the office of prophet at the time they wrote.) III. THE KETHUBHIM: (Psalm to Chronicles in Hebrew Old Testament) A. POETRY: Psalms, Proverbs, Job. B. MEGILLOTH: (A scroll of papyrus or animal skin.) Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. C. NON-POETICAL HISTORICAL: Daniel (Because he wasn't in the prophetic office.), Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles

Canonicity aids the believer in accepting the books of the Bible as the Word of God. These books are to be trusted and used in the believer's everyday life. The Bible can and should be the central guide in our lives via the application of It to our lives by the Holy Spirit.

00400

AUTHORITY

I think that we all understand what authority is, so we won't dwell on definitions. We do need to understand, however, that all of mankind needs to have authority over them. Small children need to have the discipline of an authority, or they will mature not knowing, or obeying authority.

I went to a young friend's home years ago, and his little boy walked up and kicked me in the shin and asked if it hurt. I said that it most certainly did. I turned to talk to his father and the kid kicked me again. The father made no attempt to correct the boy. The boy recognized no authority at all. The third time he swung his foot my way I hooked his leg with my foot and dumped him on the floor. He got up and swung again and I dumped him a second time. He got up and walked away. He had not liked his confrontation with authority, but he learned from it. That child I'm confident grew up not recognizing his parent's authority, probably not the Lord's, or the Word's authority, and most likely no authority.

I have observed similar children that have parents that recognized the need for discipline and have begun to apply the principles. The children respond with in a day or two of any new authority structure that a parent puts in place. They not only recognize it, but they respond to it with obedience and quite often they become more affectionate and loving toward their parents and siblings.

There are two principles to "Authority" in relation to the revelation. Both are valid and necessary.

1. The Word is our authority over us in our lives.
2. It is authoritative because it is the inspired Word of God.

Someone has said that if there is anything small, shallow, or ugly about a person, giving him a little authority will bring it out. In contrast, as you allow authority to the Word, it will bring out everything deep, and beautiful in a person.

DEFINITIONS: The term translated authority in the scripture is Strong's word 1849 "exousia." It is very interesting that it is not only translated "authority," but it is also translated "power." Since you cannot have authority without power, it is reasonable to assume that the two would be closely related.

Erickson mentions, "By the authority of the Bible we mean that the Bible, as the expression of God's will to us, possesses the right supremely to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves." (Erickson, Millard J., "CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985, p 241)

He also makes a stronger statement of interest, "By authority we mean the right to command belief and/or action." (p 242) The right to command belief. The right to command action. Do we really understand and accept this concept of authority where scripture is involved? In reality this is the authority that the Word should have over us!

The term "authority" comes from the word "author." Author comes from a Latin term "auctor" which means someone that causes to grow or someone that originates something. In our case God is the originator and author of the Word, and thus is our authority! Indeed, He is the author of mankind as a race. He declared that we should exist. HE DOES HAVE AUTHORITY OVER US AS BELIEVERS, AS OVER ALL OF MANKIND.

RECOGNITION: Authority is being questioned as never before in our society. Women are questioning all authority over them, including God's authority over their bodies. Children are being encouraged to question their parents' authority by the government, social services, and the school system.

I have even seen a pastor or two simply undermine what parents were trying to do in their children's lives. The pastors meant well, but they can't stand in the pulpit and tell the congregation that the parent is wrong to do certain things. Yes, I figured you might want an example. The only illustration that came to mind was a church where many in the congregation were trying to keep the music in the home at a conservative level, and the pastor began making statements that the contemporary Christian songs were okay, and he even brought it into the sanctuary as special music at times. I may be staid, conservative, old fashioned and a stick in the mud, but a very upbeat version of Holy, Holy, Holy on a guitar at high volume is too much!

PRINCIPLES OF AUTHORITY:

1. We all have authorities within our lives. As children we had parents and teachers, as well as others that took care of us from time to time. As adults we have authorities of some sort. Teachers, employers, superior officers, police officers, Presidents, Board of directors etc.

2. Those that own billions of dollars worth of properties, or businesses still have some sort of authority over them to some degree. I saw a documentary on Donald Trump, the

multi-millionaire of great fame. He was asked many questions concerning his financial empire and it was very obvious that he had many authorities over him. The loan officers at banks were watching everything he did with great interest.

3. In the Biblical realm we must realize that the lost will not recognize the Word as an authority over their lives. Indeed, we need to take this into consideration when we become upset with how they live their lives. They are their own authority at that point in time. The Word has no authority to them. Most lost people are enjoying life as they see fit, and we have no basis to judge them on. They are doing what is right in their own eyes. We, knowing the Word can understand that. Yes, they are doing wrong, and yes, they will be held accountable for it, but they don't know that.

SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:

There is a real question where the believer's authority is. Is the Church his authority, is the Bible his authority, or is the Lord his authority? Let us consider this for a moment.

1. The Church: The Church of Rome holds that they are the final authority in the lives of their followers. Some cults find a similar power within their authoritative structure. Several of the cults even claim, and use their authority over the marital rites of their followers. You cannot marry the person of your choice. You marry the one that the leader picks for you. Sun Moon married dozens of couples. I believe it was in a stadium in New York City. All couples were paired at Moon's choice.

Getting back to the church having authority over the people, it may be growing among those of a more conservative nature. I have heard comments in sermons and conversations from some in Baptist circles that indicate that some are playing around with some fringe thoughts on this position. I heard in one sermon several years ago, by a leading Baptist seminary president that the church was the final authority in controversies of interpretation. If the "Church" is straight, this is great, but what if it goes sour? I might add that I don't think that this is the normal strain of thinking among Baptists of any generation.

The Word is our authority, and not the church, in the final analysis. Yes, the church is our general authority and it is there for regulation and control of the ministries of believers, however if a local church begins to go against the Word then there should be a parting of ways. In doctrinal disputes, we must recognize the believer's right to interpret and understand the revelation from the Lord. The church can and should guide, teach and help the believer to a proper understanding. The church is never the final authority, else all the reformers were in great error to confront, and separate from Holy Mother Roman Catholic Church.

Thomas Armitage, a Baptist, mentions, " . . . the book called the Bible is given by the inspiration of God, and is the only rule of the Christian faith and practice. The consequence is, that we have no creeds, nor catechisms . . . which bind us by their authority . . . Our churches hold that Jesus

Christ is the only Law-giver, and the only King in Zion; that His law is laid down in the scriptures, and is perfect; and therefore, they refuse to follow all forms or tradition and ecclesiastical ordinations whatever, bowing only to the behests of inspired precept, and the recorded practices of the apostolic churches, as their record is found in the Scriptures. . . ." (Quoted by Louie D. Newton, "WHY I AM A BAPTIST"; p 38) There are many other statements from history that declare the Bible has always been the final authority for Baptists.

One more quote for good measure. Pardington, "The divine authority of the Scriptures constitutes them the final court of appeal in all matters of Christian faith and practice." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 40)

2. The Bible: The Scriptures are, and can be, the ONLY source of authority that the believer can have. The scriptures declare the God that gave them, and the God of final authority.

BASIS OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD:

The only basis there is, is centered in the fact that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God. He, being the final authority, the Creator, has made known His wishes and they are binding upon His creation. II Tim. 3:15-17, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This is a very plain statement that the Word is to be an integrated part of our lives. Only an authority can reprove or correct!

If you don't believe me, then allow your children to run your house awhile, and then tell them to do something. If you have lost your authority you will have serious problems. Someone has said, "That there is still plenty of authority in the American home. The problem is that the children are exercising it!"

II Pet. 1:19-21 mentions, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, unto which ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Why take heed if there is no authority? There is no reason for us to heed. This text again declares that the prophecy was from God - an authoritative revelation of Himself.

A side thought to this is that the revelation is the only way that we can know God, or His authority. Thus, the revelation is the other side of His authority. The Word is His authority revealed to us.

Ps 19:7-9 tells us, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Again the terms of law, statutes, commandments and ordinances smack somewhat of authority! AND THEY ARE PERFECT, SURE, RIGHT, PURE, TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS!

I Pet. 1:25 states, "But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." The word is His authority over us and this text tells us that the Word is eternal. Thus we must surmise that His authority over us is eternal as well. Matt. 24:35, reiterates the same idea. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." John 10:35b, "the scripture cannot be broken," Not only is the Word and Its authority eternal, but it is also unbreakable. Nothing can come between the authority of God over us and our beings.

This is true not only of the saved but of the unsaved as well. The authority of God to the unsaved is not recognized at this point in time, but in eternity the Lord will impose his authority upon them in a mighty and terrifying way.

And one final passage. I Thess. 2:13, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it, not as the word of men but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." This verse mentions that the word is not from men but from God.

CHRIST RECOGNIZED AND USED THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES:

1. He used the Word against the Devil in the temptations. He knew that the Word was truth and that It was to be lived by. (Matt 4:4,7,10)

2. He used the word in rebuking the people. (Matt 21:42, " . . . Did ye never read in the scriptures. . . .") He knew the Word had authority.

3. He used the Word to vindicate his actions in cleansing the temple. (Mark 11:17, " . . . Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? But ye have made it a den of thieves.")

John Calvin had a very neat argument for the authority of the scriptures over the person. His main argument concerning this topic is that the inward witness of the Holy Spirit is the most powerful argument for the authority of the word. Spend some time considering his thoughts. "Calvin insisted that the testimony of the Holy Spirit is superior to reason. It is an inward work that captures the minds of those who hear or read Scripture, producing conviction or certainty that it is the Word of God with which they are dealing." (Erickson p 853)

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. We only need to teach the Word of God and allow it to speak to people. Their reaction, be it good, or bad is then a reaction to God, and not to us or our teaching.

2. In church matters, be they moral, organizational, or emotional we should endeavor to keep the Word as the standard, and not some philosophy of man.

3. If we as believers live according to the Word, and Its directions then we need not fear or worry about what others may say, be they lost or saved.

Martin Luther faced the Roman Emperor at the Diet of Worms. He told those present that he would not reject anything that he had written. He was given a day to think it over and asked the next day to recant his statements. He replied, That he would not recant unless he was confronted with Scripture and reason that would prove him wrong. He also rejected the authority of the church.

Might I suggest that Luther did not just sit down one evening and do a short Bible study and tell off the Roman Church? His break came after some very long hours of searching the Scriptures and seeking God.

If you decide to buck the church that you are a part of, you should be very sure that you are correct. Be sure you have studied many hours, talked with others for many hours, and prayed many hours before you decide your interpretation is correct, and that which is normally taught by the fundamental churches is wrong.

There is something happening in fundamental churches today that is of interest. I was saved and discipled in fundamental churches. I was trained in fundamental schools, yet I see the same fundamental churches going away from the things they once held. It is not that they have discovered new truth in the Word to show their past positions in error, but rather they have decided to go another direction, whether it contradicts their past position or not. None of these churches bothers to explain their deviation, they just do their own thing and take their congregations along for the ride.

4. When you realize the Word has the answers to life's problems you can turn to it instead of all those self-help spiritual books that are on the market.

5. Authority is from the term author. We have established that the author of the Word is God Himself. He has revealed to us all that He wants us to know. He wants to be our authority. He wants to be the author of our lives! He wants to guide and mold our lives through His Word. We need to allow this so that He truly is the Author of our life.

6. Since we have seen that the term "exousia" is translated "power" as well as "authority," we might consider the two terms as they relate to our relationship to God. We realize we are under His authority, however we probably seldom think of His power. In life we seldom think of the

power of the police officer unless we get sideways to him, and the law that he upholds. We then think of the power at length. The same is true of God. When we get side wise to His ways we will ultimately consider His power. This should be an incentive for us to remain under His authority and not to come under His power. When a person comes under His power there is often suffering, be it physical, mental, or emotional.

7. The Word is our message from God, RIGHT? We are to obey everything that God tells us to do in the Word, RIGHT? How about this one? "Greet one another with an holy kiss." Rom. 16:16a Holy kiss is in Scripture, so why not? Culture? Yes. It would be offensive today - but are the love, compassion and concern behind the kiss to be missing as well? NO. YET IT IS SO VERY MISSING IN SOME OF OUR CHURCHES TODAY. We really don't follow the authority that God has set before us in all areas!

8. There is an aspect of authority that we have not discussed which is of importance. Along with authority come the right and ability to enforce. We mentioned that the Word has authority to command belief and to command action. We should also remember that the Word is revealing the will of The Father who has the right, and certainly the ability, to enforce.

God does not normally force men to do things, yet there are times when He desires to do certain things within a person's life. At those times the Lord may, and at times does, bring to bear certain forces to move the person to action. Indeed, some believers testify of God using gentle forces to bring them to a belief in Christ. Others mention health and trial type forces to gain their attention.

It seems that we need to submit to God's authority over us that is exerted through the Word. God authored the Word, He authored mankind, and He desires to author our everyday life. May we be open to that creativity that only He can use in our lives.

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ILLUMINATION

We need to make a distinction between the illumination of the mind to the Scriptures, and the illumination theory of inspiration. The illumination theory of inspiration states that "inspiration is merely an intensifying and elevation of the religious perceptions of the believer." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 106) This is not the topic of consideration in this section.

We desire to study the illumination of the mind which occurs as we study the Word of God. This illumination is not something mystical that falls upon us when we enter the pulpit without studying for the sermon, but is the illumination that comes to us via the Holy Spirit as we study the Word.

There is also a type of illumination which people discuss that is related to salvation. It deals with the fact that all lost are in darkness, and the Lord illuminates them, or illuminates their minds so they can understand enough of the Scripture to understand the Gospel so they can be saved. (This is seen in Acts 26:17,18, "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in me.") Buswell in his theology discusses this some. He mentions that some theologians equate illumination with the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit of the lost unto salvation. (Buswell, "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; p 165-166)

Chafer goes into great detail about the darkness that is present in different groups if you want to give additional study to this. The blindnesses that he mentions are: Israel's blindness, Gentile blindness, Satan's blindness, and Carnal blindness. This blindness/illumination relates to soteriology not bibliology so we will not be discussing this type of illumination either.

We are speaking in this study of the illumination of the mind by the Holy Spirit. This illumination is dependant on the person being saved and walking with the Lord.

Illumination is not inspiration. Inspiration is the method by which the Word of God was transmitted from God to human authors in the original manuscripts. This was the communication from God to mankind. Illumination on the other hand is the act by which God the Holy Spirit assists mankind to understand that which was transmitted by inspiration.

THE NEED FOR ILLUMINATION:

The fact that mankind is fallen and unable to understand the things of the Lord is the only need. We simply cannot understand God's revelation with our foggy sin-stained minds. All aspects of man's character were affected by the fall and sin has limited our ability in all areas including our understanding.

The mind that has been cleared by the work of the Holy Spirit can understand as the Spirit allows. The regenerate mind can understand as far as the Holy Spirit is allowed to work. We need to realize that the Holy Spirit is limited in His work by the degree of sin in the life and the control that the life allows the Spirit to have.

DEFINITION:

1. Pardington mentions, "Illumination may be defined as the divine quickening of the human mind in virtue of which it is enabled to understand truth already revealed." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p. 41, 42)

It does not reveal new truth, but makes the old truth understandable. Someone said, and I don't know the source of this, "What light is to the eye, illumination is to the mind." (Matt. 16:17 may relate, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is in heaven."

2. Ryrie tells us that "generally the concept of illumination relates to the ministry of the Holy Spirit helping the believer to understand the truth of the Bible." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 116)

3. Erickson adds a thought that is probably assumed in many people's minds, but it is worth mentioning. When he is commenting on Calvin's concept of illumination, which he supports, he mentions that the thought of illumination, must have with it the idea of growth in the believer. We have already mentioned this fact; it bears repeating. There must be a continuing growth and walk in the life of the believer for illumination to occur. Erickson also adds a point that is important and that is the fact that illumination is not a one time, once for all occurrence. We are illuminated as needed. The Holy Spirit opens our minds to the possibility of understanding, as well as continues to illuminate our minds as we continue to study.

The term illumination does not appear in our New Testament. Illuminated appears in Heb 10:32. It is the Greek term "photizo" (Strong's 5461) which Strong defines as, "to shed rays, i.e. to shine . . . to brighten up . . . ." (Strong, James; "STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE"; Waco, TX: Word Books, p 77 of His dictionary)

This term seems to relate to the salvation of the reader. Unger mentions of the term, "In the early Christian Church it was used to denote the baptized." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 516)

The same term is used in Eph 1:17-18 and is translated "enlightened." The Ephesians text is of some interest and might need some of your concentration. Ephesians 1:17,18 states, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation [apokalipsis] in the knowledge of him, The eyes of your understanding being enlightened [photizo]; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,"

This seems to indicate that there is a relationship between revelation and illumination. To some there seems to be a close relationship between revelation and enlightenment. This is based on the fact there seems to be a sense of meaning in revelation of the idea of revealing that which was not known.

In essence this is what we view as illumination. We do not know because we are not illuminated. When the Holy Spirit illuminates, then we know that which was not known.

God is in the business in this age of revealing Himself to us, but this is not new revelation. He is revealing Himself to us on a daily basis, but this information has been previously revealed not only in the original revelation of the Word, but quite possibly also to other believers in the past by illumination.

Specifically, revelation in Bibliology would be the revelation of the Word, while illumination is God allowing and helping us to understand that revelation.

Chafer felt that revelation was continuing in a sense. "In place of special revelation, however, a work of the Spirit has especially characterized the present age. As the Spirit of God illuminates or casts light upon the Scriptures, this is a legitimate form of present tense revelation from God in which the teachings of the Bible are made clear and applied to individual life and circumstances." (Taken from the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 33)

Remember that he is not speaking of new "direct" revelation of God to man. Even so, I believe that he is in danger of confusing the believer that reads his writings. Revelation is completed, not continuing in any way. Revelation is complete, while illumination continues in this age to assist the believer in understanding that revelation.

TYPES OF ILLUMINATION

1. ILLUMINATION TO ALL MANKIND: There is some illumination for all of mankind that is indicated in the following verse. John 1:9, in the context of Christ being the light John mentions, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." There seems to be a sense in which that light affected all men.

What is meant in the John text? Some possibilities: a. The light that brings forth salvation of man as is possible with man's response to God. The problem with this is that every man does not respond, thus it is not really light to all mankind. b. This may relate to the idea that a person can be drawn to the Lord via the Holy Spirit. The problem with this is that the phrase "every man" is not acceptable when we know that all mankind is not drawn to the Lord. c. The revelation of Rom. 1 might be involved. This would be the thought that every man has some light via nature and from within. It relates to the fact that all man is enlightened enough to respond to God if there is a desire to know God. This seems to fit the thought of the John passage best.

Some feel that II Tim 1:10 is speaking of the same thing, however it would seem to me that the two verses are speaking of two different types of light. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," There is a light that is brought to man through the appearing of the Lord, and the gospel is the carrier of that light. It would seem that this light of

the Timothy text would be limited to those that have heard of Christ and His work.

2. ILLUMINATION TO THE NATURAL MAN: This technically is the same as number one, in that all mankind is natural man. The difference that is being made is that all mankind has some illumination, while the elect have a further illumination while they are still in their lost state.

The natural man has no desire to know God, nor can he really understand God. I Cor. 2:10-14, mentions that the natural man cannot understand things of God. I Cor. 2:15, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Yet, there seems to be an illumination of the Holy Spirit to draw the person to God. This is an understanding of the Gospel so they may accept it. (Heb. 6:4)

3. ILLUMINATION TO ALL BELIEVERS: I Jn 2:27 speaks of this type of illumination. "But the anointing which we have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." Part of the Holy Spirit's ministry to the believer is to illuminate the believer's mind to the revealed Word.

4. ILLUMINATION TO NEW BORN BELIEVERS: The new believer automatically desires knowledge of the Word. This would indicate that even the newborns have illumination available to them. This is only logical, since they receive the Holy Spirit at salvation, and He would automatically begin His ministry to them. (I Pet. 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that ye may grow by it.")

Newborn believers don't always automatically continue to grow. The illumination in their lives is limited, if not eliminated until they begin to walk with God. (I Cor. 3:1-3)

5. ILLUMINATION TO GROWING BELIEVERS: They desire to know the word and God's information to them. Ps 119:18, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of they law"; I Cor. 2:10-14, mentions that the Spirit helps believers to know things; Eph. 1:18; Eph. 3:9.

6. ILLUMINATION TO STAGNANT BELIEVERS: Stagnant believers may have to be retaught the basics due to their inadequate memory. Heb. 5:12, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food." Even mature believers need to be reminded of the basics of the faith.

Over the years I have spent speaking in different churches, I have been continually reminded of this. I tend to speak topically, because I only have one or two sessions in a particular church. In these topical sermons, I have used the basics of the faith and constantly have people telling me after the sermons that they enjoyed being reminded of some of the things that they had forgotten.

The newborns that aren't growing, as well as the stagnant believer, are in the situation they are in because they are not allowing the Holy Spirit to minister to them in the area of illumination.

7. ILLUMINATION TO FUTURE PEOPLES: There seems to be a coming illumination which will arrive when the Lord returns. I Cor. 4:5, "Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God."

Illumination is via the Holy Spirit. Jo 16:13 (This was to the apostles, but I think that it shows the principle.) states, "Nevertheless, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come he will guide you into all truth; for he shall now speak of himself, but whatever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." Since the Holy Spirit is resident in all believers then the ministry of illumination is available to all believers.

The verse also tells us that the Holy Spirit is dealing with ALL truth. This would seem to cover all of the scriptures. Jo 16:13 indicates that this is all to the glory of Christ.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. We have the promise of the Holy Spirit's help when we have problems understanding the scriptures. This does not exclude the study of, and the reading of the scriptures. It does not necessarily preclude the use of helps, commentaries and thoughts of other believers. All may add to the ultimate understanding that the believer may have.

2. It also indicates that the minister does not have a corner on the market of understanding of the scripture. It may be that he has done more homework than others, however any minister should be open to the honest questions of his students. They may well have something new that the minister has not seen in the Scripture.

3. Since we know that the Lord inspired the Word, and that it is authentic, and that it is our authority, we now have a promise that we will have help in understanding what It has to say to us. We need not worry about not doing something that we are supposed to be doing. He will show us those things that He wants us to do, or not do.

4. There is a sense in which the writer or teacher of the past and present can share their illumination with others. As they diligently study and are helped by the Holy Spirit they can help others by their teaching and writing. This may be the one redeeming quality in the vast number of books that we have on the market. Those books dealing with the scriptures can have good information in them.

You need to be careful that the writers and teachers you read and listen to are in a proper relation to the Lord before you rely upon their illumination.

5. There is a stiff dose of knowledge in the previous item for those that would teach, preach, and write. They had better concentrate upon the relationship they have to the Holy Spirit so that they know that they are properly illuminated. Keep the sin out of the life. Keep the Spirit in control of the life.

6. Our being illuminated, can help us determine truth from falsehood. Many of the false teachings today come from men that are on a status trip, trying to find new ear tickling things in the Word. If we would concentrate on the Word and what It says to us, then falsehood could not creep in.

7. If He has helped you understand it - then obey it, and share it with others.

8. One final application that we need to consider. A number of years ago I struggled for a few weeks with the why of our needing to accept Christ. I knew it to be fact, but why did God want us to do it. I thought and studied for sometime and then had to lay the study aside due to my schedule. As I was thinking over these things, my mind just seemed to receive a flash from the Home Office on the why of it. I really believe that the Lord wanted me to have that information, so gave it to me through my thought processes.

As we study, we may not immediately understand a passage. If this is the case, we need to go to the Lord in prayer and seek His help in knowing the meaning. He may lead us to other passages that relate, or He may use our thought process to share the meaning with us.

To conclude, we need to restate that God's revelation is complete. It was given to the writers of Scripture in its entirety. The Holy Spirit since has been in the ministry of illuminating the believer. The revelation was the giving forth of information that was not previously known. Illumination also is the showing of information that was not previously known. Even though both are involved in the same process, they are not the same. Revelation is complete in the Bible, while illumination is continuing via the Holy Spirit.

As we study His Word, might we willingly bow to that information which He shows to us. If we allow the Holy Spirit to illuminate, and allow the information to be integrated into our lives, we will become mature believers that are useful to our Father.

This is the result of all that God is doing in our everyday lives. As we allow Him to do these things, He gains glory. His glory should be the desire of the believer, and submitting to His illumination is an easy method of gaining and giving glory to Him that has done so much for us.

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INTERPRETATION

The previous studies have related to God's part in Bibliology. Now we want to look at man's part

in the process of understanding all that God has revealed. We need to look at interpretation.

Why is interpretation, or might I say proper interpretation, necessary? A brief look in a Christian bookstore, or in a Christian book catalog will show the need for some proper interpretation. I recently skimmed through a wholesale Christian booklist and found all sorts of doctrine. I found everything from Fundamental to Liberal, from Noncharismatic to Charismatic, and from Armenius to Calvin. Now, all of these different thoughts CANNOT be THE proper interpretation of that which God has revealed to us. If they are, then God would be the author of confusion. Since we know that God is not the author of confusion, then we must assume that some of these teachings are false. Any false teaching must come from improper interpretation, or misunderstanding of that which is studied.

Interpretation is often called hermeneutics. Just what is hermeneutics?

DEFINITION:

Hermeneutics is the science of interpreting literature. In the theological realm it is the science of interpreting the Bible. This science contains rules and regulations by which the job of interpreting is properly completed.

Zondervan Pictoral Encyclopedia of the Bible mentions that "The correct reproduction of the thoughts of another (either a writer or speaker), usually from a different language, has been called interpretation. When applied to the Bible, interpretation has been called hermeneutics," (Tenney, Merrill C.; "THE ZONDERVAN PICTORIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE BIBLE"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975)

The term hermeneutics first appeared in a book written in the 17th century. The author's name was J. C. Dannhaur. It came from the Greek word "hermeneuein" which means to express or explain.

The Bible was written in different languages and different cultures. It is the interpreter's job to get as close to that historical context as possible, and try to find the thought patterns of the writer.

A missionary to Japan that I met in the Northwest was telling me of his work. He was involved with what they were calling contextualization of the Scripture. They were trying to teach the Bible in the context of the Japanese culture. Not trying to change the word, but to teach it in a way that the Japanese could understand it, and understand it properly.

He mentioned that he was having a real problem getting a passage into a format that he thought the students could understand. It was a difficult passage. He presented the idea to some of his students. They immediately understood the principles and ideas from the Bible without his explaining it. He discovered in speaking with the students that the writer of Scripture was using some Eastern thinking in his presentation, and that they understood it immediately - indeed,

much easier than the missionary when he first studied the passage.

We need to get as near to the original author as possible to try to understand just what he was saying to the recipients of the book.

If you remember the term presuppositions, you will remember that we settled on one in particular. We decided that literal interpretation, or the plain, normal interpretation of a passage, was the method to use.

There are a couple of terms that we need to mention.

HERMENEUTICS: These are the rules and methods used to interpret the Scriptures.

EXEGESIS: Exegesis is using the principles of hermeneutics while seeking the meaning of the scriptures. "The science of interpretation called hermeneutics is the art of determining the true meaning of Scripture. Hermeneutics must be distinguished from exegesis, which is application of the laws or principles of interpretation." (Reprinted by permission: Chafer, Lewis Sperry; Walvoord, Editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY" Abridged Edition; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988, Vol. 1, p 101)

TYPES OF INTERPRETATION: The wisest words that I have run across in my studies of interpretation are those of Benjamin Jowett in ESSAYS AND REVIEWS written in 1860. "Interpret the Bible like any other book." That simply means that we should read it, and understand it in plain terms.

ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION: Normally this method takes texts that can't be understood as plain and literal, and makes the words only symbols of what was originally stated. The original meaning of the text may be eliminated altogether.

Two problems:

1. To use this method leaves one with no authority. Every person trying to interpret the text will come away with his own interpretation, and there can be none that are proven correct.

2. To use this method leaves a person with fiction in the Word, for none of the words have meaning as they are read, or as they were recorded. In essence God could have set monkeys before typewriters and taken their writings and given them to man so that man could give them meaning.

Most people that are allegorists do not use a completely allegorical approach. They take things in their easy literal sense until it doesn't fit their thinking, or becomes too burdensome, and then they shift to the allegorical.

The system has been around for a long time. Origin has been credited with coming up with the system originally. The system grew out of his Jewish philosophy and some of the philosophical thinking of Plato.

Ramm mentions, "The curse of the allegorical method is that it obscures the true meaning of the Word of God and had it not kept the gospel truth central it would have become cultic and heretical." He continues, "The Bible treated allegorically becomes putty in the hand of the exegete." (Ramm, Bernard; "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, p 30)

Ramm tells of Clement of Alexandria, and his position. His position is of interest. (I have adapted this for our study.) Clement held that there were five possible meanings to any Scripture passage.

1. The historical account that the text mentions, was a real historical event and as such conveys information. 2. There may be a doctrinal idea in the text that may be moral, religious or theological in scope. 3. The prophetic side may well be present as well. 4. There can be a philosophical side to the text that might see some meaning in the people or happenings of the text. 5. There can be a mystical sense to a passage that is a deeper spiritual meaning that is drawn from the people and events.

I gather from this that Clement wanted the best of all interpretation. He wanted the literal historical, as well as that deeper mystical meaning of the allegorical interpretation.

LITERAL INTERPRETATION: This system is at the other end of the spectrum. It has been charged that this system does not allow for figures of speech, but this is not the case. We will see it in detail later.

SEMIALLEGORICAL OR SEMILITERAL INTERPRETATION: This method would be a mixture of the previous two systems. Which you hold to, depends on which system you use the most.

Ryrie quotes Mounce, from his commentary on Revelation. He "exhibits a semiliteral exegesis. He states that Armageddon should be taken seriously but not literally. It 'portrays the eschatological defeat of Antichrist . . . but does not require that we accept in a literal fashion the specific imagery with which the event is described' (p. 349). Concerning the Millennium he favors the idea that 'John taught a literal millennium, but its essential meaning may be realized in something other than a temporal fulfilment' (p. 359). 'The millennium is not, for John, the Messianic Age foretold by the O.T.'" (p.359)" (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 111) To me, of the two items, the millennium would be harder to take literally than Armageddon.

Oswald T. Allis (in PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH) suggests that the term "spiritual

interpretation" is better than allegorical, and argues for a combination of the two.

Allis, in setting forth rules as to how you tell which method to use states: 1. "Whether you should interpret a passage figuratively or literally depends solely on which gives the true meaning." So how do we determine the true meaning if we don't know which will produce the true meaning? 2. "The only way prophecy can be understood literally is when its literal meaning is clear and obvious." Were the first coming prophecies clear and obvious? Some were - some weren't. 3. "The interpretation of any prophecy hinges on the fulfilment of it." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 112 quoting Allis, Oswald T.; "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH"; Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1945, pp 16-19) The prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were fulfilled literally so you interpret them literally. However, Allis states that the second coming passages need to be interpreted allegorically. HUMMMM.

You interpret literally unless it is prophecy, or unless it bothers your theology. SOME METHOD OF INTERPRETATION. I HAVE TO WONDER HOW THESE MEN WOULD REACT TO THEIR CHILDREN INTERPRETING WHAT THEY TELL THEM TO DO, ALLEGORICALLY IF THEY DESIRED TO - WHEN IT DIDN'T FIT WHAT THEY WANTED TO DO.

In the end Ryrie gives Allis credit for trying to systematize his method of interpretation, however mentions what we have seen before and that being, if you interpret allegorical you are more than likely going to be an Amillennialist and if you follow the literal method of interpretation you will become a premillennialist.

THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION: That which interprets scripture in such a manner so as to produce an interpretation to fit your theology. Daniel Fuller in a dissertation presents such a system of interpretation. "In order to preserve the unity of the Bible, he says that we must use the principle of 'theological interpretation' which means interpretation that does not result in two purposes of God in the Scriptures (one for Israel and one for the church). The consistent use of literal interpretation leads to a distinction between Israel and the church, while theological interpretation does not." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 113)

No matter if the literal says one thing and I believe another. I just interpret the way that will bring out my belief. A very convenient system of interpretation.

LITERAL INTERPRETATION: I would like to illustrate the need for literal interpretation. If I were going to cut down a tree and was afraid that the ant hill about six feet from the tree would be destroyed, I would try to communicate with the ants to tell them of the danger. Now, this is similar to God wanting to tell us of the danger of Hell. I begin to try to understand the ant language, and as I do, I begin to plan just how I am going to tell them of the danger of the tree. When I have finished learning the ant language I tell them that there is a large cloud coming over

the horizon. This is how I tell them I am going to cut down a tree that may smash them all. You see the cloud coming over the horizon actually pictures the falling tree that is about to come.

At any rate the ants think through the message and decide that they have clouds coming over every day and it is no big deal so they continue on their way. I, in turn, get disgusted with them for not listening and cut down the tree.

Oversimplification? To a point, however the good Lord has decided that HE wants to communicate with us to tell us of Himself. Why, in the world, would He couch his information in language that has no meaning.

The Word already tells us that we can't understand the Word without the Holy Spirit's illumination. He doesn't really have to couch His message in words that we can't understand.

How would you like to have to interpret the syllabus for a class in college allegorically? Every one of you would decide what it meant to you, and the teacher would grade on the literal interpretation.

CONFUSION PLUS is the result of allegorical interpretation. Literal interpretation is the only method that leads to a unified, systematic and logical conclusion.

God not only wanted to communicate with man but He created the mode of communication. He gave language to us and nowhere in the Word do we have any instructions about how to use it. It must be assumed that we are to use it the most logical way that we can and that is the plain and simple literal way.

Ryrie comments on this, "THE PURPOSE OF LANGUAGE. The purpose of language itself seems to require literal interpretation. That is, God gave man language for the purpose of being able to communicate with him. God created man in His image which included the power of speech in order that God might reveal His truth to man and that man might in turn offer worship and prayer to God." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 113)

Had God wanted us to communicate on a deeper level, He would have told us about it, and He would have told us how to do it.

A woman evangelist in California, a few years back, had a revelation from God and He told her that the Bible wasn't written for the normal person to understand. He had written it so that man would think that they understood it, however she was his choice to teach man how to understand it. She had revelation concerning the vocabulary of the deeper meaning of Scripture and she spent hours on the radio explaining what the words of Scripture really meant. Mud isn't really mud, it is really soap, so when you get mud on your pants it's really soap and you can brush it off. There is little difference in her thinking and that of the theologian that does not attempt, at all

times, to interpret literally.

What is the first place where LITERAL INTERPRETERS leave their own method of interpretation? The book of Revelation. When people enter this book they tend to lose all contact with the real world of interpretation. Very few men I know of today have even attempted to interpret this book literally. In your ministry try it - you'll like it.

Since prophecies of the first coming were fulfilled literally it is reasonable to assume that the prophecies of the second coming will also be fulfilled literally. There is no reason for the interpreter to interpret the book of Revelation in any way other than the normal literal approach! Yes, there are portions of the Revelation that are pictures and symbolic, but they are introduced as such within the text.

Ryrie lists four principles of NORMAL HERMENEUTICS. I have adapted these for our study. Items to consider in interpretation:

1. Grammar: The words carry the message to the listener. We must attempt to understand the words as they were used at the time that they were recorded. Not to do this will result in much error and confusion.

2. Context: The words and sentences that you have been studying will of necessity have to be compared to what was mentioned earlier, and later in the text, to fully understand the intent of the Lord.

3. Context of the entire Scripture: When you understand what the person hearing or reading the words understood, then you need to compare that to the context of Scripture to properly understand all that is meant. We must interpret every part within the context of the whole.

4. Progressive revelation must be considered: God revealed Himself progressively over time, and we need to understand that what was revealed to one person in the Scripture, may find change later in Scripture. Example: The sacrificial system was the requirement under the law, is not required in the Church age, and will be reestablished in some form in the Kingdom. The idea of progressive revelation does not imply that later revelation contradicts, nor negates current revelation.

In this section we might mention that the recipient of the book may be of importance. The books to the Jews must be viewed somewhat differently than the epistles of Paul to the churches. Many things had happened and changed between these times. Much will apply differently in our age.

I've added two items of importance.

5. The message of the book: How you approach a book will be partially determined by what the book is about.

6. Objectivity: We must go into the Word to see what it has to say to us, and not to see what we can say to others through it. We all have preconceived ideas, but they should be left out of interpretation.

I wish that I could give proper credit for the following quotation, but I do not know where it originated. I found it in some of my notes. It is of significance, so will be included. I trust that the originator will forgive its uncredited use. "If the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense or you'll end up with nonsense." I trust you will reread that and consider it as you seek to interpret the Word.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. Remember the words of Jowett? "Interpret the Bible like any other book." Can you imagine the allegorist reading the Caine Mutiny, or the Magnificent Obsession, and interpreting them like he interprets Scripture?

2. The seriousness of proper interpretation cannot be overemphasized in my opinion. If you are going to dare to teach or preach you must be sure that what you have prepared is really what the Lord had to say in the first place! Be very careful of how you use the Word. Be very careful how you prepare.

Don't be satisfied with a bit of surface study! Go deeper to be sure the passage really says what you are going to say it says!

3. It seems to me that any system of interpretation other than plain, literal interpretation is a step away from the idea that the Word of God is for all believers of all ages, education levels, and abilities.

If you move into some of the other areas of interpretation, it seems that you remove the Word from the hands of all, and place it in the hands of the elite that know how to apply their special principles.

00550

ANIMATION

We all know what animated cartoons are, indeed, we probably know all too well. They are drawn pictures that are shown in quick sequence, and then filmed to give the impression that the pictures or characters are alive.

We want to look at the thought of animation in relation to the Word of God. There are some various aspects to animation in the context of the Word. The Word itself is animated, or living,

and It can make a person animated as well, via the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

DEFINITION:

The term animate comes from the Latin word "anima" which means breath, and this symbolizes life itself. The term "anima" comes to us in our English words; animal, animated, inanimate, animation, and animosity.

1. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionry mentions of animated, ".....endowed with life or the qualities of life....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

2. Animation is the quality of the Word that gives it the characteristic of life, as well as the quality of the Word of God that produces living and lasting effects in the person reading it.

Animation is a term used to describe an attribute of the Word of God. The Word is active, or animated - it is alive. Not that it will ever get up on it's hands, and knees and crawl, but it can move the reader emotionally. It can bring them to salvation. The Word is faithful, righteous and powerful. It is not a dead lifeless book, but a living Word, capable of giving life. No other book can boast of such an attribute.

The Bible can, and does affect the nonbeliever. Let us look briefly at It's effect on the unsaved: The Word can give him faith, Rom 10:17; The Word can give him wisdom IN RELATION TO SALVATION, Ps. 19:7; The Word can give him salvation, Ps. 19:7; I Pet. 1:23.

Not only does the Word affect the nonbeliever, but It also affects the believer. It's effect on the saved: The word strengthens the new believer, I Pet. 2:2; The Word builds up the older believer, Acts 20:32; The Word can purify the believer's life, Eph. 5:26; The Word can bring change in the mind and in the heart of the believer, Hebrews 4:12

There is indication that a proper understanding, and acceptance of the Word is necessary for the animation of the Word to be effective.

A quotation might sum up what we have seen thus far. There are many that have witnessed the life changing effects of the Word, and this is one of those accounts: "Experiences in the past two years have profoundly altered my thinking. The authority and truth of Scripture is not an obscure issue reserved for the private debate and entertainment of theologians; it is relevant, indeed critical for every serious Christian - layman, pastor, and theologian alike.

"My convictions have come. . .from life in what may be termed the front-line trenches, behind prison walls where Christians grapple in hand-to-hand combat with the prince of darkness. In our prison fellowships, where the Bible is proclaimed as God's holy and inerrant revelation, believers grow and discipleship deepens. Christians live their faith with power. Where the Bible

is not so proclaimed (or where Christianity is presumed to rest on subjective experience alone or contentless fellowship) faith withers and dies. Christianity without biblical fidelity is merely another passing fad in an age of passing fads. In my opinion, the issue is that clear-cut." (Boice,; "STANDING ON THE ROCK"; Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1978, p 108. This was a quote from one of Chuck Colson's books.)

Two terms are related to our study of animation.

1. The term "zao" is defined as "to live, be alive" by Vine. (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co; Strong's number 2198)

This term is used in Heb. 4:12 as a clear statement of fact that the Word is living. "For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. . . ." We see the identical thought given in I Pet. 1:23.

The term is also used of:

God, Matt. 16:16
The Son incarnate, John 6:57
The Son in Resurrection Jo. 14:19
eternal life, Jo. 6:57
the present state of departed saints, Lu. 20:38
the hope of resurrection, I Pet. 1:3
the resurrection of believers, I Thess. 5:10
the way of access to God through Christ, Heb. 10:20
the manifestation of divine power and authority, II Cor. 13:4b
bread (figurative of Christ), John 6:51
a stone (figurative of Christ), I Pet. 2:4
water (figurative of the Holy Spirit), John 4:10
a sacrifice figurative of the believer, Rom. 12:1
the oracles, Acts 7:38
the physical life of men, I Thess 4:15
the maintenance of physical life, Matt. 4:4
the duration of physical life, Heb. 2:15
the enjoyment of physical life, I Thess. 3:8
the recovery of life from the power of disease, Mk 5:23
the recovery of life from the power of death, Matt 9:18.

Do you get the idea that this life that the Word has, is considered to be life, as in the plain, literal interpretation of life. It is living, and it is really something!

2. The term "energees" (Strong's number 1756) has the idea of "in work" according to Vine.

(Vine's Word Studies) It is used in I Cor 16:9; Philem 6; and Heb. 4:12. We gain our terms energy, energetic etc. from this term. It is translated effectual in the first two texts and powerful in the Hebrews text.

The Word is living and powerful, in and of Itself. It is also living and powerful in people's lives.

When I was considering going into the ministry and college, I began to pray that the Lord would make it clear to me that He wanted me to leave at that particular point in time. My father had no one to care for him, and he had been given two years to live, about a year and a half prior to this point in time. I really didn't feel that it was right to leave him, and travel twelve hundred miles away to college, however I told the Lord we would do as He directed. I had in mind that if the Lord sent us away that He would take care of the details of my father.

One evening, as time was running out, I opened the Word to read, and my eyes fell upon two verses that sent us forth to college. "And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Luke 9:59,60

The neat part of the story is that shortly after our decision to leave was made, my brother called to tell me that he was moving back home to help care for our father. My father found out a few months later, that the doctors had made a bad diagnoses, and that he wasn't dying. He lived for a number of years after we left. Over the next few weeks the Lord closed the door to the college we had planned on attending, and led us to attend a college that was only three hundred miles away. We were able to spend many weekends with my father over the years.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. If this is the Word of God, and it is perfect, and it is without error, and it is powerful, and it is living, then why don't we respond to it more as believers. Do we really believe that it has power to change our lives? Do we really believe that it has power to change the lives of others? Do we really believe that it has power to keep mankind out of eternal HELL?

The answers to all of these questions is "YES". Indeed, if we are believers, we can think back, and see that the Word has, indeed, changed our lives drastically!

If we see that change in our life, then why aren't we more ready to share the Word with people that need their lives changed by the Word?

2. If we really believe that the Word can change lives, why are we so bent on telling people of the problems in their lives? Why not share a reference or two with them, so they can find out what God wants them to be like and trust the Word to change their life.

We worked with a lady that was seeking "the baptism" and tongues so hard that she couldn't see

anything else for several weeks. She finally, through the ministry of the Word and the Holy Spirit, realized that it wasn't the baptism and tongues that she needed - it was the Lord Jesus that she needed. She accepted the Lord - a real changed life!

3. In family situations when there are problems why is it that we so often use our own angry words to settle a dispute, when we could allow the living Word to do the job much better?

4. If the Word has a power and life that no other book has then why do we spend so much time in our Sunday Schools etc. in books instead of THE BOOK? We get a newsletter from a fundamental church and the youth group is always studying some book rather than the book. Teenagers can respond to a living Word as well as children and adults.

5. It alone is living - it requires no man to make it live! Recently I saw an ad for one of the California evangelical elite saying that the man makes the Bible live! WRONG! God made It a living thing when He delivered It to man. We have no need of any man to make it live for us.

6. I would like to take a longer look at two verses that we have read. I Pet 1:23 and Heb 4:12.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." I Pet. 1:23 It can cause the rebirth of a person, It is incorruptible, It is living, It is eternal.

"For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12 It is powerful, It is sharp, It pierces to divide soul and spirit, It discerns our thoughts, It discerns the intents of our hearts.

Can we say from those things that the Bible can, on it's own, without any help from us, bring someone to know the Lord? Yes. The Gideons have testimonies of people that have read Bibles in hotels and motels and found the Lord.

A South African missionary I met once shared in his personal testimony that he knew he needed something, and felt that the Bible might have his answers. He purchased one, and shut himself in a room for two days and did nothing but read the Bible. While reading the book of John, he found his answers and accepted the Lord. Yes, the Word is alive and can make lost men live.

7. Since we know that it is eternal, and we know we are to respond to that part of it that we understand (illumination), then we might assume safely that if we do not respond, that it will be the record used against us when we stand before the Lord. Did you ever wonder what other books are going to be at the judgments? (Rev 20:12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.") Do you suppose that one of those books will be the living Word?

The Word of God is living. God does not need any preacher, nor evangelist, no matter how famous, no matter how eloquent, no matter how brilliant, to make His Word live. It lives, because of Its very nature. It lives, because It is the message to man from a living God. DON'T FALL FOR THE FALSE ADVERTIZING THAT YOU HAVE SEEN.

GOD'S WORD IS LIVING.

00600

PRESERVATION

Most doctrinal statements which speak of inspiration usually mention at the end of their statement that their belief extends to the original manuscripts. This is true, yet there has always been a gap in thinking to me in these statements. If God inspired the Scriptures in the original manuscripts, but did nothing else, how can we know that what we have today is valid, authoritative, or useful? I was always desirous of more than the statement "in the original manuscripts."

It is this addition that I would like to address in this section. Preservation is often assumed, yet seldom mentioned or examined. Hopefully this section will address this gap in the normal inspiration study.

DEFINITION:

1. In jam it means to keep the fruit unspoiled, and so it is in the Scriptures. God preserved the Bible in it's transmission to our time.

The Word was verbally inspired by God through human authors. That inspired Word was in the transmission of the original manuscripts. Preservation would teach that God preserved the transmission of that information to our time in a most useable and correct work.

2. Pardington, in speaking of all that God has created quotes Strong (Both were speaking of the universe.), "Preservation may be defined as "That continuous agency of God by which He maintains in existence the things He has created together with the properties and powers with which He has endowed them". (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 101)

This is one area of preservation, however we do not wish to speak of this type at this time. There is also the preservation of the soul, all things, and physical body.

Unger mentions the preservation that we are interested in under the topic of inspiration. "The Holy Spirit, it is reasonable to conclude, also had a definite ministry in preserving the inspired Scriptures through millennia of transmission." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE

DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 528)

There are three sections to the preservation of the Scripture.

First, that the books of the canon were preserved throughout the time before they were viewed, or held as canonical.

Secondly, that since the books were set down by their authors the books have been preserved not only until the canon was set but even until our day.

Thirdly, I believe we can be assured that the Lord will also preserve His word until eternity future.

ARGUMENTS FOR PRESERVATION FROM SCRIPTURE:

1. The Word is declared to be eternal: To be eternal the Word would need to be kept intact from Its inception throughout all time and into eternity. (Ps. 119:152; Matt. 24:35; I Pet 1:23b; Ps. 12:6-7; Ps. 119:89)

2. Christ is the Word and Christ is eternal, so how can The Word change, even if there were no doctrine of preservation? The lack of preservation is a foolish thing to contemplate. (Jo. 1:1)

3. The book of Revelation contains a warning to those that would tamper with it's contents. By application, at the very least, we may say that God is in the business of watching over His Word and how it is transmitted! (Rev. 22:18,19) In a similar vein the book of Deuteronomy contains a warning to the Israelites as well. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish anything from it," (Deut 4:2)

4. One other item that clinches this doctrine of preservation is that Christ and the apostles, when quoting the Old Testament texts were using copies of copies, not the originals. This would show that Christ and the apostles held the copies to be of the same quality and authority as the originals.

5. Matt 5:18 mentions, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." This promise DEMANDS PRESERVATION!

The Westminster confession indicates that preservation has been believed even though few have written on the topic. Speaking of the Scriptures, "...being immediately inspired by God and by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages...." (Pache, Rene, "THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE"; p 186)

ARGUMENTS FOR PRESERVATION FROM LOGIC:

1. If God went to the trouble to communicate the Word, His revelation of Himself, to man so that man might know Him, it would be sheer foolishness to allow it to become corrupt along the way through the years, so that at some point in history it was not a true view of Him.

2. If God preserves as worthless a lot as man and beasts, I am sure that He would preserve the Word, which is His revelation to His creation. (Ps 36:6; Ps. 145:20 mentions that he preserves those that love Him)

3. Consider a few texts. Col. 1:16 mentions, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones,or dominions, or principalities, or powers - all things were created by him, and for him; And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

Heb. 1:3, "Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power,"

Neh 9:6 mentions the preservation of the creation.

It only follows that if He protects all things as the above verses tell us - then He must preserve the Word for He preserves all things!

4. There have been those that have tried to destroy and eliminate the Bible, but we can see how much effect they have had. The Bible still is in existence.

"No other book has ever been the object of such antagonism as has the Bible. In both ancient and modern times, kings and priests have tried desperately to destroy it and unbelieving intellectuals to ridicule and refute it. Untold numbers of copies have been burned and mutilated and hosts of its advocates persecuted and killed. But it has only multiplied the more, and today is read and believed by more people in more nations and languages than ever before, continually remaining for centuries the world's best seller." (Many Infallible Proofs by Henry M. Morris; p 15.)

In the conclusion of one of their chapters Geisler and Nix have a few comments that relate to the topic at hand.

"The history of the New Testament text may be divided into several basic periods: (1) the period of reduplication (to c. 325), (2) the period of standardization of the text (c. 325-c. 1500), (3) the period of crystallization (c.1500. 1648), and (4) the period of criticism and revision (c. 1648-present). During the period of criticism and revision, the struggle between proponents of the "Received Text" and the "Critical Text" has been waged. In the final analysis, there is no substantial difference between their texts. Their differences are mainly technical and methodological, not doctrinal, for the textual variants are doctrinally inconsequential." "Thus,

for all practical purposes, both texts convey the content of the autographs, even though they are separately garnished with their own minor scribal and technical differences." (Taken from: "A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE"; Geisler, Norman L/Nix, William E; Copyright 1968, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.; p 464)

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. If the Bible was inspired, if it is authoritative, if it is the Word of God, and if He has preserved it, then we may put our entire trust and faith into the Word.

2. When someone becomes worried as to the differences between the texts we can assure them that THE BIBLE THAT WE HAVE IS THE BIBLE THAT GOD WANTED US TO HAVE! HE HAS PRESERVED IT UNTO OUR TIME, IN THE FORM OF MANY MANUSCRIPTS, AND AMONG THESE MANUSCRIPTS THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES THAT CHANGE ANY DOCTRINE.

3. The preservation of the Scripture might also be of encouragement to one that is having difficulty believing the preservation of the saint in his salvation.

00650

INERRANCY OF THE SCRIPTURE

This is a relatively old doctrine, though little had been done to develop it until more recent years when the Christian community allowed the liberal questions and attacks to shake their belief and confidence in the Scriptures. Since, there has been good research and the doctrine has been developed. Most conservative Christians would have believed it in years past but probably hadn't really thought that much about it.

In recent years there has arisen confusion as to the meaning of the term. Some have used terms similar to those used by conservatives to discuss the Scriptures. These men do not believe that the Bible is without error.

Enns describes the dilemma nicely. "The result, as Charles Ryrie has shown, has necessitated the inclusion of additional verbiage. To state the orthodox view it is now necessary to include the terms 'verbal, plenary, infallible, inerrant, unlimited inspiration!' All this has been necessitated because of those who have retained words like inspiration, infallible, and even inerrant while denying that the Bible is free from error." (Taken from: "THE MOODY HANDBOOK OF THEOLOGY"; Enns, Paul; Copyright 1989, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 166)

Definitions:

1. The Scriptures are without error of any kind in all that they say.

2. Webster states that inerrancy means "free from error."

3. Enns suggests, "The teaching that since the Scriptures are given by God, they are free from error in all their contents, including doctrinal, historical, scientific, geographical, and other branches of knowledge." (Taken from: "THE MOODY HANDBOOK OF THEOLOGY"; Enns, Paul; Copyright 1989, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 636)

Inerrantists are people that believe that the Bible is without error, while Errantists are people that believe that there are errors in the Scripture.

OTHER DEFINITIONS:

1. An errantist writes, "The Bible is infallible, as I define that term, but not inerrant. That is, there are historical and scientific errors in the Bible, but I have found none on matters of faith and practice" (Ryrie quoting Stephen T. Davis, THE DEBATE ABOUT THE BIBLE, Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986 p 115)

This demands that either God gave men His message and the men added in what they wanted, or that God gave the writers of Scripture information that was not correct. Neither are acceptable to the theologian that believes in infallibility.

2. The Lausanne Covenant stated, "inerrant in all that it affirms." Both errantists and inerrantists could agree to that statement, though the inerrantist would naturally desire to take the statement further.

3. The International Council on Biblical Inerrancy in Chicago stated, "Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching..." They then added nineteen articles to define what they said.

4. The Roman Catholics hold to an inerrant scripture, but only in the area of salvation.

5. The Neo-evangelical holds to either inerrancy or non-inerrancy. Some of the old timers that we now call established evangelicals held to the inerrant scriptures. Harold Ockenga is one of those according to Enns.

There are others that feel that the text itself is not inerrant, however the truths that the text conveys are inerrant.

Ryrie sets the argument logically by stating that God is true, the Scriptures were breathed out by God, thus the Scriptures are true. (Rom. 3:4; II Tim. 3:16)

Erickson suggests that there are seven divisions within inerrancy. (P 222ff if you are interested.) I will recap his points as I understand him.

1. ABSOLUTE INERRANCY: This position holds that everything is true and if there is a seeming contradiction that it needs to be explained. In the area of science some suggest that the Word is in error. The absolute inerrantist would state that there is an explanation for all those seeming contradictions, normally that science is wrong again. Science has been proven incorrect before when it had contradicted Scripture.

2. FULL INERRANCY: The full would be similar to the absolute except that they would not attempt to prove contradictions to be false in the area of science. They would state that the Biblical author was presenting what he saw or heard as he saw or heard it with his level of understanding in his own time period. This might allow for errors of misunderstanding on the author's part.

3. LIMITED INERRANCY: These folks would hold that the Bible is not attempting to be an authority on science, history etc. The items of science, history, etc. that Scripture mentions are limited to the understanding of the day and may indeed contain some error.

4. INERRANCY OF PURPOSE: This position tells us that the purpose of the Scripture is to bring man to God. In that purpose, everything that the Word states is inerrant, but that is all.

5. ACCOMMODATED REVELATION: There is the possibility of a mixing of man's knowledge with the revelation of God. When Paul mixes in teaching that comes from his Rabbinical days he is actually adding comment to the Lord's inerrant revelation.

6. NONPROPOSITIONAL REVELATION: This is the position that holds that the Bible is only there to guide us to personal relationships between people. The Scriptures are only the words of men and are only useful to bring you to person to person encounters.

7. INERRANCY IS IRRELEVANT: The thought of inerrancy brings one to concentrate on the minute thoughts of inerrancy while ignoring what might happen if someone is free to study the Word without the limitation of thinking that it is without error.

Ryrie poses some questions that might help us understand some of the ramifications of this doctrine. (p 77) Can a person be an Evangelical and not hold to inerrancy? Yes, many are today. Can a person be a Christian and not hold to inerrancy? Yes. Many are. Can a person be a Biblicist and not hold to inerrancy? No, not if the Bible teaches inerrancy.

Some suggest that the terms infallibility and inerrancy are identical and relate to the Bible. Lindsell is quite emphatic about the fact that they are synonyms. When you are studying either, you will probably need to look under both topics.

I personally feel they relate first to God, and then to His revelation. I also feel there is a slight difference between the two words.

Inerrancy according to Webster is "exemption from error." He defines infallibility as "Incapable of error." If I, as your teacher, sit in silence during a class hour looking at you, I would be without error in what I had taught, however I certainly am not "incapable of error". The difference is slight but we need to see it.

Infallibility is the idea of being unable to make errors. Or in the case of Scripture the Word of God was given without error, in that God can not make errors. God is infallible. His Word on the other hand IS without error. An extension of this might be that it is unable to give forth error to it's reader.

Infallibility then is: God is unable to make errors, and the Bible cannot give forth error. Inerrancy is the other side of the coin in that it is the result of infallibility. Because the Bible was given by One with no possibility of error then it is without error. Inerrancy then is the fact that the Bible is without error in the original manuscripts. Thus an errantist that says the word is infallible but has errors must say that the Lord gave errors to the writers of Scripture, or else that God made errors in what He transmitted.

Geisler/Nix list an argument of logic. "Whatever God utters is errorless (inerrant). The words of the Bible are God's utterances. Therefore, the words of the Bible are errorless (inerrant)." (Taken from: "A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE"; Geisler, Norman L/Nix, William E; Copyright 1968, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Thus infallibility must be the quality that makes God's utterances errorless, and His utterances are without error or inerrant because He is infallible. This then would extend to the Scriptures themselves as they were given to the authors. Inspiration would be that process by which the infallible God transmitted His errorless revelation to the authors for the recording of the canonical books of the Scripture.

We need to distinguish between the originals and the copies of Scripture. Most doctrinal statements mention that the inerrancy is in the original manuscripts. The implication is that the copies of copies that we have today may have errors in them that the originals did not. The Lord and apostles when quoting the Old Testament were giving their approval to the copies of Old Testament originals. They viewed them as reliable.

We do not know what condition the copies they used were in. I suspect they may have been of better quality than those we have for the New Testament. The fact is that there are differences between different manuscripts that we have today. That was the bad news but the good news is that we have no doctrine that is changed by any of these differences. We will discuss the differences in a coming study.

Point: The originals were errorless.
Point: The manuscripts of today have differences.
Point: The differences make no changes to any doctrine.
Point: There is strong indication that the Scriptures have been PRESERVED. The fact of so many manuscripts existing shows preservation.
Point: We may then safely assume that the manuscripts that we have are adequate for our knowing the total error free knowledge that God has revealed to mankind.

THE CHURCH FATHERS SPEAK

Ryrie assembles some of the Church fathers for their input to our discussion: "For example, Augustine (396-430) clearly stated that 'most disastrous consequences must follow upon our believing that anything false is found in the sacred books. That is to say that the men by whom the Scripture has been given to us and committed to writing put down in these books anything false. If you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one false statement, there will not be left a single sentence of those books, which, if appearing to anyone difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away as a statement, in which intentionally, the author declared what was not true' (Epistula, p. 28). Here in ancient terms is the domino theory.

"Again, Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) plainly said that 'nothing false can underlie the literal sense of Scripture' (Summa Theologica, I, 1, 10, ad 3). Also Luther declared, 'The Scriptures have never erred' (Works of Luther, XV;1481). John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, wrote, 'Nay, if there be any mistakes in the Bible there may well be a thousand. If there is one falsehood in that Book it did not come from the God of truth' (Journal VI, 117).

"How can anyone say, then, that inerrancy is a recent invention?

"But even if it were, it could still be a true doctrine.

"Only the Bible, not history, can tell us." (Ryrie, "BASIC THEOLOGY"; P 81)

It may be to simplistic to find a place in a theology book but think about the simple facts.

God revealed-
God can not have, nor give error-
The revealed Word was recorded-
The recorded Word is the Word of God-
HOW THEN CAN THERE POSSIBLY BE ERRORS?

Pache mentions that there are 3,808 times that the authors of scripture state that it is the Word of God that they are communicating. The Psalmist says that the Law of God is perfect (Ps. 19:7). How can something perfect have error? Matt. 5:18 states that there will not be a jot or tittle pass

from the word until all comes to pass.

The possibility of errors calls into question every doctrine that we have. There is no part of the Word that would not be suspect.

If as some say the Bible is error free in the parts that govern faith and practice then they leave the rest of Scripture open to errors. This contradicts the idea of the Psalmist when he says it is perfect!

I would like to close with the words of Augustine, "I have learned to yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the manuscript is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it." (Erickson p 226 quoting Augustine Letter 82.3)

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE

1. When the Bible declares that we need only call on the Name of Jesus Christ to be saved, we can unreservedly declare that we are believers on the basis of His work and not our works.

2. When the Bible declares that we are His for eternity, we can unabashedly declare that there is no possible way in which we can lose our salvation.

3. When the Bible commands that we love one another, it is not a multiple choice option, but the very command from God Himself.

00700

CRITICISM

Please read II Tim. 3:1-17 as an introduction to this study.

Criticism - we all know what that stuff is. That is how we get back at someone without them knowing it. Criticism is telling someone off without the danger of a black eye. There are two types of criticism: Higher and Lower. Higher is when you get the pastor and teachers. Lower is when you get the janitor. Both are valid criticism but neither is proper.

Now that we have that out of the way we can move on. In the Bible we have criticism. We want to take some time to consider this subject.

A conservative, old preacher was riding on a train next to a liberal theologian. They had been

discussing the Bible and its trustworthiness. The conservative man began reading in the Old Testament. When he came to the crossing of the Red Sea he was so thrilled that he said aloud, "AMEN"! The liberal ask him what he had read to cause him to say "Amen".

The conservative related the story of God opening up the Red Sea. The liberal said, "OH NO! we know that isn't the Red Sea, but it is the Reid Sea further north. It's only a marsh and about six inches deep."

"Oh", said the conservative somewhat disappointed. He returned to his reading. A little later, he in excitement said, "Praise be to God!" The liberal said, "Well what now?"

The conservative replied, "WOW, GOD JUST DROWNED PHARAOH'S ARMY IN SIX INCHES OF WATER"!

Some today say the Bible is a bunch of stories. Some today say the Bible is a bunch of myths. Some today say the Bible contains "SOME" truth.

I say today: That the Bible has no error. That the Bible is trustworthy. That the Bible is reliable. Our study will primarily deal with the New Testament though all of these things are true of the entire Bible.

The term criticism comes from the Greek word "krino" or to judge. It is the study or evaluation of information to prove it valid or invalid. There are several types of criticism in the religious realm. In Biblical Criticism there are two divisions. Historical which is at times called Higher and Textual which is also termed Lower. We will stick to the Higher/Lower terms as they are more popular today, I believe.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM: "Science or art of studying the text, authorship, date, and meaning of various parts of the Bible." (Kauffman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967)

It is the process by which information is studied to attempt to show the original words of the original manuscripst. The person involved in this study uses all sources of information available to him to make his determination. He attepmts to discover not only the original terms, but in some cases the author, date, etc. of the work.

1. HIGHER CRITICISM: "Biblical criticism principally concerned with sources, writers, dates, and order of the various documents in the Bible. It seeks to apply scientific, historic, and literary principles to Scripture." ("DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS")

Miller mentions that higher criticism "seeks to determine the age (date), authorship, composition, sources, character and historical value of the documents, as judged by internal evidence. This is done chiefly by a study of the documents themselves, although it does not hesitate to make use of

the sciences of history, geography, ethnology, and archaeology. It deals with the contents of the Scriptures, and is concerned with the questions of canonicity, genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the books of the Bible. . . ." (Miller, Rev. H.S.; "GENERAL BIBLICAL INTRODUCTION"; Houghton, NY: The Word-Bearer press, 1937, p 13, 14)

2. LOWER CRITICISM: "Lower criticism is concerned principally with actual manuscripts and the original text of Scripture." ("DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS")

Webster states, "criticism concerned with the recovery of original texts esp. of Scripture through collation of extant manuscripts"

Miller: "seeks to determine the exact and correct text of the Scriptures as it existed in the original documents, when freed from the errors, corruptions, and variations which have come into it during the long process of copying and recopying. It deals with the text. It is sometimes called lower Criticism." (Miller p 14)

Q. What type of Criticism are we going to be covering if we are trying to decide which text of many is the best? Hopefully we will be studying "Lower" or "Textual Criticism".

We must distinguish between the good Higher Criticism of the conservative movement, and the improper destructive higher criticism that the liberal theologians have given us. This includes the JEPD theory which teaches that there were four different authors for the book of Genesis. They also attribute different Old Testament books to authors and dates that allow for the Bible to have been written by men, rather than being the inspired Word of God.

A brief look at where our Bible came from might be of assistance to the study.

We need to realize that we have no original manuscripts today. We have many parts of copies which we have assembled our Scriptures from. These copies come to us from many sources and by many methods.

1. Papyrus: Papyrus was the pith of a reed that was beaten and flattened and prepared so that men could write on it. It was laid in strips, then a layer of strips going perpendicular to the previous strips was placed on, and they were stuck together with sticky water. They were then dried, smoothed and used. These come to us from the 2nd-4th century and are the earliest witnesses we have.

2. Uncial manuscripts: Uncial manuscripts were parchments in book form from the 4th to 10th century. They were developed around the city of Pergumus. These manuscripts were written in all capital letters with each letter formed separately.

3. Minuscule manuscripts: Minuscule manuscripts are the largest group existent today, and are from the 9th century and following. These were written with all small letters.

4. Lectionary manuscripts: These are the 2nd largest group of manuscripts, and are arranged in units for church purposes. They would be similar to responsive readings of today.

5. Codex: This is a manuscript that is in book form rather than in roll form.

To date there are around 5000 different manuscripts that the critic's must deal with. Some of these are only small portions of copies of the scriptures.

When you compare a Biblical text in one group with another group there may be differences found between the manuscripts. Some are only transposed letters, some are misspelled words, and some are verses that are missing in some of the manuscripts. These differences are called variants.

Some would suggest that the above paragraph indicates that the Bible has errors. No, that is not what I said. There are differences. The variants have been studied by men that are knowledgeable of the languages, and they have decided on those manuscripts that are best in the case of each and every variant. There are no doctrines that are compromised in any of these variants.

If all 5000 manuscripts are compared with one another there are about 200,000 variants in all. The 200,000 figure seems large however let me illustrate. In one case there is a verse that is in only four manuscripts. If you do the comparing of all to the four you have many variants already.

H.S. Miller states concerning this number, "Each manuscript is compared with one standard and with each other, and the number of variations are found; then these sums are added together, and the result is given as the number of variant readings. Each place where variations occur is counted as many times as there are distinct variations in it, and also as many times as the same variation occurs in different manuscripts. This sum also includes all variations of all kinds from all sources, even those which are peculiar to a single manuscript of small importance and those which are of such minor importance as the spelling of a word." ("GENERAL BIBLICAL INTRODUCTION" p 282, 283)

Of all of these variants there are only about fifty of any significance. Among these significant variants, there are none that affect any doctrine. The doctrines involved are clearly taught elsewhere in the Scripture, so if you tore all of these significant variants from the Bible, you would not eliminate or change any doctrine.

Today there are two main texts which are used in translation work. These are the Textus Receptus and the Critical text. Most scholars would use one of these two or a combination of the two.

The Critical text has produced most of our current translations and paraphrases. The Textus Receptus is the basis for the King James Version.

There is a great debate concerning which text is the proper text. Some feel that the Textus Receptus is the inspired text, and that the Critical text is heresy. The other side of the coin is that the Critical text is the best text to use, but most using it do not feel that it is inspired and the Textus Receptus is not. They would feel that both texts are resultant from the inspired originals and that the Critical text is the closest to the originals.

This debate is one of the saddest of our day. It is splitting good fundamental churches. Pastors are declaring that the King James is the only Bible. One of my students told me that the New American Standard Bible was of the Devil. He told me that was the Bible that the Cults use. When I told him that the cults also use the King James, he realized the foolishness of his statement.

The King James Only people are often quite divisive in their comments, while being quite caustic in their attacks on those that disagree with them.

A plea for sanity, fairness, logic, and Christian love is needed!

When these two texts are compared with one another there are only 5000 variants between the two. These variants are all minor and they change no doctrine whatsoever. Many are variations of only a letter or two. Some are misspelled words. A very few include a verse or two.

Mark 16:9ff is one of the largest variants to my knowledge. The passage may or may not belong in Scripture. Even in its variance the text does fit both with the Chapter and the whole of Scripture, and may well be a part of scripture.

Remember, NO DOCTRINE IS CHANGED. Many of the new translations list these variances for us in the side or footnotes.

VARIANTS EXAMINED: Let us look at some of these variants and how they may have come to exist.

UNINTENTIONAL ERRORS

1. Errors of sight: These errors may have come because of poor sight on the part of the copier, or the light in which he was attempting to work. You must understand that this copying was done a few years before Franklin went kite flying. They had no electricity. There may well have been problems with the manuscript that the man was working from. There may have been aging, or staining which distorted the original information.

As an example of how sight can affect your perception translate the following phrase. HAVEYOUEVERSEENABUNDANCEONTHETABLE. There are two very logical translations. Have you ever seen a bun dance on the table, or Have you ever seen abundance on the table. This is how the uncial texts look. They are all capital letters with no punctuation, nor

spacing.

2. Interruptions: Have you ever been interrupted when copying something, returned to your work and found that you went back to the wrong place? This is a common occurrence even in our own day.

3. Lack of sleep: Have you ever been writing and fallen asleep? I quite often keep writing, however it makes little sense. In fact at times when working on the computer, I have fallen asleep and kept typing. It is quite a shock to look up at the screen and see nothing but gibberish. It's a possibility that copyists did the same thing.

4. Error of hearing: At times one person would read the Scripture slowly, while several other men wrote down copies of what was read. Some Greek words are pronounced nearly the same yet are spelled differently and mean something completely different.

5. Errors of Memory: As he was coping the copyist might have transferred a phrase, but inadvertently lost part of the phrase as he transferred it. I have at times been writing and had someone say something. I am shocked when I return to recheck my work and find that some of their words had crept into my paper.

6. Sloppy copy work: When copying from sloppy work there could be mistakes made.

7. Skipping a line: This is especially easy when two lines end the same way. (Especially the same word or syllable.)

8. Repeated words: Omitting a word that appears twice in a verse can be easy, as is the addition of a word making it appear twice when it shouldn't.

9. Using memory, rather than sight: When copying a familiar text the copier might have relied on his memory for what he put down, and made mistakes.

10. Mistakes: In copying the genealogy of Christ one man didn't realize his original was in columns and he copied across the page. Thus virtually no father had the right son.

11. Errors of judgment: When problems were incountered, it would be possible to misinterpret the evidence and make corrections when they were not needed and vice versa.

12. Transposition of letters, syllables or words: These are easy mistakes to make even in our good light, and with our modern computers.

13. Boredom: Boredom of copying over and over could cause great problems of lack of attention, eye strain, etc..

INTENTIONAL CHANGES

These would be changes that the men made, believing that they were correcting someone else's previous error.

1. Grammatical changes: It has been of interest to me in my own writing. I have very poor grammatical skills so at times check my work with a computer grammar checker. I have been amazed at the high rate of grammar errors that I find in Scripture quotes. It is not that the Scripture is poorly written, but that the laws of grammar have changed.

Many of these copies were hundreds of years removed from the original Scriptures.

2. Liturgical changes: Some of these changes came because someone wanted to make it fit into the services. This would be in the lectionaries.

3. Harmonizing changes: Some copiers seemingly tried to harmonize the Synoptic Gospels by changing small things so that the three gospels would be in agreement. (Matthew, Mark, and Luke are very similar in some of their passages, though they are different in some of their details. This is not due to errors of copiers, but from difference of view of the authors.)

4. Doctrinal changes: To strengthen what was already there to make their own doctrinal position look better. I John 5:7 might be the result of this. This text only appears in four of the 5000 texts that we have.

In short, ANY MISTAKE THAT WE TODAY CAN MAKE, THEY COULD HAVE MADE IN THEIR COPYING.

THE METHOD OF CRITICISM

INTERNAL EVIDENCE: These are some of the principles that are used in determining which version of a text is used in translation work.

1. The shorter reading is often the preferable reading. The shorter version would be the preferable due to the fact that any additions and most changes would extend the original sentence. Col 1:14 contains the term blood in the King James but not in modern translations. It is felt that this was in the King James as a result of someone trying to harmonize this verse with Eph. 1:7 where "blood" does exist.

2. The harder the reading the more preferable the reading. During the copying some of the Scribes wanted to simplify the text so it was easier to read. John 3:16 in some manuscripts does not have the term "begotten". The King James and the New American Standard Bible have it but the New International Version doesn't. (John 1:18 is also listed in relation to the term "begotten".)

3. The reading from which the other readings in a variant could most easily have developed is often preferable.

4. The reading that is most characteristic of the author is often preferable.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE: The critics collated and compared 5000 manuscripts plus 13,000 pieces. These pieces of information they divided into three families of texts.

1. The Alexandrian Family: These were found around Alexandria, Egypt. (These are the most reliable to the critical text people.)

2. The Western World Family: These portions were from Europe.

3. The Byzantine text Family: The majority are in this family. These come from the East and are the minuscule texts. (The critical text people feel that these are the poorest available.)

Bernard Ramm mentions that we should never build ANY doctrine on a questionable text. Indeed, we should probably never rely heavily on one verse for a doctrine, unless the text is very easily understood as to meaning.

This introduces you to the realm of criticism, but you must understand there is also criticism for the Old Testament as well with it's own differences. We won't get into Old Testament criticism. There are good works on this subject readily available.

You need to understand as well that the men that work in this field devote their lives to their study and work. It is not something which you can pick up from some theology book.

00750

APPLICATION

I have entitled this study "application," however I'm not sure that this is a good term. It does describe what we are going to be talking about, yet the term conjures up images of long dry application in the sermons when the preacher is stepping on your toes and we are too dead spiritually to realize it.

Our study is somewhere between the interpretation and the previous type of application. It is not, in and of, itself interpretation in my mind, in that it is the use of things learned in interpretation to assemble the information required for application.

"Pre-application" or "post-interpretation might be a couple of choices for a better term. Interpretation deals with what the text is saying. It is finding out just what God wanted us to know from that text. Our study is the process by which we take that information and use it to

change lives in our own time.

The "rub" here is that not all things in Scripture are for our time in the same way they were in the time given. Example: The law of the sacrifice when given, demanded and expected a sacrifice, while for a teacher to teach that way today is in error, for we have further revelation and know that the sacrifice is not needed since Christ provided Himself for our sacrifice.

Since Paul told Timothy that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable...." we must assume that there are things in the Old Testament law that are profitable for us.

This study will attempt to deal with some general rules to know just how you can use Scripture in the application section of your sermon or study.

Webster states of application, "an act of applying. . .an act of putting to use. . .a use to which something is put. . .an act of administering or superposing. . .the practical inference to be derived from a discourse. . . ." The final thought of Webster is probably more to the point for our discussion. "the practical inference to be derived from a discourse...." (Webster, Merriam; "WEBSTER'S NINTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY"; Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc., 1986)

How do we apply and use the different sections of Scripture and do it correctly? We have the Old Testament Law, the Prophets, the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation

THE NEED FOR THIS STUDY:

1. There are many today that are so loose with how they use Scripture that they are teaching false doctrine. Example: I Cor. 16:2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." I was in an Independent Baptist church in Denver one Sunday morning when the pastor used this text to give a half hour message in the Sunday School opening on how we had to give that day and in coming weeks so that we wouldn't have to take up any collections when the Lord came. I call that false doctrine! I trust you also call that false doctrine! (A reading of the passage will reveal that the text is speaking of Paul coming, not the Lord.)

2. There are many today that are being confused by some of the writers of our day and their use of the gospels. You can not take application directly from every text in the gospels to our lives without running it through some very important questions.

I was in a Bible study in Oregon that was being taught by a layman that had been prepared by his pastor to give the lesson. We were in the beatitudes and he would read a beatitude and ask what we thought it meant. There would be as many thoughts as there were people and he would end up with something like, "Well I don't know which one of these thoughts is the one that the writer was getting at, but I'd guess one of them is correct."

The people went away thinking that the beatitudes were completely impossible to understand.

PREREQUISITES FOR THE STUDY:

1. A balanced mental capacity: A balance of common sense, logic, imagination and criticism. If a person is unbalanced in any area he may miss much of what the Word has to say. These abilities will help in understanding what the text is not teaching as well as what it is teaching.

2. Salvation: Salvation of course is required for the student to properly understand the Scriptures. An unregenerate mind has no capacity to understand and interpret the Word of God.

3. Knowledge: A knowledge of many things will help in the understanding of the Word. Geography may be an asset as you enter into some of the historical books and the prophetic books. History is very helpful in understanding the context within which the Bible was written. The outside world was exerting forces upon the Jews in the Old Testament. You won't properly understand the Gospels if you don't understand past and present, at that time, forces. (The captivity, Roman rule, etc..)

An understanding of politics, as they relate to the history of the Biblical times also will help to show what was going on in some of the Books of Scripture.

4. Godliness: The walk of the expositor will very definitely reflect upon the outcome of his study. If he is not walking with the Lord, the Holy Spirit's ministry to him will be limited and his study will in turn be limited.

PRESUPPOSITIONS FOR THE STUDY:

1. You must desire to interpret the Scriptures in a literal and as such, a premillennial and dispensational format. This assumes your ability to use the tools available to properly interpret the text that you are dealing with.

2. You must believe in progressive revelation.

3. You must be using proper tools of interpretation to arrive at the principles which you are attempting to apply.

4. You must be a believer. Each believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God and He can illuminate your study.

5. Since the above are true we must also assume that the final authority should be found in the Scripture that is directly related to the Church age. Any application that is used must be in complete keeping and agreement with these teachings.

These teachings are to be found primarily in the Epistles of the New Testament along with some information within the book of Acts and the Gospels.

6. There must be a distinction between the Church and Israel in the Bible.

7. You must never apply Scripture until you have properly interpreted that passage. A related item of business is the fact that you should never attempt to apply truths to the lives of others until you have applied the truths to your own life.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR DETERMINING THE USAGE OF A TEXT:

These are principles that relate to all of the following sections. They may vary slightly between sections but primarily relate.

1. Is the principle that you have drawn restated in the Bible in any other dispensation? If it is found in other dispensations, which ages are the principles found, and how are they used?

2. Is the principle found in the New Testament epistles?

3. Do any of the New Testament writers mention that this principle is no longer useful to the believer?

4. Is there any indication from any age or Scripture that this principle is not for other ages? Example: The idea that circumcision was a sign to the Jews would show that it was not for the Church age saint unless there was some statement in the New Testament that would make this a requirement for the New Testament believer.

5. Use common sense and logic as your guides. If your application does not follow these guides then don't use it!

6. Allow the application to come naturally from the text. Do not determine your application then go looking for a text to stuff it into. I was in a Sunday School class once when a Christian psychologist was teaching. He mentioned a group of facts concerning the cycle of marriages, and I have no doubt that the facts were true, yet the man then turned to Scripture and began trying to show how that passage was teaching what he had taught. It did not fit nor could he make it fit no matter how hard he tried to stuff it into the text. Several of the laymen challenged him on his usage of the text, but he would not back down.

7. In application we need to remember that it is the Scripture that is applicable to the believer, not our own thoughts of what the people need.

SPECIFIC CASES AND PRINCIPLES:

Let us look at some specific cases and list some principles for interpretation in different areas of the Bible.

The Old Testament Law:

An example of a problem of applying the Law. The Scriptures teach that the woman is not to wear the clothes of a man. Can we use this text to state that women can not wear slacks in the church service today? If they can't wear them in the church service then can they wear them on recreational outings connected to the church? This text relates to its own time and has little to do with our time. I am not stating that women can or cannot wear slacks to church, I am just stating that this text does not show this.

Principles for the Old Testament:

1. Is the principle, if used, placing the believer under bondage to the law if he tries to follow it? If it does, then it is an improper principle.

2. A method of Old Testament usage has been suggested by some that asks the student to take the passage and boil it down and boil it down to it's most basic thought that would be usable for all of time. The problem with this is that if you are working with a text that is specifically given to Israel then how do you know when you have it boiled down enough, or if you can boil it down enough to state that it is a principle for all time.

In our example of women wearing slacks some New Testament texts might relate and assist in the study. The epistles mention that the inner woman is to be the prominent thing that people see when they look at a Godly woman. The passage on hair relates in that the man is to look like a man and not a like woman. Vice versa a woman is to look like a woman. There are many times when I can not tell if a person is a man or woman - that is wrong according to the Scripture. Take any principle you find in the Old Testament to the Epistles for validation.

The Prophets:

We cannot apply everything found in the prophets directly to our day. When the prophet prophesied that some of the people would die from the sword, he was speaking of a specific occurrence that was yet future for his listener. It has nothing to do with us today. The application might be made that if a Church age believer continually turns against God, they run the chance of suffering retribution in this life. This can be backed up with several New Testament passages.

Principles for the prophets:

1. The prophets were given to a specific people in a specific time and for a specific purpose. Be very careful how you apply them.

2. If you can determine the time and people that the work was written to, then you can know these facts, and know that the main message is not for us.

3. Some general application can be made from the prophets in that as you determine the principle set forth by the writer, you will find similar situations in the church age to which the principle may relate. Example: In the book of Ezekiel the people were told that they would throw their gold and silver into the streets because it had no value. The city would be under siege and the gold and silver would not buy them freedom nor food.

You might find a situation in the spiritual life where we are under siege and starving and there is no way out. How is your money going to help you? The important things of life are not money and things, but the spiritual food that our souls desire.

It might have application in areas of stewardship as well. We do not want to say, however, that the believers should throw their gold and silver into the streets when they get home from church. There is no need to! At least not until I'm positioned under the window.

The Gospels:

One of the problems of the gospels is the different character of life and living that are portrayed in them. It must be understood that there are texts which relate to the life of the Millennial believer, and that there are texts which relate to the life of the believer in the transition period between the gospels and the epistles. Example: The text concerning the taking of no weapon sees it's meaning in the Millennial time when there is peace and no need for weapons. The gospels also mention taking up weapons and this would have fitting application in the Church age when there is a need of weapons at times.

Example: Mark 16 mentions the picking up of serpents and drinking poisons and not being hurt. The graves of many people are full due to their misapplication of this text. This was a promise to the people of the early church that were spreading the gospel. The book of Acts mentions such an occasion in the life of Paul, yet later in life Paul did not have the power to heal as he did earlier in his ministry. The sign gifts and miracles diminished with time.

Principles for the gospels:

1. The student needs to see the program of God and how it is related to the gospel accounts. If you do not understand the mechanics of this, there will be much trouble in the application of these texts.

2. As in the Old Testament times there were items mentioned that related specifically to a specific people. We must not take a text given to the Jewish people, in a Jewish time, and relate it directly to the Church.

The book of Acts:

The student needs to place the book of Acts in a special category. It is a record of what went on in the transition between the Old Testament law of the Gospels and the New Testament age of the Church. There is information in this record that is not for the Church Age!

The operation of the New Testament church for example. To have communal eating would be very difficult, if not impossible, in this age. Some have tried the "all for one and one for all" concept, but none I know of have survived the test of time. Indeed, the Church in Acts did not follow this concept for a long period of time.

The Epistles:

The epistles are very straight forward for our day and age, and should be used freely, however care must be taken again to the application, or non-application of passages.

It is more and more prevalent to "It was the custom of the day" passages out of our spiritual application. If we were to total all of these passages we would have a multitude. Even in those texts that were customs of the day, the underlying basis of those customs is true for us today and should move us to change. For example the Holy Kiss. The love and concern behind that kiss should certainly be something that we draw as application for our age.

The Revelation:

The Revelation is one of the great books of the Bible, but it is also subjected to some of the worst interpretation and application of any book in the Bible. This book is for our encouragement and edification so we should use it as such, but we need to be careful how we use it.

Principles for the Revelation:

1. The student must realize in the book of Revelation that much of the information is of a prophetic nature and that it is limited in application.

2. The idea of right living in light of the coming of the Lord, and related ideas are certainly present and usable.

3. Application of the information to the seven churches also is in need of care. There is no real agreement as to the meaning of the churches, thus we don't want to build heavily on anything we might find there. General application of the false teaching and Christ's reaction to it is certainly appropriate application for our age, as well as some of the promises that are in the first chapters.

As we move into ministries and positions, we need to be very careful with our interpretation as well as our application. Application misapplied can cause great problems and heartache.

00800

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION:

After all that we have studied in this section of theology it should be obvious that God not only wanted us to have this information, but that He wanted all of mankind to have this information.

Believers in this present time seem to be saving the Bible for their own use rather than proclaiming it to those around the world that so desperately need it. We need to share the Word with those around us and those around the world.

1. PROCLAIM IT FOR WHAT IT IS:

Proclaim It because this is the Word of God, the message for all of mankind. We need to give the word forth as if it were what we believe it to be.

It is AUTHORITATIVE! It has within Itself all the authority that is needed to use It. You should give it forth and use it as the authority dictates.

It is ERRORLESS! We need to be sure that what we say It says, is true and use It as the Errorless Word of God.

It is POWERFUL! We need to give It forth as if It were dynamite. It is powerful and will do many things in the lives of people if we will only use It.

2. PROCLAIM IT AS IF YOU BELIEVED IT:

Some pastors talk of the Word as if It were a snake that was sleeping on their pulpit. They act as though, if they get excited about It, It might wake up and bite them. It has it's own built in excitement and credibility. We need not shy away from being forceful with the Word.

3. PROCLAIM IT WITH CONFIDENCE:

God has called you as a believer to proclaim the Word. He has called some of us to preach the Word. We should use the word with a strong confidence that what we are saying is something that can be used by the people that we minister to.

We don't need to be apologetic about our preaching. God told us to proclaim the Word, so we must with all the confidence that we have.

4. PROCLAIM IT AS IF YOU WERE THE EXPERT:

Many relate to me they feel very unsure of themselves when someone important is in the congregation. ALMIGHTY GOD IS IN THE CONGREGATION EVERY TIME WE OPEN OUR MOUTHS! WE OUGHT NOT WORRY ABOUT SOMEONE SPECIAL FROM THE HUMAN RACE THAT MIGHT BE PRESENT.

I know just what they are talking about however. I was asked to preach at a church in the northwest. I knew that I would have a Bible College president and three or four of his professors in the congregation. I knew there would be a very wealthy orthopedic surgeon present. I knew that my Lord and Savior was going to be present. That is probably the only reason that I was able to walk up to that pulpit. I knew that I had done my preparation, and that the message I was sharing was from God's word. That was my confidence. I dare say that the time I spent in that pulpit that morning was the time when I began to gain the confidence to preach more as I ought. I still do not have all the confidence that I would like, however this was a beginning point.

THERE IS NOTHING THAT MAN CAN DO TO YOU SAVE TAKE YOUR LIFE! WHY DO WE DREAD WHAT THOSE MEN WILL THINK AND SAY WHEN WE ARE MINISTERING THE WORD OF ALMIGHTY GOD!

5. PROCLAIM THE WORD WITHOUT BEING A RESPECTER OF PERSONS:

There are all sorts of people. There are rich and poor, there are men and women, there are tall and short, there are wide and thin, there are smart and not so smart, there are spiritual giants and spiritual pigmies.

All - I repeat, ALL are needy of being fed as the rest. Every single person sits down to take in physical food and every one ought to sit down to take in spiritual food. Do not hesitate to speak to the sin of the rich man. Do not hesitate to speak to the sin of the spiritual giant. This may not be popular, however, spiritual giants have their problems just as we pigmies do! Do not hesitate to speak to the sin of the board member or anyone else that is present.

This may affect your job security if you look to the church for your security. May I recommend that you look to God for your job security!

Do not hesitate to speak to the sin of the politician. ALL ARE SHEEP AND ARE IN NEED OF FEEDING AND LEADING! NEVER FORGET THIS!

6. PROCLAIM IT AS IF IT IS THE LAST TIME YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO SO:

We may be overrun by some other country tonight. The Lord could be here before coffee break is over. We could have a massive heart attack in the middle of the service. This is the message that God has laid upon our heart! We need to be putting it out with all the gusto that you can muster!

7. PROCLAIM IT AS IF IT HAD MEANING:

We know that if we saw smoke and flame in the building that we would yell FIRE! Yet so often we see the sin in a life and see that the life is headed for trouble, and yet we sit by, watching and knowing that we have the answer to the problem.

We also have the answer to LOST man's problems, and we are so hesitant to give the answers. We wait until we are asked the question.

8. PROCLAIM IT!!!!:

We have a related topic which I would like to touch on briefly.

RECEPTION OF THE WORD:

1. RECEIVE IT AS IF IT WERE FROM GOD:

This is not to say that we shouldn't be good Berean's and check all things against the Scripture. It is to say that we should receive messages and lessons as from God and not from man. If we view messages as from men we may tend not to listen to them quite as closely. If we view them as from God we won't tend to argue with the message as much.

2. RECEIVE IT AS FROM A MAN OF GOD:

I trust that you will listen carefully to me and not misunderstand what I am going to say. There is much emphasis on education today. Everyone is wanting to have several degrees behind their name.

Education is not wrong in and of itself. The desire and lust after education and the glory it may bring IS wrong.

I trust, in fact, that some of you might go on with your education and prepare for ministries that God may call you into.

For others of you that may be in a lay ministry I trust that you will relax in the knowledge that God has prepared you adequately for the work that he has you involved in. This is not to say that He might not send you to school many years down the road to prepare for something else. For now, you have all that you have need of!

HOWEVER, degrees behind the name do not guarantee a good message. Degrees behind the name do not guarantee a spiritual messenger.

HOWEVER, the lack of degrees behind the name do not guarantee a good message. The lack of

degrees behind the name do not guarantee a spiritual messenger.

So, What is the sum of what I have said? Degrees, or lack of degrees, has very little to do with the spirituality of the messenger, or the message as long as the preparer has adequate knowledge to do the job correctly.

Indeed, it has little to do with the receptiveness of the hearer.

To illustrate all this let me relate a story to you. I had the pleasure of ministering in a little Northern California coast city for a weekend. I talked some with the pastor that weekend and felt that I was talking to a man of God that had been well educated in the realm of spiritual things. At dinner Sunday I asked him where he went to college. He turned a bit red in the face and mentioned that he had quit high school when he was finished with the eighth grade and had not been back to school.

Education for this man of God came from the Word that is powerful to change men's lives. I have had a number of friends that have finished seven years of Bible college and Seminary. These men have much to say spiritually as well.

IT ISN'T THE EDUCATION NECESSARILY, BUT THE WILLINGNESS TO BE TAUGHT OF THE LORD FROM THE WORD!

I trust that I have not downgraded nor uplifted education! There are some today that will look down their noses at the uneducated and there are those that look up their noses at the educated. Both are in sin! Both persons are looking down or up their noses due to their own pride in what they have, or have not. God leads different men in different directions.

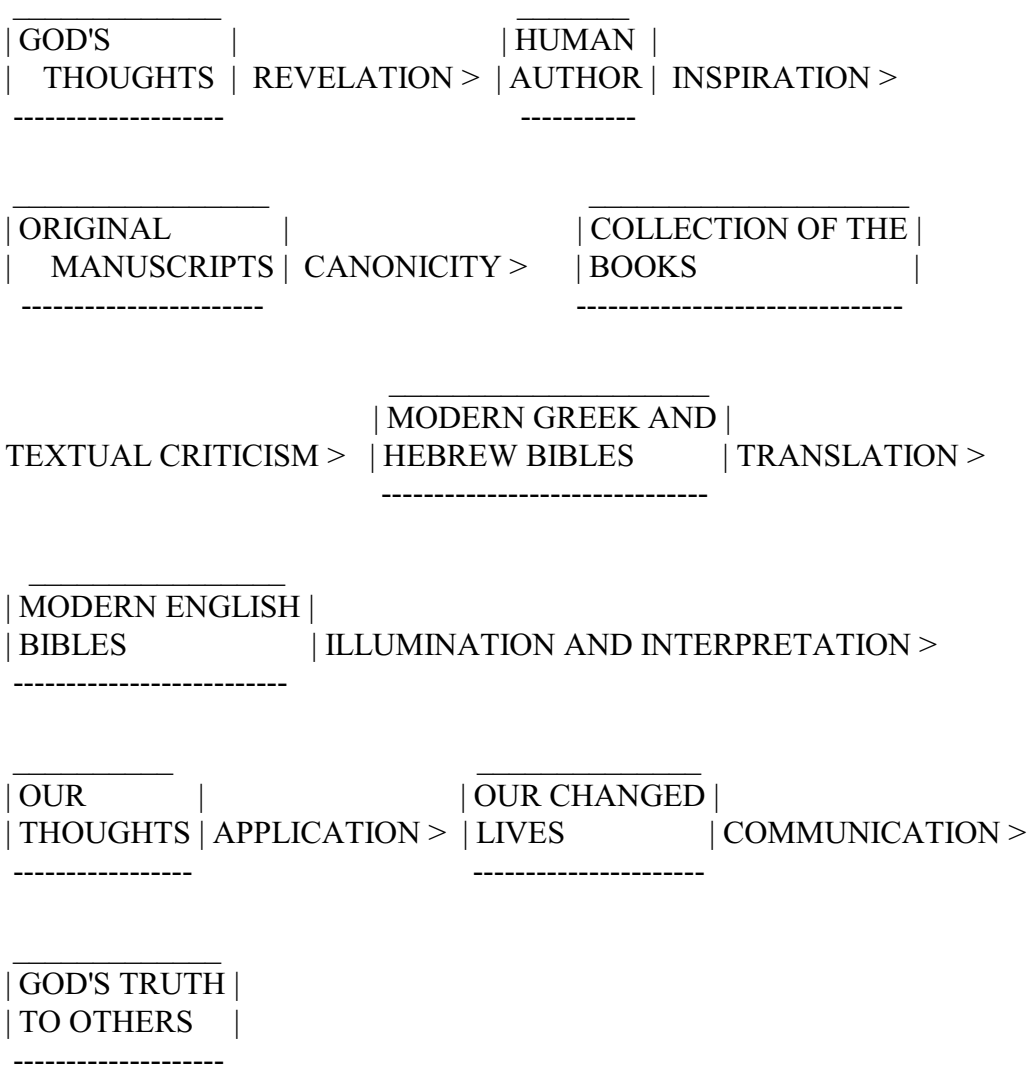
I trust that you will never condemn another believer for having education. When you do you condemn the Lord that led that person to gain that schooling. I trust also that you never condemn anyone for not having an education. God is a God of variety. He can use anyone that He wants to use, no matter how educated or uneducated the person is.

We have studied God's Word from a very academic standpoint in this study so that we might have answers for those that doubt - that includes ourselves. These truths may come in handy for your own lives. You may find yourself one day with doubts. Just think through some of the things that we have covered in this section.

Consider the Word's claims for Itself and rest in the assurance that this is the very message that Almighty God has given us for ourselves, but more than that, for the lost of the world.

Ryrie presents a chart in His Theology book that I have adapted for our study. (Adapted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 117)

THE BIBLE AND ITS TRANSMISSION TO MAN



Now, how do we apply all this in the area of communication.

1. This is God's message to man. This Bible is God's message to all mankind - not just believers - not just people in the United States of America, but to all of mankind.

2. This Book has all that is necessary for mankind to know God, and be saved from God's wrath.

3. God has given this information to us in an understandable manner.

4. By some normal principles of speech and language we should be able to understand fully that which God desired to communicate to us.

5. This is a work that can usher all of mankind into the Kingdom of the Lord if man will only accept the Lord Jesus that It presents.

I trust that this study will move you to a strong confidence in the Word, as well as a strong desire to communicate the Word.

00850

THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGINS OF THE WORD OF GOD

Chafer (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947) deals at length with the fact that the Bible had supernatural origins. I have condensed his thoughts into what is presented in this appendix. He presents 15 topics.

1. THE BOOK OF GOD: The book of God asserts this fact for itself many times over. The question some raise is whether it was written by a man or revealed by God and recorded by man. The structure and message of the book demand a divine author.

Man could not set out to write a book of this size. He would not have the ideas of it, nor would man be able to produce the detail and precision of it. It presents God as THE God. It presents God as having a plan. It presents God only as deserving glory. It presents God as the absolute authority.

The unregenerate man could not subdue his own pride to produce such a God, nor could he exalt his talents to a level capable of producing such a book.

2. THE BIBLE AND MONOTHEISM: The Bible presents monotheism - one God, not many. Mankind has always had many gods, be they wood, clay, gold or silver. Idolatry is in every civilization to some extent. The Bible presents a one-God religion. How could man devise such a thought as one God in a world of many gods?

3. THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY: The doctrine of the Trinity is so complex yet so simple as to demand a divine origin for the Bible. The Trinity is three persons in one God. Stated it is simple yet the explanation has evaded man since the subject was undertaken for study. We cannot explain the how of the Trinity only the fact of it.

The work each member of the Trinity is involved in is also very complicated - the Fatherhood of God, or the perfections of Christ. Man cannot adequately explain these things so how could he devise them?

4. CREATION: The creation is the beginning of the content of Scripture. This creation is presented as fact and is described in Scripture. Man's explanation of the beginning of the world

is tied up in evolution. Even with the best product evolution could produce, that person could not have produced the Biblical account. Evolution is shot through with problems and gaps. Man could not devise a creation as perfectly presented in Scripture.

5. SIN: Sin is presented in Scripture. Forty authors, are in complete agreement on sin and its existence. Man could not devise such a thing as sin from his own mind. Sin is a divine statement and idea not a man made doctrine.

6. THE CURE OF EVIL ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE: The Bible's cure for sin is so divine as to demand divine authorship.

Man would not devise a plan of salvation because without Scripture he doesn't know he needs it. Even if man knew he needed salvation he could not dream up a plan whereby all could be saved apart from works or vanity.

Man could not devise a plan of salvation where the one redeeming would gain all the glory. Man could not come up with such a beautiful plan aside from having it revealed to him by God.

7. THE EXTENT OF BIBLE REVELATION: The extent of the Bible demands a divine author. It reaches minutely into eternity past as well as eternity future. Human authors aside from revelation could not make up such detail nor such broad perimeters.

8. THE ETHICS OF THE BIBLE: The ethics that the Bible produces have never even been hinted at in man's religions. Purity and holiness of life are the divine standard while in most of man's we find debasement and immorality.

The Bible presents man as an utter failure and unable to help himself. Man in his vanity even today has trouble comprehending such things, much less making them up.

Only a divine author could take a moral system such as Judaism and lay it aside for another system so different yet presenting the same morality as Christianity. Man could not come up with such a moral standard based on the teachings of a book without revelation from God.

9. THE CONTINUITY OF THE BIBLE: The continuity of Scripture declares a divine editor and revealer - 66 books, 40 authors and hundreds of years of history. The authors are separated by time, space and education. They come from all walks of life and most of them never met one another, yet they came together to form one central story of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

He is shown as pre-incarnate. He is shown in prophecy as coming. He is shown as here in His first advent. He is shown as coming again in the future.

One man could produce a work with continuity but this combination of authors and times has to be divinely assembled. Man could not produce such a work.

10. PROPHECY AND ITS FULFILLMENT: Prophecy along with its fulfillment is proof that the Bible is of divine origin. Man can think and project what might happen in the future based on knowledge, history and common sense, but man cannot accurately predict specific occurrences and have those occurrences come to pass. The Scripture is full of prophecies that have been fulfilled and which will yet be fulfilled.

11. TYPES WITH THEIR ANTITYPES: The types of the Old Testament and the antitypes of the New Testament are of such splendor that they must have divine origin. The fact that the type was set to words by a person other than the one setting down the antitype, and this being done hundreds of years apart, shows divine origin. This would require divine intervention!

12. THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE: The Bible is considered great literature even by the unsaved. If a man had been setting these great words down, he most surely would have left some personal opinions and pronouns to let the reader know that it was he that had written the work.

The truths are not from the men but from their God so that they left no opinion of their own or personal pronouns to lay claim to any of the truths.

Many of the church fathers have been prolific writers, however, none of these have even touched the clarity and preciseness of Scripture, nor have they touched the literary quality of the Word.

13. THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE: Science is in constant revision. The world was flat - remember - and now it is round. The scientific world is always redoing and redefining to fit the exposed facts. The Bible on the other hand has always been acceptable in all ages without revision or redefining.

Where the Bible has seemingly contradicted science in the past, the scientists have found that they were in error in later days.

14. THE BIBLE AND TEMPORAL POWER: The Bible is not dependent upon political power, or clout to get its job done. The believer can do the work of the Lord with or without the help of the governmental powers.

Man naturally, when he wants something done, will try any means to achieve his end. They often use political power, or strings with politicians, to achieve their goal.

If man had written the Bible he would not have been able to come up with the idea that man could do the work of the Lord relying on the heart and mind of others rather than political power.

15. THE BIBLE'S ENDURING FRESHNESS: The constant new blessing a person gains from the Word even when he has read, and read, and read a portion there is always something more to be gleaned from its content. No other literature can make this claim to freshness and vitality.

00900

HISTORY OF SCRIPTURE

First of all, I would like to list the readability index for some of the different translations. It might be handy if a person begins working with different age groups or possibly people with diminished mental capacity.

King James Version	14.0 years of education
American Standard Version	11.6 years of education
New American Standard Bible	11.3 years of education
Revised Standard Version	10.4 years of education
Jerusalem Bible	10.1 years of education
Phillips translation	9.6 years of education
New King James Version	9.1 years of education
New English Bible	8.5 years of education
Living Bible	8.3 years of education
New International Version	7.8 years of education
Today's English Version	7.3 years of education
International Children's Version	3.9 years of education

(Adapted from "WHICH BIBLE TRANSLATION IS BEST FOR ME?"; Kohlenberger, John, III; Moody Monthly, May 1987)

The following information is gleaned from three sources. Rather than footnote each quotation, I have adapted the information. The three sources are listed at the end of the information.

This is some information on some of the more prominent works of translation and paraphrase through the years since the Bible was originally written.

SEPTUAGINT (LXX)

Date: Work started 250 B.C.
Author/translator: Seventy Alexandrian Jews

This was the first translation of the Old Testament into Greek. Most of the Jewish people of the time spoke Greek, and they wanted to read the Old Testament in their own language.

LATIN VULGATE

Date: Completed 405 A.D.
Author/translator: Jerome

This translation was done from the original languages. I would like to quote from the introduction of a Revised Standard Version, Catholic edition, "In the Old Testament it has not been thought necessary to make any changes in the text. There is however the very important difference in the number of books. Catholic Bibles include seven extra books and parts of two others. These are known to Catholics as 'deuterocanonical' and are regarded as an integral part of the Canon of the Old Testament. They are here printed in the order in which they appear in the Latin Vulgate, with the exception of the extra parts of the Book of Esther."

We see that the Latin Vulgate contained the apocrypha.

WYCLIFFE BIBLE

Date: 382 A.D.
Author/translator: Wycliffe

This was the first complete English Bible. Wycliffe worked from the Latin Vulgate.

GUTENBERG BIBLE

Date: 1456 A.D.

This was the first Bible to be printed on a printing press, rather than being copied by hand. It was done from the Latin Vulgate also.

TYNDALE BIBLE

Date: New Testament 1525 A.D.
Old Testament 1535 A.D.
Author/translator: Tyndale

This Bible was the first to be translated from the original languages into English.

THE GREAT BIBLE

Date: 1539 A.D.
Author/translator: Cranmer and Coverdale

This was a revision of the Tyndale Bible.

COVERDALE BIBLE

Date: 1535
Author/translator: Coverdale

This was the first printed in English.

STEPHANUS TEXT

Date: 1550 A.D.

GENEVA BIBLE

Date: 1560 A.D.
Author/translator: Whittingham, et. al.

This Bible was the first to use verse divisions.

RHEIMS-DOUAY

Date: New Testament 1582 A.D.
Old Testament 1610 A.D.

This was the first authorized English version for Roman Catholics. The work was done by two committees from the Vulgate.

KING JAMES VERSION

Date: 1611 A.D.
Author/translator: fifty four protestant scholars

This is also called the Authorized Version at times. I would like to list a quotation for your interest from Dr. Miller's notes. ". . .formally a revision of the 1602 edition of the Bishop's Bible. This translation was done in 1611 and established itself as the English Bible. Present day translations, however, have several changes. The spelling has been modernized, and other alterations have been introduced. One obvious misprint has persisted in most editions since the first one of 1611 in Matthew 23:24 where 'strain at a gnat' should be 'strain out a gnat.' Many of the earlier translations were carelessly printed. Thus the 'Wicked Bible' of 1641 left out the word 'not' in the seventh commandment. As to the Greek text, the Authorized Version is in considerable agreement with the Textus receptus."

ROBERT AITKEN BIBLE

Date: 1782 A.D.

This was the King James Version, however it was the first King James printed in America.

WESTCOTT HORT GREEK TEXT

Date: 1881 A.D.
Author/translator: Westcott and Hort

This was a Greek text which most of the modern translations are based on. The other text being the Textus Receptus, upon which the King James Version is based.

REVISED VERSION

Date: 1885 A.D.

This was a revision of the King James Version.

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

Date: 1901 A.D.
Author/translator: A committee of American scholars

This was a revision of the Revised Version. It was partially based on the modern principles of textual criticism. The Old Testament is based on the Massoretic text. It is felt by most readers to be very stiff, however it is usually held as one of the more accurate translations.

NEW TRANSLATION IN MODERN SPEECH (Weymouth Translation)

Date: 1903 A.D.
Author/translator: Weymouth

This was done from the Greek and gives particular attention to the verb tenses. The author attempted to give the proper idea of the tenses as he set the information into English.

NESTLE GREEK TEXT

Date: 1904

This was based on Tishendorf, Westcott and Hort and the United Bible Society texts.

A NEW TRANSLATION (Moffatt)

Date: New Testament 1913
Old Testament 1924

Author: Moffatt

This is a paraphrase. He was of liberal doctrine and was not against making changes from time

to time. John 1:1 for example mentions that the "logos was divine." Christ was not divine, He was deity.

AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION

Date: 1923
Author: E.J. Godspeed

This work reportedly shows the eunuch of Acts 8 sitting in his car.

NEW TESTAMENT IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE

Date: 1937
Author: C.B. Williams

This work also did some good work in bringing the tenses over into the English.

REVISED STANDARD VERSION

Date: New Testament 1946
Old Testament 1952
Authors: Done by 32 protestants and Catholics.

This was a liberal revision of the 1901 version. The Catholic Edition of the R.S.V. mentions, "The Revised Standard Version itself needs no lengthy introduction, being already well known and widely read. It is, as its preface states, 'an authorized revision of the American Standard Version, Published in 1901, which was a revision of the King James Version, published in 1611.'"

Many have rejected the RSV due to its translation of Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The translation of the Hebrew term, young woman rather than virgin is the problem. This term is a vague term and always refers to a young woman, but not always to a virgin. When the RSV translates Matthew 1:23, a quote from the Isaiah text, it uses the term virgin, because the Greek term clearly speaks to the virginity of the woman.

NEW TESTAMENT IN PLAIN ENGLISH

Date: 1952
Author: C.K. Williams

Williams uses large words and some modern terms such as "police" and "handcuffs."

NEW TESTAMENT IN MODERN ENGLISH

Date: 1957
Author: Phillips

This is a paraphrase and was revised in 1966. He was a liberal in theology and reportedly did not believe in verbal inspiration.

BERKELEY VERSION

Date: New Testament 1945
Old Testament 1959

Author: Edited by Gerrit Verkuyl of Berkeley, CA

This is an evangelical work and many feel that it is a good work.

EXPANDED TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Date: 1960
Author: Wuest, an instructor in Greek at Moody Bible Institute.

This is a technically accurate work. The accuracy took presidence over style.

NEW ENGLISH BIBLE NEW TESTAMENT

Date: 1961

This is normally accepted as a good work by conservatives.

AMPLIFIED BIBLE

Date: Completed 1964
Author: Mrs. Siewert, et. al.

THE NEW TESTAMENT: REVISED STANDARD VERSION CATHOLIC EDITION

Date: 1965

This was done as an ecumenical Bible and is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church.

GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN

Date: 1966

This was done by a man that reportedly denied the deity of Christ and rejected verbal inspiration.

JERUSALEM BIBLE

Date: 1966

This is a Roman Catholic work which includes the Apocrypha.

NEW SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE

Date: 1967
Author: Scofield

This was a revision of Scofield's original notes of 1909. The revising was done by John Walvoord, Charles Feinberg, Allan MacRae, E. Schyler English, Frank Gaebelein, Alva McClain, Clarence Mason, William Culbertson, Wilbur Smith, and Wilber Ruggles.

WILLIAMS TRANSLATION

This work was based on the Westcott and Hort text.

NEW AMERICAN BIBLE

Date: 1970
Author: Done by fifty Catholic and five Protestant scholars.

NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

Date: 1971
Author: Fifty four conservative Protestants. Lockman Foundation.

The work is technically good. The Greek tenses were translated so that the English reader could determine the tenses.

LIVING BIBLE

Date: Completed in 1971
Author: Kenneth N. Taylor

The work has some accuracy problems and tends toward personal interpretation rather than translation. It is a paraphrase. It was a work from the ASV.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

Date: Completed 1978
Author: One hundred fifteen evangelical scholars.

It is a work from the critical Greek texts, which is fairly accurate. I personally have noticed however that in many cases it disagrees in content when compared to the King James and the New American Standard.

TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION/GOOD NEWS BIBLE

Author: Robert G. Bratcher and six other scholars.

NEW KING JAMES VERSION

Date: 1982
Author: Done by one hundred nineteen scholars.

NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE

Date: 1985

This is a redo of the 1966 Jerusalem Bible.

THE NEW WORLD TRANSLATION

This was done by the Jehovah Witnesses. I have been told that Greek scholars took this translation to secular, unsaved, Greek scholars for evaluation. They reported that it was one of the poorest attempts at translation they had seen. It shows Christ as a god in John 1:1.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE LANGUAGE OF TODAY

Author: William F. Beck

Beck was a Lutheran, and his version is well received for its accuracy.

THE COTTON PATCH VERSION

Author: Clarence Jordan

Jordan has a Ph.D. in New Testament Greek from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He sets the New Testament in the modern day south. The Jews and Gentiles are viewed as black

and whites. Acts is entitled the Happening, while the book of Romans becomes Washington.

There are many other works that have appeared. I have only listed some of the more prominent ones.

The following charts are hopefully accurate. I have gleaned information from many sources over the years to set these charts to paper.

SOURCES:

Miller, Dr. David; Theology Class notes, Western Baptist College; Salem, OR.

Kohlenberger, John III; "WHICH BIBLE TRANSLATION IS BEST FOR ME?"; Article in Moody Monthly, May 1987

Till, George A.; Class handout, Western Baptist College; Salem, OR.

THEOLOGY

00950

INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY PROPER

Tozer said of his God, "O Lord God Almighty, not the God of the philosophers and the wise but the God of the prophets and apostles; and better than all, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may I express Thee unblamed?

"They that know Thee not may call upon Thee as other than Thou art, and so worship not Thee but a creature of their own fancy; therefore enlighten our minds that we may know Thee as Thou art, so that we may perfectly love Thee and worthily praise Thee." (Tozer, A.W.; "THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"; Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1961, p 7)

The term theology proper refers to the study of the true theology, the study of God Himself. This section will deal with God, His attributes, and His nature. Some state that it deals also with His existence, however if a person is dealing with nature and attributes, there is existence.

Please define the term God for me. A hard task? Yes, a very hard task. Let me share other people's attempts to define God.

I read in an Oregon newspaper of a pilot that told the newspaper that God had licensed him. He did not need the government telling him if he could fly or not. God told him he could, so that settled it. The story came to light after the man had crashed his plane. He told the reporter that his faith in God did not require him to have licenses, be it a pilot's, driver's, or pickup.

Is this really God that this man serves?

Still, others see God in other ways. The United Presbyterian General Assembly was introduced to a female God by The Rev. Wallace M. Alston, Jr. of Princeton, N.J. He told the assembly of the God he serves using female pronouns.

I read a story by Danny Dutton where he described God as a God that makes people, babies actually, so that there will be enough people here on earth to take care of things. He figured that the babies could be trained by the people down here, rather than take His time to do it.

He went on to describe his idea of God. It was the description of an eight-year-old boy, but that description was quite practical and thought provoking. We grownups ought to take God for what He is and not try to make Him over in our own image. (Dutton, Danny, an essay "An Explanation Of God"; Sword of the Lord, Feb. 1986, quoting Evangelical Press News Service.)

The thoughts of a Jewish man that lived in A.D. 1200 depict well the reverence with which he discussed his God. It also depicts the God of the Word quite well from the Old Testament standpoint. He mentions His creation, unity, eternality, and many other attributes. "Thirteen Principles of Faith (Ani Ma'amin) Lieberman, Leo/Beringause, Arthur, editors; "CLASSICS OF JEWISH LITERATURE"; Secaucus, NJ: Castle, p 226-227. (I would have included it but could not find an address so I could seek permission.)

Let us look at other definitions of God.

1. "By God we understand the one absolutely and infinitely perfect Spirit who is the creator of all" (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D. quoting the Catholic Dictionary; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 58)

2. "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth" (Pardington quoting The Westminster Shorter Catechism, p 58)

3. "God is the infinite and perfect Spirit in whom all things have their source, support, and end." (Strong, Augustus H.. "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907, p 52)

4. Bill Bright mentions that God is not a "cosmic policeman," nor a "dictator," nor a "big bully." He also mentions that "to know Him intimately is to love Him supremely." (Bright, Bill; article from Worldwide Challenge, "Getting to Know God")

5. Unger mentions, "He is purely spiritual, the Supreme Personal Intelligence, the Creator and Preserver of all things, the Perfect Moral Ruler of the universe; He is the only proper object of worship; He is the tri-personal - the Father, Son, and Holy spirit constituting one God-head." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody

Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 410)

He is distinct from any other God that might be fabricated in man's mind. Scripture declares that God is a God among many gods. He is pictured as THE GOD among other gods. He is the TRUE GOD among the gods of men's minds.

In Isa. 45:5,6 God declares that He is the only God. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me; I girded thee, though thou hast not known me, that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else."

Yet, Ex. 15:11 and other texts declare Him to be The One God among other gods. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Ps. 136:2 states, "Oh, give thanks unto the God of gods; for his mercy endureth forever." (See also: Ezra 1:2-4; Jer. 10:11; Ex. 18:1-12; Ex. 20:3; Ex. 23:24; II Kings 17:26.)

The next item to examine is the question, "How do we know God exists?" There are four indications of God's existence that I would like to mention at this point.

INTUITION: We know God exists due to man's intuition. All men of all ages have had a sense of God. There have been burial sites of hundreds of civilizations that have shown the people prepared their dead for the afterlife. Intuition is ". . .what the normal natural mind assumes to be true." (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988, Vol. I, p 111)

Romans 1:18-20 tells us that God will hold all mankind responsible based in part upon this intuitive knowledge of Him. Nature itself reveals God and the book of Romans is clear that, based on these two revelations, the lost are without excuse.

TRADITION: We also know that God exists due to tradition. Tradition comes from those things that man knew from ages past that were handed down through the ages. There are also the Scriptures that contain this earlier tradition and they record for us those things we can know of God from times past.

REASON: By viewing the creation and using the mind, man can know that God exists. We will cover this in detail later.

REVELATION: We have just studied the doctrine of the Bible which is God revealing Himself to us. He tells us much of Himself in His Word.

God is one. God is three. There is one God and within God are three personalities. There is one essence and there is one nature. There are three persons.

The term "God" normally in Scripture relates to, not a particular person of the Trinity, but to the essence and nature of God. It refers to "deity." There are times when "God" is used and elsewhere in the context the Word identifies "God" as one particular person of the Trinity.

SOME DEFINITIONS:

ESSENCE: Essence is that which gives attributes residence and is the proof of existence. Thiessen mentions of essence, ". . .that which underlies all outward manifestation; the reality itself, whether material or immaterial; the substratum of anything that in which the qualities of attributes inhere." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 119)

BEING: Being is a state of existence and essence.

PERSON: Person is a term that defines the totality of essence and being.

NATURE: Nature is the outworking of essence and attributes. It is the total of all that a being is.

ATTRIBUTES: Attributes are the qualities of essence.

PERSONALITY: Personality is that which causes distinctness between different essences.

Take some time to consider these terms as they relate to God.

CONCLUSIONS:

We want to study God so that we can know more about the Lord, but also that we might know the Lord. There is a vast difference between knowing about God and knowing God. I trust that not only will you learn facts about your God, but that you would also get to know Him in a more special way.

Tertullian said, ". . .the knowledge of God is the dowry of the soul." (Warfield, B.B.; "CALVIN AND AUGUSTINE"; New York: 1931, p 147) Knowledge of Him should be of great importance to each of us.

I trust that in years to come that you might well fit into the category of man that Theophilus mentions. "If you say, 'Show me thy God,' I reply, 'Show me your man and I will show you my God.'" (Warfield. B.B., p 147)

Strauss mentions, "The nature of God is not fully comprehensible by the human, finite mind; however, we must pursue that which is apprehensible and which God himself has been pleased to reveal." (Strauss, Lehman; "THE FIRST PERSON"; Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967, p 43)

Tozer indicates that we can know a nation by knowing it's concept of God (p 7). We can also know a church by it's idea of God. Likewise we may know a man by his concept of God.

As you converse with a person or observe the actions of a church or nation you may gain knowledge of what that person, church, or nation thinks of God.

That is an awesome thought, that people can know what we feel and think about God by observing us. What do you tell by your lifestyle to the people around you? What does your church tell the neighbors about God by their lifestyle?

I met a man when working as a janitor. He knew that I was a preacher and talked to me from time to time. He swore, drank, and smoked each night after work with the other men. He would talk to me of knowing the Lord, and knowing that he was not living correctly. He also mentioned how important it is to affect those around you spiritually. The problem with his affect on others was that it was not a Godly affect.

We must, as believers, portray the God that we serve. We cannot reflect our God if we are abusive, if we are nasty, if we are short tempered, if we are dishonest, if we are unpleasant, if we are _____ . You fill in the blank with your improper personal traits.

Consider daily how you have portrayed your God as you lay down to sleep.

01000

NATURALISTIC THEISTIC ARGUMENTS SHOWING GOD

Naturalistic would be something to do with nature. Theistic would have to do with God. Naturalistic theistic arguments then, would be arguments for God from nature.

The term theism is used in different ways: In the most general sense it is any belief in god as a concept or idea. In the specific sense as we use it, it relates to the belief in Almighty God the Creator.

Atheism is the thought there is no god. The atheist is up front, automatically a fool according to the Psalmist (Ps. 14:1). The atheist should assume there is no god and force the theist to prove there is a god. Instead the atheist attempts to prove there is no god. If something is not there then how do you prove that it is not there? Especially when that thing that is not there is invisible. That is at best, a foolish thing to attempt!

The theist is left with the job of proving that his god is there even though that god is not visible and scientifically observable.

Our discussion in this section will be concerned with some of these proofs that have been set forth to prove that God exists. To be more specific, they are proofs that our God the creator of the universe exists.

NATURAL THEISM: This is the information available from nature and through man's reasoning about God.

BIBLICAL THEISM: This is all information available to man from nature and from the Word of God that is not only complete, but true.

I. NATURAL THEISM

Knowledge of God comes from three sources in the natural realm. These three sources are intuition, tradition and reason.

A. INTUITION: Due to the sin in man this knowledge is distorted, however it is a knowledge that all of mankind has shared through the centuries. This is an inborn knowledge of God. Rom. 1:19 mentions, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them."

All civilizations have had some sort of afterlife and belief in some sort of god or higher power. This knowledge is that which does not need to be taught. It is knowledge that does not come from his environmental training or upbringing. The thought of right and wrong is a good example. Every society has rights and wrongs. Some of them are much more primitive than others, yet we find some concept of right and wrong in any society that we care to study.

Man has this type of knowledge of God. He may not know much, and his knowledge may be warped, but that knowledge is built in.

Strauss quotes Zwemer, THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION: "On two great conceptions modern scientists are agreed: namely, on the unity of the race and on the essential religious nature of man....Man is very much alike everywhere from China to Peru....He always has been and is [,] incurably religious....Humanity itself finds its roots in God...." (Strauss, Lehman; "THE FIRST PERSON"; Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967, p 32)

In all societies man has the concept of God and there is also along with that concept the concept that if the man does wrong there will be displeasure on the part of God, and punishment for the man. On the other hand - good actions bring lack of punishment, or reward.

B. TRADITION: The information we have in our Bible may have been tradition before it was set down by Moses. The men that followed God during this period operated on what had been handed down to them from previous generations.

To a point much of what we can know of God today came from past generations that have committed their findings about God and His Word to the printed page for us to consider and ponder.

C. REASON: There are several arguments for the existence of God from reason. Walvoord says these arguments are inductive and proceed from facts to a conclusion. If I grab the two wires in a light socket, I feel something. That is fact. From the fact of pain, I SHOULD draw some conclusions that I should not touch two wires in a light socket.

1. ARGUMENTUM A POSTERIORI: This is the argument from effect to cause. If you see or observe an effect you know there was a cause. If you come up to a car that is upside down in the ditch you know there has been an unexpected occurrence. That is the effect - the cause may be a number of things, but you can be sure there was some cause!

We lived in an apartment in Salem, OR located on a curve at the edge of town. We had numerous accidents every year on the curve. One morning early we heard a crash and I went to see if I could help. Another car was just pulling off in a hurry. The driver of the wrecked car said he had taken the corner at 30 miles per hour and he didn't know what happened. I was told by one of our sons before going to the scene that the two cars had been drag racing. He knew the cause of the effect just as well as I did, even though the driver just couldn't figure out what happened!

This argument for the existence of God is quite effective with people that don't know if God exists. These arguments are very logical in their approach, and thus conducive to acceptance by both the intellectual mind and the mind of a less educated person.

This line of argumentation moves from the end product that we are, and in which we live (creation), backward to what was in the past - only One that had intelligence, desire and power enough to create what we see today could have created it all. There must have been a being that had intelligence, desire and power enough to create, to have done so.

A well-built car, if examined, will demand there be a designer that had the desire to design and build such a device, as well as the power to build.

a. COSMOLOGICAL: Cosmological comes from the term, "kosmos" meaning orderly. Simply stated this tells us that we can observe the great and vast creation thus we must assume there was a great and vast power that was powerful enough to have created that creation.

There are four arguments concerning the creation that have been presented in the past.

1). Nature is eternal so there is no need for a cause.

2). Matter is eternal and therefore is self-developing. It can do as it wants - man has no direction

or purpose - only the matter that is developing has purpose.

3). Matter is eternal however it's present arrangement is due to the influence of God. Plato, Aristotle, and others held this thought. Man then may have some purpose else wise why would God influence matter.

4). Matter was created for the express purposes of Almighty God. Only this final argument is consistent with the Revelation of God.

Pardington quotes Strong: "Everything begun, whether substance or phenomenon, owes its existence to some producing cause. The universe, at least so far as its present form is concerned, is a thing begun, and owes its existence to a cause equal to its production. This cause must be indefinitely great." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 65)

This system of argumentation is based on three presuppositions:

1). If there is an effect there was a cause. If you enter a room and a thief is standing over me with his fist raised and I am laying on the floor, there must have been a cause for my reclining position.

2). The effect depends on the cause for its being. My reclining position is not because the price of eggs is higher today than yesterday in Chicago, but it may be because I said something about the way the thief was acting.

3). Nature cannot in and of itself produce itself. There had to have been a cause for the effect of nature.

Cause and effect. Everything begun owes it's existence to some producing cause. Let us consider a room for example; something caused it; it didn't just come into existence. This book - a cause somewhere caused it to come into existence.

Lockyer ends his study in this way: "There is a power somewhere because there are effects everywhere.

"There is wisdom somewhere because wise deeds are accomplished everywhere.

"There is intelligence somewhere for there are order and arrangement everywhere.

"There is goodness somewhere for there are beneficent agents and resultant gladness everywhere." (Taken from the book, ALL THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE by Herbert Lockyer. Copyright 1964 by Zondervan Publishing House. Used by permission. p 21)

b. TELEOLOGICAL: Simply stated is the fact that we can see design in the creation thus we must assume that creation was designed and created by a being that has design and order.

The term comes from the Greek word "telos" which means design or end.

If there is design then it is logical to assume there was a designer. Pardington quoting Strong states, "Order and useful collation [means bringing together] pervading a system respectively imply intelligence and purpose as the cause of that order and collocation [means arranging together]. Since order and collocation pervade the universe, there must exist an intelligence adequate to the production of this order, and a will adequate to direct this collocation to useful ends" (Pardington, pp 66, 67)

I once took apart a Norelco razor - there had to have been a designer - it was too well engineered to just have come into existence in some junk yard somewhere. The universe is full of examples of the great design to be found in the creation in which we live.

Cambron mentions the design whereby ice floats to the top of water thereby allowing fish life to live through cold weather. If ice sank to the bottom then all above would also freeze killing the fish.

Reason for the design is indicative of intelligent thought processes of a being that designed due to a reason and created. Intelligent thought processes also indicates the personality of the designer.

The human eye and it's intricacies. The seed that can be planted and spring forth to life as a plant and later as fruit.

It should be noted that the skeptics must admit that the world is ordered. They are left with the problem of explaining how the order came into being if there was no order. They must rely on disordered primordial gluck moving from itself to a finely ordered world of today. This idea is not only illogical but it lacks reason.

Some might state that the order and design came from the natural working of the laws of nature. If this is true where then did the orderly laws of nature come from if not from an orderly God.

c. ANTHROPOLOGICAL: Simply stated this point says that man has a spiritual side that did not happen by chance - we must assume there is a spiritual being that created him.

Pardington states, "The argument may be represented in three parts:

a. "Man's intellectual and moral nature requires for its author an intellectual and moral Being. The mind cannot evolve from matter, neither can spirit evolve from flesh. Consequently, a Being having both mind and spirit must have created man.

b. "Man's moral nature proves the existence of a holy Lawgiver and Judge. Otherwise, conscience cannot be satisfactorily explained.

c. "Man's emotional and volitional nature requires for its author a Being, who, as Dr. Strong says, "can furnish in Himself a satisfying object of human affection and an end which will call forth man's highest activities and ensure his highest progress." (Pardington, p 68)

Ryrie states, "Inasmuch as God has created man with unusual qualities not found in any other created being, it is possible for man, on the basis of what he is, to have some concept of what God is. Man is composed of both material and immaterial elements." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

In using this argument you must be careful to not use "God" in your proof of God's existence. I think that Ryrie needs to reconsider his argument. It would be better to say that because man has qualities that animals do not have there is some reason for that difference. We can assume that due to our makeup that a creator would probably have some of those same characteristics, which He gave to us.

Ryrie goes on to say that a being creating man with "Life, intellect, sensibility, will, conscience, and inherent belief in God" must also have those attributes. (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Some submit man's moral nature as indicative of a moral God as well. Indeed, some call this whole thought the Moral argument.

In concluding the three arguments Walvoord states the following:

"(1) In the cosmological argument, the existence of the cosmos, originating in time, constitutes proof of a First Cause who is self-existent and eternal and who possesses intelligence, power, and will.

"(2) In the teleological argument the evidence of design extends the proof of the intelligence of the First Cause into details of telescopic grandeur and microscopic perfection far beyond the feeble ability of man to discover or comprehend.

"(3) In the anthropological argument, though confirming the proofs advanced in the two preceding arguments, an added indication is secured which suggests the elements in the First Cause of intellect, sensibility, and will, which are the essentials of personality; the moral feature of conscience in man indicates that his Creator is the One who actuates holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, Vol. I & II, 1988, p 122)

d. CHRISTOLOGICAL: Simply stated this argument shows that if we can observe so many things related to Christ that cannot be humanly produced, we must assume there was a supernatural being that produced the effects.

This point is closely related to Scriptural proofs of God's existence yet the unsaved philosophical mind must cope with it if he is to be honest.

If there is no God then how do you account for:

1). The Bible and its longevity.
2). Fulfillment of prophecy.
3). The miracles.
4). Supernatural character and divine mission of Christ.
5). Christianity's influence on the world.
6). The fact of conversion and the change in people's lives.

If there is no God then you must account in some way for all of the above.

e. CONGRUITY: Congruity simply stated says, if you have a system of thought that fits the facts of the effect then you must assume the system of thought contains facts that are correct about the cause. This comes from the state of being "harmoniously related or united." (Bancroft, Emery H./Ed. Mayers, Ronald B.; "CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976, p 66)

The following is an argument that follows this line of thinking. If a key fits the lock of the door and it unlocks the lock then it is the correct key to the door. If an infinite God fits all the facts that we perceive, then He is the answer that we seek.

2. ARGUMENTUM A PRIORI: This argument by definition works from the minute to the enlarged. It moves from a bone to a suggested full size recreation of the bone's original owner. Pardington states, "a priori argument, that is, from cause to effect." (Pardington p 69)

a. ONTOLOGICAL: Ontological comes from the Greek word "ontos" or being. Simply stated, man has a concept of an infinite perfect being thus we must assume that the infinite perfect being made us aware of Himself.

Walvoord describes this argument: "The argument is that man could not have this idea unless something exists that corresponds to it. According to this argument, the existence of God is certified by the fact that the human mind believes that God exists." He also states that most do not use this argument due to the fact there are questions that can arise from it. (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, Vol. I & II, 1988, p 123)

Pardington likens it to "the Scotchman's definition of metaphysics: "one man talking about

something of which he knows nothing to another man who does not understand him!"" (Pardington, p 69)

Pardington lists three forms of this argument:

1. Samuel Clarke of the 18th century. "Space and time are attributes of substance or being. But space and time are respectively infinite and eternal. There must therefore be an infinite and eternal substance or Being to whom these attributes belong.

" Gillespie mentions: "Space and time are modes of existence. But space and time are respectively infinite and eternal. There must therefore be an infinite and eternal Being who subsists in these modes." (Pardington P 70)

Space and time are infinite, therefore there must be an infinite and eternal substance or being to whom these attributes belong. Some thing or being had to be operating in infinity to create these things to enjoy.

We have an idea of an infinite and perfect being. This idea cannot be derived from imperfect, finite things. Thus there must be an infinite being who is the cause.

2. Descartes a Frenchman from the 16th century: "We have the idea of an infinite and perfect Being. this idea cannot be derived from the imperfect and finite things. There must, therefore, be an infinite and perfect Being who is the cause." (Pardington p 70)

We have an idea of an absolutely perfect being. But existence is an attribute of perfection. Thus, an absolutely perfect being must exist.

Strong argues that the finite mind cannot come to the infinite idea.

3. Anselm of the middle ages: "We have the idea of an absolutely perfect Being. But existence is an attribute of perfection. An absolutely perfect Being must, therefore, exist." (Pardington p 70)

Q. Is this truly a naturalistic argument? As Ryrie and Walvoord state it, I'm not so sure. If as the other writers define it - not using God but the idea of a being, then you might see it as naturalistic. To put God into it is to say that we are arguing from a knowledge of God.

In witnessing you can use these arguments to jog people's minds as to the possibility of God's existence. Missionaries in foreign countries oft times have to use these arguments to help the people to the place where they can believe that there is a God and then the missionary can witness to them of the Gospel.

In The Daily Bread a story by Mr. Ralph Norton of the Belgian Gospel Mission, illustrates the

truth that we need to remember even when using these arguments.

"What do you do Mr. Norton, in a case where an unsaved man does not accept the Bible as having any authority?" He replied, "Well, if I were in a fight and had a sword with a keen double-edged blade, I wouldn't keep it in its sheath just because the other fellow said he didn't believe it would cut." (Used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

We need to use the Word at any and every opportunity even though the person may or may reject the Word's validity. ("For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Heb. 4:12)

I would encourage you to be familiar with these arguments in coming days. You will be running into more and more people that will not believe there is a God and these will give you an opening to talk to them of God anyway.

Someone has suggested that when Paul preached on Mars' Hill he approached the people via an unknown god they worshiped, but that he went immediately into the Gospel, not using any rational arguments, thus we must assume that we should not use rational arguments with people in witnessing. NO! This is wrong logic.

Paul was talking to people that had belief in gods. They had many but they believed in gods. "...I perceive that in all things ye are very religious." (Acts 17:22b It should be noted that Paul began at Genesis 1 to explain his thought to the Athenians.) It should also be noted that though Paul did not use the arguments of reason that we are discussing, he did use reason with them. This is seen in his presentation in vss. 22ff. (Vs. 29 especially)

He did not have opportunity to share the Gospel with these people by the way. He did have some that followed and evidently accepted the Gospel later. Vs. 34.

There are people that do not believe in any god or gods. These are the people that we can confront with rational arguments. They may accept the possibility of a god and then begin to listen to the Word.

I spent an afternoon talking with a man that was irate with a Christian that had spent the noon hour telling him that he needed to be saved. When I entered the truck, He challenged me. "You aren't a religious nut are you?" As the afternoon went along, I talked with him of the possibilities of God existing. He was very open to the logic of the arguments. Ultimately I was able to share the Gospel with him. His final comment that day was, "Stan, thank you for telling me that. At home I have stacks of religious literature, and I have never heard what you told me today." He promised to seriously consider the Lord's claims - because he was open to logical arguments for the Father's existence.

01050

VARIOUS VIEWS OF GOD

Walvoord, Chafer and Theissen all have good sections on these topics. Hodge has a detailed section on this as well. Since so much work has been done on the subject there will only be a brief introduction to the topic here.

There are many views of the creation, the being or power that did it, and the resultant oversight of the creation by that power or being. We need to look at some of these views.

1. DYNAMISM: There is in all things a force which can be tapped for either good or evil purposes. This force is not described - only used and worshiped. This is an impersonal force that is stronger than man. Does that sound like anything you've been seeing on tv in recent years? Sound like Star Wars? "May the Force be with you."

2. ANIMISM: All of nature has spirits that are personal and responsive to the worshiper. The spirit will do good or evil according to the worshipers activities. Help or injury can come from these spirits at the will of the spirit. This would be tree worship or moon worship etc.

Animism views all immaterial things as being and existing due to the immaterial part of the object. The immaterial is inseparable from the matter and gives the matter form and life.

In short if we were animists and I was to give you a test and you failed the test, you might well come to the desk that you took the test in, and feel that its spirit had been unkind to you because you left your gum on it. You might clean the gum off and do some ritual to get back into its good graces.

3. FETISHISM: The idea that objects have spirits and the object must be worshiped because the spirit is there. The spirit is a temporary resident of the object so may leave the object. The term means magic. Many Indian tribes in South America and elsewhere have great problems with fetishes. When the people accept Christ one of the first things to go should be, and usually is, their fetishes.

In our previous illustration, if we believed in fetishism, you might, when you came to the desk, find that the spirit had moved. You might have to go find it.

This reminds me of the Roman Catholic Church in South America in years past when they removed some of the saint's statues from the cathedrals because they were no longer saints. The people had been worshiping at those statues for several generations in some cases, and all of a sudden the saint wasn't a saint and was gone - they had no one to pray to.

4. IDOLATRY: This is not the worship of sleep. The term means image. The idol is the

permanent residence of the spirit and as such, is worshiped. The object is something that is man made normally and is sacred.

The difference between idolatry and fetishism is that the spirit is permanent in the idol while the spirit is not permanent in the fetish. The difference between animism, idolatry and fetishism is that the animist views ALL objects as having a spirit, while the idolater and fetishist view only some objects as having a spirit.

Jer. 10 has a great listing of the attributes of idols: they are cut from the forest, they are crafted, they are decorated, they are fastened so they can't fall, they can't talk, they need to be carried, they aren't to be feared, they can do you no harm, they can do you no good, they are falsehood, they have no breath, they are vanity, they are works of error, and they will perish. SO WHY WORSHIP THEM?

You can then list all of these and compare them to God's own attributes and see the difference. He, the Living God is what all of the idols are not. Isa. 44:14-20 is a text you need to remember for speaking to the foolishness of idolatry! Take time to read it.

5. MONOLATRY: The worshiper selects one idol from all the rest and worships it exclusively and feels that his god is more powerful than all others. Quite often this idol that is worshiped will be a tribal god in the Indian cultures. In monolatry the object is import rather than the god. Sound like "money" today, indeed, the title is close!

6. POLYTHEISM: This is not, as someone has suggested, the worship of parrots. It is Greek for many gods, or the worship of many gods. These gods are usually well defined in the persons mind. They may live in mountains or in other objects of nature. In the Greek thought they were well-defined gods of supernatural nature. Venus, Apollo, Jupiter etc. The Greek gods all lived on Mt. Olympus.

Quite often there will be one god that is over the other gods or at least more powerful than the other gods. This is also true of the Greek system of gods.

These gods are different from the idolater's god. The god of the polytheist has form and is not related to an object. Their god is independent and can act as he wills, rather than being contained within an object.

There is indication in the Old Testament that many of the peoples of the earth were polytheistic. They all felt that each god had different levels of power. When they ran into a god more powerful than their god, they would add that new god to their list of gods. They might do this when as a valley people, they fought the mountain people and lost. They would naturally assume that the mountain people's god was more powerful. The Old Testament pictures God as knowing that He was one god among many, however, He always declared Himself as the Living God, or as the God above all gods.

7. HENOTHEISM: The worshiper chooses one of the gods of a polytheistic listing and worships it exclusively as his god. Within the Greek system of gods, the person might choose cupid and worship the god of love to the exclusion of all other gods in the system.

8. DUALISM: This thought comes from the Latin two. Dualism is a belief in two equal gods of opposite character. One is good and one is evil. (Zorasterism) If you study the different ideas of the creation of the universe, you will run into the dualism of the ancient peoples. Many of the concepts of creation are based on two gods, one representing good and the other representing evil. They quite often are the products of one set of parents, or one producing force.

9. TRITHEISM: "This is the doctrine of three Gods." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 21) I have read that this thought originated with a man that came out of the Brethren movement in years past.

10. PANTHEISM: All there is, is god and there ain't no moe. God is all, and all is god, and all you see is a manifestation of that god. There is no matter - only god. You are sitting on God, and you will eat God at lunch. It would be very difficult to honor your god within this system, since you have to use material things, while knowing they are your god. In this system you would definitely respect the things which you used.

11. PANENTHEISM: This system of thought is very similar to Pantheism. Pantheism holds that all is god, and god is all that exists, while Panentheism holds that all is god but god is more than exists. In other words, god is in all things, but all things are not the extent of god. The universe is god, but god extends further than the universe and is more than the universe.

12. DEISM: Deism comes from the Latin for god. There is one personal supreme god that is personal. He is far off from mankind and as a result is very seldom worshiped or heard from. HE'S WAY OUT I GUESS YOU COULD SAY! God is known from nature and reason, but not from the Scripture. (Many of our countries founding fathers were Deists. Benjamin Franklin for one.)

He created but doesn't sustain the creation. "God is the Maker, but not the Keeper." (Cambron, p 20)

Theissen states, "God is present in creation only by His power, not in his very being and nature. He had endowed creation with invariable laws over which he exercises a mere general oversight; he has imparted to his creatures certain properties, placed them under his invariable laws, and left them to work out their destiny by their own powers. Deism denies a special revelation, miracles, and providence." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 74)

13. MONOTHEISM: From Greek for one. Monotheism presents a personal ethical god that is in the world yet distinct from the world. One god only.

We as Christians are monotheists. Among monotheists we find not only Christianity, but Islam and Judaism.

14. THEISM: Theism is the same as Monotheism, with the added idea of self-revelation. God has revealed Himself via our nature, the creation and the Word. "Theism is the belief in the existence of a personal God, Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all things." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 57)

15. IDEALISM/REALISM: This is not usually a form of worship yet could be. It is often listed with REALISM for they are opposites.

Idealism would be the worship of ideas. Idealism states that what is, ain't, and realism states that what ain't, is.

The idealist would view a chair as only an idea and not real. The realist would view a chair as real because he can perceive and be conscious of it.

Realism relates to things of which we are conscious. If we are conscious of something then it is real. Logically speaking from their definition, if you sit in a chair and feel it on your backside it is real. If your rear area goes to sleep then you don't feel it and it really isn't there so you will fall on the floor.

16. POSITIVISM: Positivism limits itself only to the knowledge which can be gained by and through phenomena. In other words if a lightning bolt hits one of them they can observe the result and know of that item. In relation to god, there can only be knowledge of god if there are some observable phenomena to study and draw conclusions.

17. PLURALISM: This system sees the mind as the determinate factor as to what the world is. Thus each person has their own world because each person has their own mind. To a point this is what Humanism is. Humanism teaches that everyone is free to choose their own thing and own way.

18. ATHEISM: "Atheism is a denial of God's existence." (Pardington, p 57) Indeed, the atheist tries to prove that god does not exist.

19. SKEPTICISM: "...a doubt of or disbelief in the existence of God." (Pardington, p 57) I suspect that most modern day atheists are more correctly defined as skeptics. They attempt to prove that He doesn't exist indicating that there is a strong possibility that He does.

20. AGNOSTICISM: Agnosticism "...is a denial that God or his creation can be known." (Pardington, p 58) Pardington relates the term to another interesting term. "Etymologically, agnostic and ignoramus mean the same thing. The former is from the Greek, the latter from the

Latin." (Pardington, p 58)

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary mentions of an ignoramus, ".....ignorant lawyer in Ignoramus (1615), play by George Ruggle.....an utterly ignorant person: DUNCE....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

HOWEVER!!! DO NOT CALL AN AGNOSTIC AN IGNORAMUS!

21. MATERIALISM: This view holds that there is no spirit realm but only matter. Matter exists, and matter is all that exists. There is no god that created matter, nor is there a god that formed matter into creation.

The use of the term materialism in our own day is actually a slight redefinition of the term. When we use the term, we usually mean that a person is taken up with material things, such as cars, homes, stereos, etc. The underlying principle is still there however. The person may not really believe that there is no god and that only material exists, yet they are living so as to indicate this belief.

22. MONISM: This system attempts to reduce all things into one principle or substance. There are different types of monism.

Materialistic monism = matter only exists.

Idealistic monism = Ideas are the only reality.

Pantheistic monism = "If monism denies the reality of both finite personal life and finite physical existences, through affirming both as phenomenal manifestations of an impersonal ground, the doctrine becomes pantheistic monism." (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, Vol. I & II, 1988, p 130)

I once illustrated the pantheistic monist to a class as follows. If I believe I don't live and don't exist, but I manifest life and manifest existence then I am a pantheistic monist. Everything is a manifestation, but not real. Since I'm a manifestation, I can't dismiss class, but I'm leaving. I guess you'll have to sit here for eternity.

In all of these systems you can see man's attempt to explain his environment, and his inward knowledge of God. The problem is that they have rejected the God of the universe for a god of their own making. The only real God that we have discussed is the monotheist's God - the God that we know to exist, that we know to support His creation, and that we know to be our Salvation.

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BIBLICAL THEISM

BIBLICAL THEISM DEFINED: That which may be known about God from Nature and the Word of God. The term Biblical indicates that this theism is primarily from the Bible. Theism is the belief in the existence of a personal, knowable God.

Theissen defines theism as follows: "The belief in one personal God, both immanent and transcendent, Who exists in three personal distinctions, known respectively as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 51)

Theissen introduces us to two terms that we should discuss.

Immanent = ".....to remain in place.....remaining or operating within a domain of reality or realm of discourse....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Transcendent = 1 a: exceeding usual limits.....3 : transcending the universe or material existence....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

So, what does Immanent mean? He is here, He is not on vacation, He is not dead! HE is a real God that is here and present, watching over His creation.

So, what does "transcendent mean? He is bigger than all of His creation.

So, if we speak of an immanent and transcendent God we are speaking of a God that is bigger than all of creation, a God that is in control of the creation that he has created.

The Bible is the Revelation of God to man. The Revelation from the Word supports all information which we can gain from our reason, or from all of Naturalistic theism.

If at any time reason fails to complement the revealed Word then reason must bow to the truth of the Word. The Word is complete, final and trustworthy.

THEISM IS SEEN IN OUR SIMILARITY TO OUR CREATOR IN PERSONALITY: Not only has God revealed Himself to man, but God has created us in His own image. We have many of the same traits such as love, truth, faithfulness, holiness, and justice. We must admit that we have these traits in far lesser amounts than God. We handle these traits in a lesser manner than God, and we have distorted these traits through our sin.

THEISM IS SEEN IN OUR SIMILARITY TO OUR CREATOR IN SPIRIT: God is spirit, Jo. 4:24, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

What does it mean that we are to worship Him in spirit? Might we find in this verse, there is lesser value to outward manifestations of worship than inward worship? The clapping, the hand waving, the swaying may be worship to some, however the spirit is the center of worship, not the body. We need to bring our souls to the Lord rather than attempting to get His attention with our bodies.

I was in a worship service where the special music was given by a hip swinging, finger snapping blonde that did a nice job with her music. She was visibly disgusted with the congregations reaction to her "performance" and as she left the platform and walked briskly down the aisle to the back door, she very clearly commented on the deadness of the congregation, and their lack of worship. The young lady was not only very arrogant in her actions and thought, but she was very judgmental. People worship in different ways and she did not allow for methods of worship other than her own, if indeed, her method was correct.

God created us in His image, Gen. 1:26, ". . .Let us make man in our image. . . ." Be careful how you talk about other human beings. We are, every one, created in God's image. If we reflect too harshly on any man, we may reflect on his creator.

THEISM IS SEEN IN OUR SIMILARITY TO OUR CREATOR IN THE THOUGHTS OF BIBLICAL WRITERS: Some of the writers of Scripture used what is called anthropomorphisms. The writers of the Bible at times picture God as having human characteristics. I will just list some of these for your future study. (Deut. 33:27, God has arms; Jo. 10:29, God has hands; Isa. 66:1, God uses a footstool; II Chr. 16:9, God has eyes; Ps. 11:4, God has eyelids; Isa. 59:1, God has arms and ears; Isa. 58:14, God has a mouth; Ex. 33:11,20, God has a face; II Sam. 22:9,16, God has nostrils.)

Though God does not have these physical features it is indicated that He can surely perform the functions of these features. (See, hear, speak, etc.)

These should give to us a special affinity to our God! We aren't worshiping a tree, nor a limb of a tree, nor a statue, but almighty God! We are like Him!

THEISM IS SEEN IN OUR SIMILARITY TO OUR CREATOR IN OUR POWER TO REASON: If we reason then it is logical that the Lord also reasons. It can be safely assumed that His reasoning is always correct while ours may or may not be correct.

THEISM IS SEEN IN OUR SIMILARITY TO OUR CREATOR IN BEING: There are a number of areas where we are similar in being.

We have intellect, sensibility and will. God also has intellect, sensibility and will. Again our

traits and God's traits are not equal in quantity, clarity or proper use, however we are in His image in these areas.

Referring back to the arguments from reason for God's existence, we found that in the Cosmological thought God possessed a self-determining will. In the Teleological thinking we saw that God had a mind to produce design and power to enact that design. In the Anthropological thinking we saw that God has sensibility. All of these are qualities of God's creation as well.

Let me list a few miscellaneous items that show that we are similar to our creator in being. God is intelligent: Ps. 147:5, Acts 15:18, Heb. 4:13. God possesses sensibility - He is love: I Jo. 4:16. Because God has personality, we then can fellowship with Him. Matt. 11:27 mentions that Christ reveals the Father to the believer. Jo. 14:16-17, 26, mention that the Holy Spirit is within us for comfort and instruction. It also mentions that we may know Him. Jo. 15:26 mentions also that the Comforter will come. I Jo. 1:3, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

THEISM IS SEEN IN THE GENERAL REVELATION OF NATURE: This is information that we can gain from nature concerning God.

1. We can see His glory Ps 19:1.

2. We can see His handiwork in creation, and His power would also be indicated Ps 19:1.

3. We can see His eternal power Rom. 1:20.

4. We can see His nature Rom. 1:20.

5. We can see His providential control of nature Acts 14:17.

6. We can see His goodness Matt. 5:45.

Biblical theism in most listings covers the personality and attributes of God. I would like to take just a brief overview of the entire field of Theology Proper before we get into a detailed look at some of God's attributes.

The basis of this outline comes from Dr. Augsburger, president of Denver Baptist Bible College. (He is with the Lord now.) I have adapted it extensively. I might interject something entirely off the subject, but important to us as Believers. Dr. Augsburger was very special to me when I was his student. I learned much from him, but never got around to thanking him for his efforts on my behalf. One day as I was working on this section for the first time, I decided that I should call him and thank him for being my teacher and for the things that he had taught me.

I picked up the phone and found a number for him. I called, but there was no answer. I became quite busy and forgot to call back. A few days later I heard that he had gone to be with the Lord. I was too late. Say your thank-you to people while you have opportunity. Tell the people God has used in your life how important they were to your spiritual life - before you find it is too late.

THEOLOGY OVERVIEW

I. EXISTENCE OF GOD

There are seven channels through which God has revealed Himself.

A. The material and animal creation: Ps 19:1-4, Rom. 1:19-20.
B. The nature and makeup of man: Gen. 1:26-27, Acts 17:28-29.
C. The direct revelation to man: Gen. 6:13.
D. The miracles: Deut. 4:33-35, Jo. 10:38.
E. The life of God's people: I Peter 2:9.
F. The Bible: Heb. 1:1, II Tim. 3:16.
G. The Lord Jesus Himself: Jo. 1:18, Jo. 14:8-9.

II. Attributes of God

A. Personality

1. He is living: Deut. 5:26, Heb 10:31.
2. He is intelligent: I Sam 2:3, Prov. 3:19-20.
3. He is purposive: Isa. 14:26-27, Eph. 3:11.
4. He is active: Dan. 6:27, Jo. 5:17.
5. He is free: Dan 4:35, Eph. 1:11.
6. He is conscious of Himself: Exod. 3:14.
7. He is an emotional being: Psa. 5:5, Isa. 63:9.
8. He is Spirit: Jo. 4:24.

B. Unity: Isa 44:6, Mark 12:29

C. Greatness

1. He is self-existent: Jo. 5:26.

2. He is eternal: Deut. 33:27, Isa 57:15.

3. He is unchangeable: Mal. 3:6, James 1:17.

4. He is omnipresent: Psa 139:7-10, Jer. 23:24.

5. He is Omniscient: Job. 37:16, I Jo. 3:20.

6. He is omnipotent: Matt. 19:25-26, Rev. 19:6.

7. He is perfect: Psa 18:30, Matt 5:48.

8. He is infinite: Ps. 147:5, Ps. 40:5.

9. He is independent: There is no other!

10. He is Incomprehensible: Ps. 145:3, Rom. 11:33.

D. Goodness

1. He is Holy: Isa. 6:1-5, I Pet. 1:15-18.

2. He is true: Jo. 17:3.

3. He is love: I Jo. 4:7-10.

4. He is just: Rom. 3:26.

5. He is faithful: Deut. 7:9, I Thes. 5:24.

6. He is merciful: Deut. 4:31, II Cor. 1:3.

E. Tri-unity

1. He is the Father: Jo. 6:27.

2. He is the Son: Jo. 10:30.

3. He is the Spirit: Jo. 15:26.

III. The decrees of God

We will be looking in great detail at the decrees of God in coming studies. We need to

understand through all of this that the God that we have discussed should be easier to serve, follow, and worship than the chair that we are sitting on.

He is the creator of all we are and have, and all that we are and have is due to His action and love. How can we do less than love Him and act for Him?

01150

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

To set the stage for this section, please read the following texts: Heb. 10:30, 31, I Tim. 6:17, I Tim. 4:10, Ro. 9:26, Acts 14:15, Mt. 16:16, Da. 6:26, Ps. 42:1-3, Ps. 84:2, Jos. 3:10.

An attribute is some characteristic that is permanent and distinguishes a thing or person from other things or persons. A rose has the attribute of a certain fragrance. I have some very distinct and permanent attributes which make me Mr. Derickson. I may also have a certain fragrance, but that does not make me a rose.

In the case of God we find a large number of attributes which distinguish Him from all other things, persons and gods.

PERSONALITY: What is personality? It is the most important fact of the world in which we live and yet hard to identify. It is the name given to a group of functions or characteristics belonging to one person. Some characteristics of personality: life, intelligence, purpose, activity, freedom, self-consciousness, emotion, spirit.

Another aspect of the personality of God might well be lost in the discussion in a theology book. God is personable - He is a personal God. He is a God that we can get to know on a one to one basis. We both, God and ourselves, have personality, thus we should have a number of things in common.

It boggles my mind to think of God as a personal God, when I relate the creation to Him. How can a God that created all these things be Someone that I can have free access to, Someone that I can communicate with, and Someone that cares for me? I can't have free access to the president of the USA, yet I can go talk to God any time that I want!

Consider the following information and relate it to the fact that you are on a first name basis with this same God.

Consider the fact there are clusters of galaxies some of which contain 11,000 galaxies, then the fact that the galaxy is made up of many suns. There are possibly as many as 200 billion suns and their associated systems of planets and moons in our own Milky Way.

Then on the other hand we have the minute world. 1/(25 zeros) is "...the fraction of a square centimeter that a nucleon occupies in space.' That is one tenseptillionth of a square centimeter. "'That isn't the very smallest thing that we look in on by any means,'" (Phillips, McCandlish, "WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE SUPERNATURAL"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1980, pp 43-45)

Nucleons are protons or neutrons. Phillips goes on to state that nucleons are not the smallest part of matter, but that they are made up of quarks. Quarks to Quasars and my God created them all! That God I talked to this morning, the same God to whom we have free access.

Think on these things. He isn't a being out there somewhere that has the following fifteen and one half characteristics. He is the God that we can know and the God with whom we can fellowship. He is the God that can hurt with us. He is the God that has all the answers, and what's more He loves to give those answers to his sons and daughters. He is the God that loves you and me. He is the God that acts on our behalf. He is the God that has a purpose for our lives.

GOD IS LIVING

Bancroft's statement on this subject is good. "By the sharp distinctions drawn in the Scriptures between the gods of the heathen and the true God, the fact of life as a divine attribute is clearly shown. Israel's God, unlike the gods of the nations, hears, sees, feels, acts, and therefore is a living Being." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 48. I might mention that Bancroft's Elemental Theology has a good section on God's personality.)

God is living so we know that He automatically has certain characteristics. God has intellect, sensibility and volition. Let us look at these characteristics.

God has Intellect: He is intelligent and capable of rational thought. He is not the insensitive nothing that some say we are absorbed into in the end of it all.

He is Someone that we can relate to no matter how intelligent we are, or how little education we have. No matter what level we are on, He can relate to us.

God has Sensibility: We have a Father/son relationship with God and he feels all that we feel. We need to thank Him at times for understanding how we feel when we are in a spiritual or emotional slump. HE DOES UNDERSTAND HOW WE FEEL! He is also sensible to our disobedience. He hurts when we are seemingly enjoying our sin.

God has Volition: He is not locked into a set of man's rules and ideas of how He should be. HE MADE THE RULES AND LAWS!

Indeed, Strong mentions that life is mental energy that shows up as these three items. (Strong, Augustus H.. "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907, p 252)

Scripture is clear on the fact that God is a living God. Deut. 5:26, Jer. 10:10, I Tim. 4:10.

What do we mean by living? Yes, when we think of living we mean the quality of having life. Yes, that's what we are. Yes, many other things that might relate, but how do you really define "living?"

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary mentions, ".....having life.....the condition of being alive." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Consider this definition. That energy or force which causes activity. It is that which enables God to do things. More importantly living is that which allows Him to do things for us! Salvation, Preservation, Provision, and Fellowship.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

This doctrine should be the antidote for all forms of idolatry. Why in the world would people worship a piece of wood when they can worship a LIVING God that can assuredly do, and be for them?

The human heart has a very real need and only a living God can satisfy that need (Ps. 84:2). Yet today even in our own country we have people serving other gods. They serve idols. Not in the literal sense of cutting a tree limb and carving something a god. They are carving something out of life and making it the object of most importance. They make career, wealth, material possession, fame or other items which they seem to view as very important into their god.

Most of us know that idolatry is putting anything before God while making it our priority. We would agree that career, money, home, etc. can be idols, but let us consider some other things we might put before God. Studies - I have to much to do to have a quiet time. Socializing - I'm going on a date - let the studies go. Rebelling - spending time being a grump about the dumb rules of life. Being a grump takes time and great concentration. Looks - How I look is important. Self Importance - I'm going to let them know I'm upset. I'm going to let them know how much I know.

He is a living God and this fact is manifest to us in many ways:

The Living God is a God that speaks to His people (Deut. 5:6). He listens to us in our prayers and speaks with us in our private lives with Him.

The Living God is a God that will help His people (Jos. 3:10). Multitudes of testimonies have

been given relating to how God has helped believers.

The Living God is a God that produces a strong love and desire in His people (Ps. 42:1-3, Ps. 84:2). Why else, would the martyrs of yesteryear have given their lives for Him. Why else, would many people give their lives to the ministry of His Word.

The Living God is a God that is true and everlasting (Jer. 10:10). He will always be as He is and will always do as He has said.

The Living God is a God described as a God to be feared, even by non-believing Gentiles (Da. 6:26). He is a God of judgment as well as a God of love. The intelligent person that knows of Him should fear Him.

The Living God is a God that sent His Son to earth to die (Mt. 16:16). Even though He is a God to be feared, He is a God that is to be loved. He is a God that loved us so much that He gave His Son for us.

The Living God is a God that created the heavens and the earth (Acts 14:15). We don't worship a primordial muck that evolved into life, but we worship a God that is living and a God that created all there is.

The Living God is a God that has many children (Ro. 9:26). By our belief in His Son, He accepts us into His family as sons and daughters. He becomes our heavenly Father.

The Living God is a God that is our Savior (I Tim. 4:10). Not only did He give His Son, but His Son is God as well. We have a God that died for our wrong that we might have eternal life.

The Living God is a God that we should trust in, instead of riches (I Tim. 6:17). He gives all we are and have, and He can take it away as well. Those that trust in riches should not trust in what they have accumulated, but trust in what God has allowed them to have. The God is the better to place one's trust in.

The Living God is a God that will judge (Heb. 10:30, 31). Not only will God judge the lost, but He will hold the saved accountable for their works and their actions.

The Living God is a God that indwells His people (II Cor. 6:16). He was not satisfied to create us, He was not satisfied to save us, but He also came to live within us. He is ever present within us.

Based on all this, why - ever set money, things or mental ideas up to take our time when we can talk to a God like that? He is interested in our needs, hurts, joys, trials, learning, provision, and everything. He, indeed, because He lives, does all He promises.

In the area of hurt and troubles: Worry doesn't work. Stewing is for food. Leaning is for "against God." When you hurt and have a burden don't worry or stew - LEAN.

GOD IS INTELLIGENT

One of the first questions that may come to your mind when we mention Intelligence, is, "What is the difference between Intelligence and knowledge and Omniscience?"

Intelligence is the ability to learn, understand and manipulate information and then use that information. Knowledge is the awareness of information retained within your on board computer. It is information and facts and the ability to use them. Omniscience is that aspect of God that tells us that He knows all there is to be known. He is total, complete, and correct knowledge in and of Himself. (I Sam. 2:3, Isa. 11:2, Isa. 29:16, Prov. 3:19-20, Rom. 11:33.

God's intelligence is of the highest type - Perfect.

Knowledge is perception of facts as they are. Understanding is insight into the facts perceived. Wisdom is the ability to place known facts into proper relationship to all other facts and to use those facts and relationships for a good end.

I know what a chair is. I understand that the chair before me is very weak and it wobbles. I have enough wisdom not to sit in it. (Don't forget James 1:5 in this area.)

Ideal intelligence can be viewed in four manifestations:

Intuitive intelligence: The ability to see things as they really are. "Oh, Lord I have given all to you!" God knows about the 99% that you haven't turned over to Him.

Reflective intelligence: The ability to bring facts forth from memory and relate them to other facts. I can remember when I had lot's of hair. I can remember when I had a nice car. I don't have that car anymore so that must be why I don't have any hair. NO. That is not a true assessment. That is not correct reflective intelligence.

Creative intelligence: The ability to take facts and merge them together and derive new and useful information or ideas. I illustrated this concept to a theology class once. Fact: You haven't had a test lately in theology. Fact: You look like you are tired of this lecture. New fact: I think I will give a test.

This is where the young inventive businessmen of our day do well. They take facts everyone has, and runs a new direction with them to the extent that they make a million or two before anyone knows what they have done.

Ethical intelligence: The ability to look at the proper facts and use those that will result in

ultimate good.

I followed up my illustration with the following: Fact: I know that you are very overworked at this point. Fact: I feel sorry for you that are heavily loaded with homework. Ethical fact: I do what is right and proper - I do not give the test.

God alone can see things as they really are. God has perfect reflective intelligence. God can create endless variety of forms (He is limitless). God alone can use all to His good ends. Job asks a question that is answered just a bit later in his book.

His question was: Job. 28:12, "But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? The answer: Job. 28:28, "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

What value is there in our knowing of God's intelligence? For the saved: Job 23:10,11 "But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tested me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined." For the unsaved: I Sam. 2:10 "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them. The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."

A term that you may run across in some writings is "Omni-sapience" of God. This is related to our study on intelligence because it has to do with, "...the "All-Wisdom of God"; that is, God has all wisdom. There is a vast difference in wisdom and knowledge." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 37)

Jehovah knows our transgressions and rebellion, He knows our arrogance and wickedness, He knows the way of the righteous and the days of the upright, He knows the secrets of the heart and the thoughts of man. Best of all He knows all that are His. (Jos. 22:22; I Sam. 2:3; Job 11:11; Ps. 1:6; Ps. 37:18; Ps. 44:21; Ps. 94:11; II Tim. 2:19.)

Guess what? No matter how hard you try, no matter how sneaky you get, YOU CAN'T THROW A SURPRISE PARTY FOR GOD! SO WHY DO SO MANY BELIEVERS TRY SO OFTEN?

Job knew his God as we should, "But he knoweth the way that I take:...." Job 23:10

APPLICATION:

We say we believe He knows all, we say we believe He is all wise, we say we believe He is interested in our well being, and we say we believe He will do for us, yet we control our own lives. We direct our lives. We do our own thing. We seldom go to Him in prayer. We deny, it would seem by our action, those things that we believe He is. INTELLIGENCE, WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, ETC.

01200

GOD HAS PURPOSE

In looking at the life of William Carey I have been impressed with the intent with which he lived his life. He was serving God to the best of his ability. He worked long hours, he ministered wherever and whenever he could and he placed his own desires and needs in second place to what God had called him to do.

William Carey had great purpose in his life! That purpose was to serve God to the fullest.

Purposive according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary is, ".....having or tending to fulfill a conscious purpose or design....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) Purposive is acting upon some goal or design that is yet future in the mind.

In God's purpose we see a completed aspect to it, as well as an active aspect. He has a specific purpose in mind and is now acting toward that end, however He, in His mind has accomplished that purpose. We are justified and glorified yet we are in the process toward that end. We have the standing before God, however our state at present is not quite adequate.

His purpose is seen in a number of ways.

HE WILL JUDGE: Isa. 14:26

God has a number of purposive lines of action, however they are all along the line of His one main purpose. Here we see his purpose is in the area of judgment however this is in line with the general purpose of showing the Devil who's boss - so to speak.

HE WILL DIRECT: Rom. 8:28

God has called us according to His purpose. He has a goal or plan in mind and is acting upon that goal or plan. If we are open to His direction through the Word and prayer, He will lead us into the things of life that He desires for us. This includes a spouse, a ministry, an occupation, schooling, investing, etc. He is interested in gaining as much benefit from our lives on this earth as He can, not only for His own glory, but for our benefit, joy and reward.

HE WILL WORK THROUGH CHRIST: Eph. 3:11

Christ is included in this purpose and the purpose is eternal in nature. Christ has accomplished some of His purpose in the work of the cross, yet has the ongoing duty of interceding for us, as

well as the future work of setting up the kingdom, and ruling over the earth for a thousand years.

HE WILL CARRY OUT HIS PLAN: II Tim. 1:9

The purpose of God was set before creation and is HIS OWN PURPOSE - not something man dreamed up, but HIS!

Why would we say that purpose is an attribute or distinctive of personality? The beasts of the field have no purpose for themselves. They react to what is going on now, and have no thoughts to the future. They react to only that which is going on at the moment, and at times they react to their instinct and the seasons.

A snake does not go out looking for someone to attach. They attach only out of fear. An animal on the highway isn't there because he wants to make you late for an appointment. It is there because they walked across, and the sun felt good so they stopped to warm themselves.

Man on the other hand has future purpose in mind. This is not fully developed in the child for if you offer them a $.25 candy bar now or a $1.00 bill tomorrow they will probably take the candy bar. They operate in the NOW.

On the other hand most people, including Christians, are tied up in their plans for the future. They are opening savings accounts, IRA's, investing in homes and all of those neat things.

Purpose is not bad in man! Without some future purpose man becomes akin to a beast of the field. He becomes bored and tends to react to the NOW situation. Can you picture a woman or a man that spends hours in front of a television set for soaps or sports? She or he, as the case may be, is reacting to the NOW and has little thought to anything further future than the next commercial breaks for a snack. It can and does become their life.

When servicing televisions, quite often when in the homes of these addicts they would talk to me about the characters on the shows as if they were part of their family. Now and then when returning a set, one of them would get all excited because they hadn't seen Joe Blow for two weeks and they were dieing to see how he was doing.

Thus, we must conclude that purpose is a characteristic or attribute of man. So, in God the thought of purpose is that of a trait or attribute that makes God what He is. It is part of His very nature.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. Prayer changes me and not God's purpose, ways, plans or whatever. He sees all things complete and I need to see it His way and conform to it. Prayer changes THINGS only! (Dan. 6:27, Phil. 2:13) He is working within us to bring about His purpose. Dan. 4:35 mentions, "And

all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" AS IF ANYONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD EVER ASK GOD IF HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING!

Then again, I'm not sure that many of us don't question what God is doing in our lives when He moves counter to what we had planned and get upset with Him.

2. Are you on the right side of His purpose? This can involve one of two things. WALK: Are you walking with Him as you know you should? He has a goal for our lives and we need to be seeking that goal and be working toward it! IF we are God's children, He has a plan for us. IF we aren't heading for that plan - THEN He will bring problems into our life which will help us change our direction. SALVATION: Are you on His side spiritually?

The old 45 rpm records were famous for having a good side and a bad side. The Lord has a good side and a bad side in the spiritual realm. Side one: Eternal life with Him as a reward for being obedient to His purpose in Salvation. Side two: Eternal damnation as a penalty for being on God's bad side in His plan of salvation.

I would like to illustrate this doctrine with a story. Friday P.M.: A man developed a toothache. He had very poor sleep that night. Saturday A.M.: He made an appointment for 1:00 PM Tuesday. Saturday noon: Pain was terrible. Called the dentist and the nurse said come in. Saturday 2:00 P.M.: Pain quit. Saturday 4:30 P.M.: The dentist couldn't find the problem - come back Tues. and we'll x-ray and fill it. Saturday 4:50 PM: Pain began. Sun.: Misery upon misery. Monday: Agony upon agony. Tuesday: The dentist pulled the tooth. Wednesday: The same toothache returned only worse. Called Dentist - It was his day off. Thursday A.M.: The dentist pulled the correct tooth. Thursday P.M.: Same tooth ache returned only worse. I went to the dentist and he started a root canal.

THOUGHTS OF THE MAN: That stupid idiot dentist! He must have gotten his diploma out of a Cheerio box. There's a guy in California with a law suit for $35,000 over one wrong tooth pulled! That's $70,000 for two teeth! However, the man was a believer and the Lord brought a verse to his mind. Rom. 8:28, "...we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,".

Some of his possible conclusions "for good" were as follows: Maybe God saw bigger trouble with the teeth if they remained in the mouth. They weren't prize specimens anyway. Maybe God was going to send him to a far off country where there were no dentists. Maybe God was going to allow him to witness to the dentist. Maybe NOTHING - He waited to see how God would use it.

He was able to use his experience in his Sunday School class that Sunday. His lesson was on God's everyday purpose for our life.

THE DOCTRINE OF PURPOSE

Before the dawn of time God said, "I can - I will" and He did. He had a plan - He began moving toward the completion of that plan.

He created - He formed man - He breathed into man the breath of life - man became a living soul (Gen. 2:7) - thus began God's trek down a bumpy, if not rutted road with mankind. We are thankful that He had a plan, for if He hadn't, He wouldn't have continued past the first road block with such as we.

Man tried to trip God by eating the forbidden fruit, but (Gen. 3:5) God tripped man right out of the garden (Gen. 3:23).

The coats of skin (Gen. 3:21) showed God alive and heading toward His goal. The skins meant shed blood - the only way to rectify the wrong in any age.

As time wore on, God saw wickedness across the land. None were seeking His goal save one (Gen. 6:5-8). Noah and his family found grace in the eyes of God.

Mankind gathered at Babel with a purpose - to build a tower to heaven. This however, as is normal, was not God's purpose - He scattered them across the face of the earth (Gen. 11).

God purposed to move toward His goal through the line of Abraham. This ultimately will happen but no thanks to man (Gen. 15).

God made a nation from Abraham which found itself in bondage in Egypt (Ex. 1). Pharaoh was there for one purpose - God's - to declare God to the earth (Rom. 9:17).

Out of this nation came Jesus Christ - the one that would complete the plan. Christ was to destroy the work of the devil (I John 3:8) - Christ was to set up the church which would show God's wisdom to the heavenly powers (Eph. 3:8-11). Christ's blood enabled God to gather unto Himself a people - a people desiring to follow and serve Him (Titus 2:14).

God set the path with the coats of skin - all sin must be dealt with by shed blood - the blood of Jesus Christ - God's purpose was to gather a people for His own - the people were sinful - God provided a remedy - those washing themselves in the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, become a part of His people - a part of His eternal goal - a part of the people in His eternal city (Rev. 21).

GOD IS ACTIVE

Active indicates an ability to do, as well as the act of doing. God is most certainly able to act, and He is very active. Indeed, the reverse is true also, the act of doing shows the ability to act.

1. God is active in redemption: Jo. 3:17

He was not only active in providing salvation, but He is actively drawing souls unto Himself.

It always thrills my heart to hear of a person that sits down to read the Bible as one lost and on the way to hell, and stands up a new creature in Christ due to his acceptance of the gospel that he has just read. The Holy Spirit draws each one to Himself personally.

I recently read an article concerning how the big parachurch groups teach their people to witness. One of the groups clearly made this very point. They encourage their people to begin and end with prayer - asking for the Holy Spirit to work in the life, because it is God that saves and not the witnessing.

2. God is active in guiding nations: Rom. 13:1

The recent breakup of the Soviet Union should move people to realize that God is in the business of raising up and putting down nations. Any study of history will reveal that many nations have risen and fallen just as quickly. A nation that honors God often thrives, while a nation that dishonors God seldom prospers or survives.

3. God is active in protecting us: I Kings 19:5, Ps. 91:11,12, Dan. 6:22, Matt. 4:11, Matt. 18:4-10, Heb. 1:14

Many are the accounts of how God has protected His people in modern days as well. One Christmas when we were in Denver for college, we had made plans to go to Nebraska for Christmas. We had all the plans laid and when I piled into the car to go home to pick up the family, the car would start but not continue to run. I discovered the fact that if I pumped the foot feet that it would continue to run so off I went 20 miles across Denver pumping the foot feet to keep the thing moving.

When I arrived home I pulled the top off the carburetor to see if I could find anything that was blocking the fuel passage. I found a piece of a rag about an inch square that had settled over the jets. We had owned the car for a year or so and the thing had never given any problems. It had died unexpectedly now and then a few months earlier but no great problem.

We set off on the interstate for the trip. As we neared the junction of two major freeways, called the mouse trap, where we had to turn north I could see a blaze of flame in the sky. I had the distinct feeling at that moment that the rag in the carburetor had been planned by God to delay us. We turned the radio on as we neared the accident to hear that it had taken place just about the time we would have been going through if we hadn't had car trouble. A tank truck had turned over and several cars were involved in the blaze. I don't know for fact that the Lord protected us that evening, but I have to think that it was so.

4. God is active in guiding us: Ps. 32:8

He will guide you in planning your life's work. He will guide you in planning your life's mate. He will guide you in planning your studies. He will guide you in planning your week's schedule. He will guide you in purchasing a car. He will guide you in anything that you want his guidance in!

He is, as we have seen many times, interested in all that we do. He is desirous of being a part of our life; even our everyday life.

I have to admit that as I was going through this study, I was looking back through the dusty memory banks to see some ways that He has been active in my life, and I had to stop to dry my eyes. He has been so active in my life and in so many ways, and in so many instances! I hope as you walk with Him you will allow Him to be very active in your life!

5. God is active in teaching us: I Jo. 2:27

We saw in Bibliology that He is involved in illuminating our foggy minds to the truth of the scriptures. He wants us to know more about Himself, as well as to know Him more. He is not the great mystery of the universe, rather He is the great teacher.

6. God is active in providing our needs: Matt. 6:33

A missionary from Alaska I met in the 70's shared that he and his wife were in need of a car and that it was going to cost about $2000. They sat down one day and told the Lord of the need and when they went to the mail that day there was an envelope with no return address on it. Inside was $2000. They never found out where it came from.

At other times God provides our needs through a good job, or maybe at times a mediocre job, but He always will provide our needs! When we left teaching in Wyoming He provided a janitors job for me. I could not find any other more productive work. The plus side of this job was that it only took about fifteen hours a week and it paid very well. It was during this time that I was able to put together this book.

7. God is active in His time table: Acts 1:7

I enjoyed hearing the testimony of a man when he read the words of Isa. 40:31 "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;" He mentioned that he really knew what it was to wait on the Lord, but that the waiting was GOOD! (He had been waiting upon the Lord for a ministry for several years.)

The rest of the verse is of interest as well. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they

shall walk, and not faint."

My wife received a card once that mentioned that it was hard to soar as an eagle when you have to work with turkeys like you. God is the one that made the promise in Isaiah, and it is He that will fulfill it even if you have to work with turkeys.

8. God is active in the Church through the Holy Spirit and His gifts: Eph. 4; Rom. 12

Might I suggest that if you don't see the Lord working in His church, that it is not God that is at fault. It is His people that are not exercising their gifts. More and more I think that most churches are dead because the people are not using what God has given them.

Our God is powerful. Our God is active. Our God is desirous of people being saved. Our God is able to do anything. If His church is the pits then the cause can be found in His people!

If you see a dead church it is because the people want it that way. I have seen churches with pastors that have no business being in their position, and the church continues to allow it to go on. That is a conscious decision on the part of the church to fail!

9. God is active in controlling the physical world: Acts 14:17, Col. 1:16,17

In 1990 the out of focus Hubble Telescope took a look into the Orion Nebula and took a picture of a star that was just forming. Actually the occurrence that Hubble photographed occurred about A.D. 500, because Orion is about fifteen hundred light years away from earth.

If He can control the intricacies of the universe and keep all that together, surely He can assist us in keeping our lives together, if we ask Him.

10. God is active in answering prayer: Acts 12:5ff

While interim pastor of a small church in Wyoming, we had been told of a young man that someone had been talking to about the Bible. The man was in the church service and seemed to be very convicted by parts of the message. As the service closed, I ask the Lord to allow me to talk to him before he left. As I left the platform I saw the man leaving the sanctuary. I thought that the answer had been no. Before leaving the church, one of the couples asked us to lunch and mentioned that this young man was going home for a moment but that he was going to join us for lunch!

God is in the business of answering prayer! I kept track of the prayer requests in that same church for about six months and marked each item as the Lord answered. There were twenty-two specific requests answered, and I'm confident, many other general requests were answered just because people took time to pray.

APPLICATION:

1. This doctrine refutes two major false teachings:

a. God is dead. NOPE, NOT ON MY BLOCK HE ISN'T! As the bumper sticker says, "My God isn't dead - SORRY ABOUT YOURS!"

b. Deism: The teaching that God created and went on vacation or went away and isn't around anymore.

Theissen tells us, "For deism God is present in creation only by His power, not in His very being and nature. He has endowed creation with invariable laws over which He exercises a mere general oversight; He has imparted to His creatures certain properties, placed them under His invariable laws, and left them to work out their destiny by their own powers. Deism denies a special revelation, miracles, and providence. It claims that all truths about God are discoverable by reason, and that the Bible is merely a book on the principles of natural religion, which are ascertainable by the light of nature." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, pp 74-75)

This was the religion of some of our forefathers. Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson for two.

Another quotation that might help you to know more about Deism is from a book on Western Civilizations. (Burns, Edward McNall; "WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS"; 7th edition, New York City: W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1941, p 575) Any encyclopedia would also give you some information.

In light of what we have read, consider Benjamin Franklin (From Guideposts Nov. 1974. From an article entitled, "They Speak Today.") He said that he believed in one God and that God created the universe. He believed in worshiping that God and that the best you could do was to serve God's children. He also respected all religions that felt as he did about God.

He spoke of these beliefs in relation to a conversation concerning his trying to help Roman Catholics. Benjamin Franklin was said, to have played both ends against the middle.

2. If He is active then it is logical that He would expect his children to be active also. How is your activity doing for the Lord? Are you as active as you should be?

3. His activity on our behalf should be of a help to encourage us when we are in hard times and trials. He is actively moving in our lives for our betterment! This one is hard to really make practical especially when we are having problems.

4. One final point. I find that oft times God wants to be active through his people. I trust that

you will be sensitive to those around you that God can use you to help. Yes, you are terribly busy, yet your five minutes listening to someone's problems may well be the encouragement that will carry them through! Be open to minister to those around you, because they will appreciate it!

01250

GOD IS FREE

You have probably heard the joke about the 500-pound gorilla. What does a 500-pound gorilla do? ANYTHING HE WANTS TO! This is a part of what we talk about when we mention the freedom of God.

To define freedom in relation to God we would want three aspects for our definition.

a. God cannot be hindered. No matter how late you sit up thinking of a way to mess up his plan, there is no way that you ever will. He has an overall plan for all of time and all of mankind. He has planned in all the dumb things that you might come up with to thwart His plan.

b. God cannot be restricted. You can't build a fence around Him. You can't set up a force field around Him. You can't set up a situation where He can't do what is correct.

c. God cannot be controlled. Not even Abraham when he was dealing with the Lord for the sparing of Sodom was controlling Him. Abraham was flat pushing his luck, but was not controlling God. There is nothing that we can do that will control God. We can't get Him into trouble with our prayer life. We can't set up a situation where He must act because of our command or prayer.

GOD CAN DO LITERALLY ANYTHING HE WANTS TO!

He is His only limit. He can do whatever he wants, whenever He wants. His desires, plans and will are the only control that is placed upon Him.

He is free from the creation and His creatures. He is independent of us and all that we do. In relation to this I was reminded of a fact of life that is constantly plaguing our household. We are not independent of our belongings. The more nice things that you get, the more things you have to fix. There are times when my list of things to fix is longer than things I want to have!

Again, I would like to think of the animal world for a moment. The animals of the field are active only on the prompting of their instinct.

They cannot rise above their environment. They are limited to activity within the confines of where they are. They cannot decide to move into town and rent a condo - they are limited to live

in those areas where they can walk and run.

Man on the other hand can in his activity rise above his environment if he desires to do so, and has the time, energy, and talents to do so. Man can determine his own activities up to the limits placed upon him by His creator. Man is free for the most part within those limits.

What are some limits that God has placed upon man that would limit his activity?

a. Government, and the laws that usually come with government. These are established and ordained by God. Rom. 13:1

b. Natural laws of nature certainly control us to a point. I cannot determine to fly to California for the winter unless I have money for a ticket. I can't just walk outside and fly there on my own.

c. Conscience sets certain limits upon the individual. There are things that my conscience just won't allow me to do. The conscience may be formed partially by our environment when we were growing up.

d. Marriage sets a certain set of limits upon the individual. Someone has suggested marriage isn't a noun or a verb, but that it is a sentence. I won't comment on that.

e. Economic and geographical limits may hamper some activities the man might desire to do. I have many things that I would like to do, but without the finances, I am limited. Man is free to do as he desires within these limits.

God on the other hand has none of these limits!

Believers are free within the same limits. God however gives the believer a little bit of liberty that the lost do not have.

a. We can fellowship with God in prayer and share our burdens with Him as well as seek His help and counsel.

b. We have the Word of God that gives us freedom from guilt. It also gives us a certain set of restrictions that the lost do not have.

c. We also have church leadership placed over us and they may set restrictions upon our activities through the ministry of the Word and discipline, if needed.

d. The Lord, His Word and will should also set some of our limits as well.

God on the other hand has no limitations.

DEFINITION: God has the ability to rise to any level He desires above His environment.

In short you might say, "If He'd rather do it Himself -- He can most surely do it Himself! To show this we need to look at a few references (Take time to read these: Job 23:13, Dan. 4:25, Ps. 115:3).

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. It refutes two wrong concepts of God.

a. FATALISM: The idea that fate is the force that determines the outcome of all things. This would be the idea there is a plan that is in effect and there is absolutely nothing that can change that plan, and that it will take place as planned.

If your room mate trips on your dirty clothes laying on the floor - that is fate. Nothing could have been done to avoid it. If your room mate dies due to the fall, that was fate. She would have tripped there even if the dirty clothes hadn't been there.

b. PANTHEISM: God is locked in nature and can do nothing except within the laws of nature. We know this to be in error for we know that God has done things outside the laws of nature in the past. The miracles of the Old and New Testament are good examples of this.

Besides, how can God make something out of nothing if He is locked inside of nothing. That would say that God does not exist.

2. God has chosen to limit Himself in several ways that we need to consider.

a. He has limited Himself to operate within the laws of nature for the most part. It is only on special occasions whereby He sets the laws of nature aside. (He is free to do so at any time, it should be emphasized.)

b. He has limited Himself to work with mankind. He is locked into completing that which He has started with man. His plan of glorification and His side plan of redemption are on course and must be completed.

He has also limited Himself to work within time, which was a new experience for Him when He created.

c. He has limited Himself also in the area of working through man. He has chosen US to be His ambassadors to the lost world around us. Meditate on that one for awhile! THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE LIMITED HIMSELF TO MESS AROUND WITH US! To trust us to do a good job!

The saddest part of this point is that very few generations have actually done the job that they were given to do. The missionary effort in many generations has been miserable at best. Today we are seeing the decline of missions and very little is being done about it. The Third World countries are becoming the prominent hope of missions in the future. These countries are sending out more and more missionaries each year while the major countries of the world are sending fewer and fewer.

3. The freedom which God possesses is our guarantee that all will come to pass as His people have prophesied through the ages! If He were not free to do as He pleases, then He would not be free to do as He has promised.

4. This doctrine has application to the local church. Not only is God free to do as He pleases in His own realm but He is free to do as He pleases in the realm of the church.

Example: If a pastor has a rich family over three weeks in a row some of his members may decide that he isn't being fair. They have never been to the pastors house. Jealousy can crop up. It may be that the rich man is a new Christian and this is how the pastor has decided to disciple the man.

Do not fall into the trap of judging people on surface observation. God may lead the pastor to do many things that you do not understand. Example: God gives gifts as He so chooses. He may give one person several gifts and another person only one. I spent some time in a church that had a pastor that was an excellent preacher but a mediocre teacher. Not that he was bad but he wasn't as good as others. When this pastor would see gifted teacher beginning to have a ministry in the church the pastor would get jealous and run the teacher off.

GOD CAN DO AS HE PLEASES IN THE CHURCH! God gives gifts as He pleases. God gives looks as He pleases. God gives brains as He pleases. God gives money as He pleases. God gives personality as He pleases. God gives homes as He pleases. God gives cars as He pleases. God gives abilities as He pleases. God gives etc. as He pleases.

5. God decides to take some believers home much sooner in life than others. It is His choice, not ours.

The following quotation comes from the days of the Boxer Rebellion in China. All foreigners were fleeing for their lives and many Christians were being martyred.

"Before giving a brief account of our deliverance on that awful journey in 1900, I wish first humbly to submit the following, for well I know there will be those who will read these pages whose dear ones were NOT delivered but whose lives were given up for Christ in glorious martyrdom for His Name's sake.

"When in Canada, following the experiences now to be recorded, we were faced with the

question, put in various ways - 'How can you say as you do, that it was by God's power and grace that you were all brought through? If this were so why did He not deliver the hundreds of missionaries and native Christians who were even then being done to death throughout China?' Truly a vital question, which could not be lightly set aside! Humbly and prayerfully we pondered this 'WHY' in the light of Scripture. In the twelfth chapter of Acts we read of Herod's succeeding in putting James to death by the sword, and directly after comes the story of how Herod was hindered in carrying out his intentions to kill Peter who was delivered by a miracle. Then who could read that marvelous eleventh chapter of Hebrews with its record of glorious martyrdoms and miraculous deliverances without being thrilled! In face of these and many other passages, while still unable to answer the 'WHY' we saw our Almighty God used His own prerogative to glorify His name whether in the glorious martyrdom of some or in the miraculous deliverance of others." (Goforth, Rosiland, "GOFORTH OF CHINA"; Wheaton: Zondervan Publishing House, 1937)

6. This point of application may encourage you. God can change any of the attributes or talents that you have for the better. (He may change them for the worse also - I used to have dark curly hair, but now am on the gray, fringe area, so to speak!)

Looks for example: We had a girl in our 4th and 5th grade class that was UGLY. Some one really beat her with a big UGLY STICK! In fact we all suspected that she took ugly pills on the side. We called her flea bag and she didn't argue with us usually. BAD! (No, we were not nice to her.)

One evening in my Senior year of High School this beautiful girl in a neat car pulled up beside me and told me she wanted to talk to me. We talked for some time before she said who she was. GUESS WHO????? (She never mentioned how she had been treated as a youngster - she was nice to us!)

Money for example: Mr. Anderson, I have been told, of the Hyles Anderson college in the Chicago area, dedicated himself and $2000 to the Lord's use and seven years later he was a millionaire serving God and giving and giving and giving.

Personality for example: Many ministers that I have been privileged to know were at one time quiet, withdrawn and shy individuals. Now they are outgoing servants of God.

7. Ryrie has one application and I would like for you to consider it for a moment. He suggests that God can never become indebted to us. He does as He chooses. In short, no matter how great you are, He is not obligated to bless you or do anything for you!

GOD CAN DO AS HE PLEASES! GOD CAN DO AS HE WANTS! GOD CAN DO AS HE DESIRES!

In closing this section we must consider some questions that Isaiah asked.

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?" Isa. 40:13-14

Of course the answer must be a resounding, NO ONE!

GOD IS SELF-CONSCIOUS

Personality begins to appear in a child as they become conscious of themselves. One of the traits of a growing child is the different levels of self awareness. Most parents will say that the baby begins to take on personality very early in life. A baby will cry out of instinct however it isn't long before the baby becomes aware that it is them that is crying, and then they become aware that mom comes when they cry. Soon they have mom and dad trained quite well.

Another item of maturation is the idea of babies playing with their feet. They have no idea, for sometime, that those things belong to them. They just play with what is handy. Those two feet stick up, so why not play with them. Many children react when they realize those funny looking things are theirs.

Man is for the most part conscious of himself, but not necessarily completely conscious. We are not aware of many things in our lives. We may have personality traits that have not surfaced as yet. We may have talents in areas that we haven't explored as yet.

God is conscious of Himself in a most complete way. Ex. 3:14 "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." God is that He is, and He knows that which He is.

There is nothing about God that He does not know. There is no personality trait that will emerge in the next 100 million years that He did not know was there.

I Cor. 2:10,11 states, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but he Spirit of God." This text shows that man cannot know God completely. It does show, however that GOD KNOWS HIMSELF COMPLETELY.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. We are dealing with a God that knows all there is to know about Himself and we can be sure He isn't going to change His mind because He just found out that He is a just God.

2. If He is totally conscious of Himself, then He is totally conscious of me. That should put me at peace about who I am. I am that which He has made me. I am just exactly what God wanted

me to be this day, at this hour, at this moment.

I'm going to pick on the ladies for a moment or two and try to bring these two items together into one big application.

It is not only aimed at the women, but to the men as well for this may help them to help women that come to them for counseling in their ministry.

I have known of seven or eight women that have walked out on their husbands in recent years. These are Christian women. I have heard of others as well. Their reason for leaving is, "I need to find myself."

I find in talking to the husbands that the wife does not know who she is. She doesn't know what her identity is. This line of irrational thought is very frustrating to the husband that has just received total responsibility for caring for the family from a woman that he has known for a number of years, which suddenly doesn't know who she is.

Most of these women are unsatisfied with being who they are so they set out to find themselves. They think by going out into the world they can make themselves over into what they want to be.

I tend to think that part of this is due to the media telling them that the housewife is a foo foo that is foolish for fooling with food for fuddy duddy hubby. The media demands that women be professional businesswomen, and a total knockout looks wise, or she is a flop.

01300

GOD HAS EMOTION

God is capable of many emotions. We want to examine some of these in this section. We will apply this section as we go through the different aspects of God's emotion.

Pity: What is pity? Funk and Wagnall mention, "Grief or pain awakened by the misfortunes of others.... That which arouses compassion...." ("FUNK AND WAGNALL'S STANDARD DESK DICTIONARY"; New York: Funk and Wagnall Inc., 1976)

At times my wife and I see people stranded on the freeway with car trouble, and pity is immediately on the scene. This is probably due to the times when we have been in a hurry to get somewhere and we have had trouble. For example the time we were planning to visit my father in the hospital in Omaha and we lived in Denver. We found out late Friday that I had to work Saturday so that meant driving to Omaha Saturday evening and then back to Denver Sunday, then to school early Monday morning. At about two o'clock Sunday morning the fuel pump went out about 15 miles from nowhere. We completed the trip yet, this is why I hurt for troubled motorists, and is part of the reason that I stop if things look safe.

Ps. 103:13 should be of great comfort when we are hurting or in hard times! "As a father piteth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

As a parent we often feel pity for our children. Once one of the boys had a great need once and there was no way that I could meet that need as a parent nor could he meet it himself. I felt very badly for the situation, but you know what? God had perfect pity for that son as well as for me, for He knows perfectly how we feel and he feels with us.

Wrath: What does wrath mean? Funk and Wagnall mentions, "Extreme or violent rage or fury; vehement indignation."

I suspect that the later thought of "vehement indignation" would be most fitting where God is concerned. However the first thought of rage and fury may well relate to the Lord Jesus when He was cleansing the temple of the trash.

Rom. 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."

You can rest in the fact that God will most assuredly take care of any wrongs that have been done to you! Not only will God take care of it, He will take care of it completely and justly.

Compassion: What is Compassion? Funk and Wagnall tells us, "Pity for the suffering or distress of another, with the desire to help or spare."

When working in mid-Nebraska, a young woman came into the store and she was a shambles emotionally. She didn't come into the store for a purchase, but to just unload on anyone that she could find that would listen. When she left, I was off center for an hour or two, trying to figure out how I could help her. The desire to help was from the compassion I had for her troubles.

Ps. 145:8, "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy." Think of that one! FULL of compassion. If you need any, He has it. He, the infinite in size is full, FULL, INFINITELY FULL of compassion!

Webster mentions that compassion means to sympathize or bear or suffer. Wow, when that hard time hits not only do we have all the pity that we need, but we have all the co-suffering that we need. God is there to bear with us when we have burdens to bear.

It has crossed my mind to wonder just how much God suffers as He works with His children. As a parent, there are times when I see one of the kids doing something that I know is going to cost them dearly, either in money or in emotion. I want to, at times, shield them from those costs, yet know as a parent that they need to go through those times for growth.

God must see us walking into some real problems and hurt knowing that His children are hurting.

Hate: Funk and Wagnall relates to us, "To regard with extreme aversion; detest." My wife will be the first to tell you that she "HATES" bugs. Bugs of any type, size, color or harmlessness! One day we were driving around in the van in Scottsbluff, Nebraska when a grasshopper blew in through the vent and she panicked. We stopped and could not find the critter.

About fifteen minutes later she noticed the thing on her leg. Remembering my concern over her outwardness of her hate which resulted in a scream, which resulted in a panic stop because I thought something was about to hit us, she calmly but emphatically stated, there he is. I panic stopped again, thinking a kid was about to dart out from behind a car. She hates bugs.

Ps. 5:5, "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity." I must say that I am very glad that I am saved and standing in the shadow of the Lord Jesus. God has a pure hate but it is also a complete and just hate. I am so thankful that I do not have to face that hate!

Jealousy: Funk and Wagnall has several definitions, but this one seems to fit the idea of God's jealousy best. "Vigilant in guarding: to be jealous of a privilege." Or in God's case, of His people.

Deut. 5:9, The Lord told the Jews not to bow down to idols for He was a jealous God. This jealousy is elsewhere likened to that of a husband for his wife. The husband jealously cares for and keeps her from all things.

The media seems to play on the jealousy of the husband for his wife and seeks quite often to poke fun at it. This jealousy is not necessarily bad. It is the total desire for his wife to be what she should be to him, and I might add that the wife should have the same type of jealousy for her husband.

The jealousy portrayed in movies of the mistrust and doubt is very negative and should not be in a marriage.

God has sought out a people for Himself and He is jealous of any attempt to take them away from Him.

Grief: What is grief? Funk and Wagnall, "Deep sorrow or mental distress caused by loss, remorse, affliction, etc."

Judges 10:16, "And they put away the foreign gods from among them, and served the Lord; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." God grieved or hurt for the children of Israel. He is a God that hurts when we hurt. Indeed, He probably hurts for us when we don't have sense enough to hurt ourselves. In the case of sin we are at times suffering before we realize it and He is already grieving for us.

Rejoicing: Isa. 62:5, mentions that the Lord rejoices over us as a bridegroom over his bride.

That's rejoicing! RIGHT YOU MARRIED PEOPLE? The only difference is that His rejoicing is perfect and complete whereas we often, as men, rejoice over the outward.

I have to wonder how God feels when one of His creatures comes to know Him as Lord and Savior.

Laughing: Ps. 2:4, "He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." The context is that God laughs at the attempts of men to cause God trouble. I can't imagine even thinking that there is any trouble that we might give to an all powerful God.

I suspect that He may laugh at some of the antics that believers try to pull on Him as well.

Sympathy: Funk and Wagnall, "The quality of being affected by the state of another with feelings correspondent in kind." Isa. 63:9, "In all their affliction he was afflicted," When the world is against us and we feel like the card I gave my wife once that said, "It's you and me against the world and personally I think we're gonna get creamed!", God is on our side and pushing back at the world with us. He is with us in all things as we walk with Him.

One is left to contemplate the feelings of God at the time when man led His Son to calvary, and then killed Him on the cross. One is left to contemplate the feelings of God as He viewed the martyrdom of His saints over the centuries.

What are the meanings of the previous terms when they are used of God? The definition would be the same as with man, except that there would be no taint of sin involved in God's. These attributes would be fully functional, and resident within God from eternity past, in a complete and pure form.

GOD IS SPIRIT

It may be difficult to truly define the idea of God being spirit. Let us look at some thoughts.

Pardington mentions, "There is no evidence that spirit fills any part of space, or that the Infinite Spirit is dependant on space." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 84)

Bancroft mentions that "God is not only Spirit, but He is pure Spirit. He is not only not matter, but He has no necessary connection with matter." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Second revised edition Copyright 1976 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 71)

The Old Testament statements contain no direct statement, but always assumes the fact. Spirit in the Old Testament may be referring to the entire trinity.

Let us look at some references to see what we can learn.

John 4:24, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Does this maybe relate to the Old Testament texts that speak of rent hearts not rent clothes (Joel 2:12,13)? I'd say so - inward worship not outward. Idolatry is outward. He wants inward change, not outward change. This also relates to worship in our day. He wants worship within, not outward manifestations or antics of the body.

What did Christ mean when He said God is a Spirit? It describes His being and existence however it is not something that we can examine. We can experience the work of the Spirit, yet not the Spirit itself. He can be experienced only in the heart.

Acts 19:21 Paul desired to go to Jerusalem. He "purposed in the spirit". There seems to be a commitment to the Spirits leading in this desire to go to Jerusalem from later information. He was experiencing something that was leading him toward Jerusalem. (Acts 21)

Matt. 10:20, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaketh in you." Christ was telling them that they would experience the Lord speaking through them.

Luke 1:47, "And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." This was Mary the mother of the Lord speaking. She had experienced the Lord. Something within her had touched the Lord. She had been changed because of Him. The spirit is our contact with God. We can mentally and emotionally think of and experience God, but the spirit is our actual consciousness of the creator.

Rom. 15:30, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me:" Love of the Spirit, striving in prayer, and praying together - all part of experiencing the Lord even though we do not see Him.

Rom. 8:26,27 tells us that the Spirit makes intervention when we do not know how to pray. There have been times when things were coming down around me so fast that I would just sit down and tell the Lord I didn't have any idea how to pray and that I was trusting that the Spirit would intercede for me. If I can have God praying for me I think that I can trust Him to do a really good job of praying for me.

Phil. 2:1 The Spirit of God can have fellowship with the believer. We can indeed experience the Lord.

Jo. 4:24, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We may worship God!

Spirit is the name given to that which is the metaphysical center of a being whether it is God or man. Metaphysical means something that can't be perceived by the senses. Thus spirit is the

name given to that which we cannot perceive by touch, sight, hearing or smell, which is the center of a being.

This is the God that we serve. He is a being that has no mass, has no visibility, has no content, thought He is everything there is in the way of worship. He is a complete being that we cannot examine. Maybe that is why salvation is by faith, why we should walk by faith, why we must have faith in Him.

Lu. 24:39, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Christ drew attention to the fact that He was a physical being in this text, while elsewhere He draws attention to the fact that He is God as well.

If no one has ever seen a spirit how do we know they exist? We can experience the effects within us. We can't see electricity, but we see the effect and can also feel the effect.

Jo. 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it willeth, and thou hearest the sound of it, but canst not tell from where it cometh, and where it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Since God is spirit and spirits can't be seen then we need to deal with those times in the Scripture where men have seen God.

Ex. 24:10,11 mentions that some saw God. Isa. 6:1-5 Isaiah saw the throne of the Lord. Lu. 3:22 mentions the Spirit as a dove. Dan. 7:9 tells us that Daniel saw the Ancient of Days. Acts 7:56 Stephen saw Christ on the right hand of the throne.

God doesn't have a form that is visible. He does take on forms at times for purposes of His own. These appearances are always the Lord Jesus and not the Father. The Holy Spirit manifests himself at times but usually in some form other than man. (The dove of the baptism or the tongues of flame at Pentecost.)

I Tim. 6:16, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

Paul shows that the Father has not been seen. The Old Testament contains many occasions when the Lord Jesus appeared in the form of man, of fire, of smoke, etc. The Holy Spirit appears in other forms as well. Paul teaches that we cannot view God in His original form. He must cloak Himself in other forms for us to see and withstand His glory.

At the times that man has seen God it has been what we have termed Theophanies. We have also mentioned anthropormorphisms. This is when Scripture pictures God with hands, eyes, ears, arms etc.

God's appearance in other than His actual form is for two reasons. His glory would be too much

for us to stand. When Moses saw God he was hidden and what Moses saw, from the terms used, may have been just what was left after the glory of God passed by. He is an infinite Being trying to reveal Himself to finite beings and the Theophanies are a good way to accomplish this.

APPLICATION:

1. God, the perfect and pure spirit, which is unhindered by the things that so easily draw our attention, is always and perfectly attuned to us and our needs. Might we ask the question, "Is God always attuned to our needs?" Might we ask the question, "Are His emotions always aimed our direction?" YES to both questions, UNLESS SIN HINDERS IT.

To answer these questions, we might consider the fact that sin hinders our fellowship with him. We must assume that His emotions, though still acting on our behalf, may not have effect, or at least full effect, if we are not walking with Him. What an encouragement to walk with Him closely!

2. When we want a perfect friend that fully understands, and one that will fully support us, why do we go looking among men to find one? We have one fully capable and perfectly qualified, IN RESIDENCE, if you will! Indeed, man cannot be the comfort that God can!

May we learn to allow God to be all that He desires to be in our life.

01350

GOD IS UNITY

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Ps 133:1

Unity in man is good and pleasant. In God it must be much more!

What is unity? Let us look at a couple of places where we should find unity.

In the church: Bringing together under a common purpose. Having a common mind in a common direction. Lack of division. Show me a church like this and I will show you a church that is doing a real work for the Lord. Most churches are like congress. Everyone is out to get what they want and the body is being pulled three dozen directions. The result is the church remains in about the shape it was in ten years ago.

The churches today that are progressing are the ones that have set common goals toward a point in the future, and have a congregation that is working toward those goals.

In the Godhead: The God head always was together. There always was a common purpose. There was and always will be a common mind. There always has been a common direction.

Never was there a difference of opinion. Never was there less than complete unity in all areas. Never was God anything but ONE!

Can finite human beings comprehend complete eternal unity? I doubt it!

Pardington states "There is but one God. The trinity must be held in harmony with the singleness of the divine essence or substance:" (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 85)

Theissen tells us, "By the unity of God we mean that there is but one God and that the divine nature is undivided and indivisible. (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 134)

Indivisible seems to be a mute statement. Even the thought of division is foreign to the concept of the unity of God! He is one and there is not room for any other thought, possibility or concept.

Man has two parts to his being, the material and the spiritual. God on the other hand is purely spirit and has a unity which man does not have at this present time, nor will he in eternity. Jesus mentions this contrast between spirit, and the flesh and bone that he had in Lu. 24:39.

Why won't we ever have this unity? We are only one. God is three and we speak of His unity in relation to this. We being only one cannot have unity. Ex. 20:3-7, tells of the commands against idols. It does not stress unity in word, however if these verses were followed there would be a worship of one God - a unity. (See also Deut. 4:35)

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. 6:4,5 Chew on that for a few years! Love with all thine heart. Love with all thy soul. Love with all thy might.

How does that relate to things like: I want to be a doctor instead of a pastor. I want to build a house instead of give to missions. I want to enjoy life rather than work in a church. I want to have a date instead of study. I want to _____ instead of _____.

If you pour all your heart, all your soul and all your might into loving God how can you possibly have time to: Do your own thing. Build a career of your choosing. Amass a fortune. _____.

If we are really fulfilling this verse we won't have time for the things of this world! We can't!

II Sam. 7:22, "Wherefore, thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears."

We've heard with our ear that anything between us and the Lord is idolatry - other gods. Yet,

many of us constantly put our own desires and our own wants before God. We hear with our ears but say no with our minds and hearts!

I Ki. 8:60, "That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else." Ps. 86:10, "For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone."

He has done wondrous things! Yet, how do we react to a new situation of trouble? As if He is inactive on our behalf and we need to worry and work through this new trouble.

The Israelites saw God part the Red Sea - depart the Red Sea and yet they doubted at the edge of the promised land. They saw the victory of taking the land yet went their own way.

Think of the neatest thing that God has ever done for you. Contemplate it. He can do the same in any situation you find yourself in! Don't forget those past "wondrous things!"

Isa. 43:10, "...I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."

It would seem by, "was no God formed" is referring to idols. Before God was, there were no idols formed. Indeed, before God - man was not even formed. The thought seems to run along the line of logic. Before me - no idols. I am before ALL. Idols would be illogical! Unity should eliminate idolatry of all sorts.

Isa. 45:5, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me; I girded thee, though thou hast not known me." Zech. 14:9, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."

Finally, in the eternal state the Lord will again be the only God instead of the God among all the other gods.

Being the only God creating man and finding that man creates many gods, don't you think that God deserves to be a bit frustrated with man? Yet, he is truly longsuffering and puts up with us. I suspect that He might be looking forward to eternity future when He is again given His rightful position and place and all of mankind recognizes Him for whom and What He is.

Read and consider the following texts: Mk. 12:32, Jo. 17:3, I Cor. 8:6, Gal. 3:20, I Tim. 2:5.

A misconception in the area of unity could lead to a rejection of the trinity. The trinity is a hard doctrine to fit into the unity of God however the scriptures plainly teach both thus we must accept their compatibility.

Was there and has there always been unity in the trinity? Why would I ask such a dumb question? When Christ died on the cross, was there a separation between God the Father and God the Son? The words of the Lord would indicate it. (Father why hast thou forsaken me.) I

don't intend to answer this question, but here are some thoughts that may relate.

1. Unity is not unity if it is division.

2. Were the words of Christ the words of the human that had submitted totally to God's will and now found Himself totally alone on the cross to die? This does not seem possible, for we teach that Christ was just as much man as if he had never been God and just as much God as if He had never been man. To suggest, that God left Christ the man, to hang on the cross, teaches that God and Christ were not as we teach.

3. There can be no break in unity or God is less that God. He is unity, so as such, must always be unity.

4. Forsaken probably does not mean division. I can be unified with my wife yet be on the other side of the earth. We are one according to the Bible no matter if we are together or not. God may only have moved away from Christ for the time that is in view.

5. Some suggest God turned His back on Christ because He could not view sin. The lack of logic in this should be obvious.

a. Christ is God. If God had to turn His back on sin, then Christ also would have to turn His back from the sin. How can God the Son turn his back on Himself?

b. Was sin present on Christ, or the cross? Was sin present on the Old Testament sacrifices? No, the sacrifice was to care for the sin. Christ died to care for sin. Sin is immaterial and cannot be placed - seen - or turned away from.

6. I submit that forsaken has something to do with things far removed from division or the breaking of unity.

I think that many things have been taught in years past in our fundamental circles that ought not to have been taught. The fact that God turned from sin when Christ was on the cross, needs some further study.

APPLICATION:

1. God is a unity. Thus we may bank on the fact that the Holy Spirit won't lead us contrary to what God the Father wants. Indeed, the Father hath revealed Himself through the Word. The Holy Spirit will never be contrary to the Word either!

2. This may be on the light side but you only have one quiet time to have so you can make it longer! Can you imagine having six idols to go to on a regular basis and worship? This doctrine certainly refutes the possibility of multiple God's as well.

3. The unity of God lends credibility to the purpose of God. There is "one purpose, one mind, one goal for all things." (Buswell, James Oliver; "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, p 103)

GOD IS GREAT

This is an attempt to look at the great God that we worship. His greatness is not a thing that we can comprehend for He has not even revealed all of it to us. We are limited to seeing His greatness in the Scriptures and that directs us to observe His greatness in the creation.

Indeed, we do not really comprehend that amount of His greatness that He has revealed to us in the Scripture and nature. We do not really, even in a lifetime of study, gain all there is to know of His greatness from these sources. We are limited in scope and mentality.

It has occurred to me in this study of His attributes that there may be many other attributes that God possesses which He has not revealed to us. There may be parts of Him that we could never comprehend so He just did not even mention them. We may have a long theology class when we get there to help us understand even more about Him than He revealed to us in the Word.

Since we are finite beings and deal with only what we can comprehend, we cannot imagine what other attributes He might have. He is a great God, an infinite God thus we must probably assume that He does have other attributes as well.

Deut. 10:17, "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and an awesome, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward."

Mighty and awesome! He is not a God to be trifled with, yet lost mankind does just that on a daily basis. They talk of their praying to Him, yet never approach Him in the area of salvation. They talk of him in their everyday conversation as if He is a personal friend, yet never make Him a personal Savior. God ought not be treated this way. Indeed, there are believers that use the Lord's name in vain that ought to be aware of their error.

I Chron. 29:10-13, "Wherefore, David blessed the Lord before all the congregation; and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our father, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the Heaven and in the earth is thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

".....in thine hand it is to make great....." Don't be so bold as to decide that you are going to make yourself great. Leave all that in God's hands and allow Him to mold and shape you into something great - something that he can use. If you mold yourself into something great, the

chances are that the Lord will not be able to use you.

Neh. 9:32, "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awe-inspiring God....." Years ago in a Sunday School class the teacher assigned each person a verse, and asked us to define God in one word based on the verse. My verse was in the Psalm and ran along this same vein. My one word definition of God from the verse was "aweful". He is full of things that should bring us to our knees in awe, or else He truly will be an awful God.

Ps. 145:3, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable." Yes, try to learn all you can of God's greatness, but don't get frustrated if you never find an end to the study, for the topic is unsearchable. Even if we had time to do all the research we wanted to do on the subject, we could not search out all there is to know of His greatness. His greatness will continue to be revealed throughout eternity. We will be constant witnesses of the things that He will do.

Jer. 32:17-19, "Ah, Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and outstretched arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee; Thou showest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them; the Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts, is his name, Great in counsel, and mighty in work; for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings;"

Within the greatness of God we have some subdivisions. He is self-existent and eternal.

GOD IS SELF-EXISTANT

It is logical to assume that either you believe in a self-existent God or a self-existent universe.

The term "aseity" is sometimes used instead of self-existence. You many run into it in your studies. It means, to have a free, or independent existence. To have an existence apart from all other things, be it being or material.

Thomas Aquinas said of God, "the first cause, Himself uncaused." In saying this he was stating his believe that God being the cause of all that exists was not caused by anything or anyone not even Himself. The last part of the phrase is something that would bother someone that is logical in thinking. How could a being bring itself into existence? If it could bring itself into existence, then it had to have existed prior to the act. Something that does not exist cannot bring anything into existence, much less itself.

In the past many have tried to define the self existence of God. The thinking went along the line that God was the cause of Himself.

Lactantius: "God, before all things, was procreated from Himself. God, of His own power, made

Himself. He is of Himself; therefore He is such as He willed Himself to be."

Jerome: "God is the origin of Himself and the cause of His own substance." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. pp 72-73)

Their error was in assuming that every effect must have a cause. God did not have a beginning; these two definitions are automatically defective.

Their thought allows for God bringing Himself into existence and this would dictate the possibility of God taking Himself out of existence. Self annihilation is not an option for God for He has revealed Himself to us as eternal and has promised man and angels eternal future existence.

God does not depend on anything or anyone for his continued existence. God is independent. He is not dependent on anything for continued existence, not even Himself.

As animals, man, and all created creatures depend upon God for their existence, God depends on nothing. He exists because of all that is within Him and nothing that which is without.

Indeed, He does not depend upon Himself for continued existence. He, by His nature exists. Continued existence is automatic within His nature. To cease to exist would require a shift in His nature - a nature that is unchangeable. Can He cease to exist? A totally mute question. To cease to exist is not consistent with His nature. In fact the idea of continued existence may well be foreign to His nature. He is that He is. This eliminates even the need for continued existence. He exists as He exists.

He could wipe out all of creation, all of the angelic host, and all of mankind and there would be nothing left but Him. He would not be hindered or decreased by one smidgeon.

We not only depend upon God for our existence in the first place, but we depend upon Him for our continued existence. He preserves the creation. He on the other hand depends on nothing.

Bancroft quotes Pendleton as saying, "When He [God] interposes His oath to confirm His word He swears by Himself saying, 'As I live,' leaving His oath to rest on the immutable basis of His self-existence. In the boundless range of human and angelic thought there will never be found a deeper mystery than the self-existence of God. It defies finite comprehension. God alone knows how He exists, why He has always existed, and why He will exist forever." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 73)

Now, I would challenge you to consider that statement. Realize fully there are things that God knows that we cannot possibly ever know, unless we can talk Him into telling us someday 30

billion years into eternity when he has taught us a little bit about Himself.

Ex. 3:14, "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. . . ." I am all that I am. There is no more or no less than what I am! In short might we somewhat tongue in cheek say, "Don't try to stick me in a pigeon hole!"

Jo. 5:26, "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;"

Acts 17:24-28 "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

Bancroft quotes Harris, "God is. His name is evermore, I AM. It certainly can be no limitation of God that He is absolutely unlimited and independent, that He is uncreated and eternal, endowed from all eternity with all possible perfection as the absolute Spirit" (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. pp 73-74)

Bancroft mentions that it is God's nature to exist. That seems to be what God said when He said, "I AM THAT I AM."

APPLICATION:

1. We can be assured that if God is self-existent that we are at the source of all life, and as such, if we have accepted His conditions and promises then those promises will assuredly come to pass!

2. God is the source of life and thus is the only one that has the right or ability to offer eternal life a commodity which He controls. He may offer this to whomever He so desires, and indeed He offers it to whomsoever will come. This should help us with election and predestination. It isn't mean. It isn't arbitrary. He controls all of eternity - His will is what will be.

GOD IS ETERNAL

There are three usages of the term eternal:

The eternal mountains suggesting great age from the beginning, of the mountains.

The eternal life or damnation of man. A beginning in time with eternal future existence. This would apply equally to the angelic host.

True eternal existence is found only in God Himself. He alone has the eternal attribute of existence from eternity past to eternity future.

All else can be viewed as everlasting, rather than eternal, for all else has a beginning since eternity past.

Years ago I witnessed to a young man about the fact that we can have eternal life. He replied that he agreed 100 percent, in fact he had eternal life, indeed, all of mankind had eternal life. I asked him to take a moment and explain to me just how he could state that all of mankind had eternal life. He mentioned that he believed that one of Einstein's theories states that as we travel in space time slows down and we actually can get ahead of time. He went on to explain that if we go fast enough and long enough out into space that at some point we could stop and look behind us and see ourselves coming. This was his "eternal life." We can keep going out into space and keep looking back to see ourselves coming. I trust that your concept of eternality is a bit more promising than that.

In dealing with the eternality of God we must take Schleiermacher's advice, when he suggests that we eliminate from God all limits of time, indeed, time itself. Time is a medium which the Lord created for us to operate in. (Schleiermacher was a liberal theologian.)

God has, at any moment of His existence, the total of His duration. We have our existence in a sequential order and gain it piece by piece through our experience and living in time.

The attribute of self-existence suggests and requires the eternality of God. To have always existed, would demand that He always has been.

There are past, present and future to God however due to his knowledge of past, present and future events He is actually in an ever present or "now" existence. He is the perfect NOW generation! He knows all events; he can combine some past and future events into those events going on in the present.

SOME QUOTES TO CONSIDER:

Bancroft states that "The Bible asserts the fact that God is eternal; His existence had no beginning and will have no ending; He always was, always is, and always will be." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 75)

Buswell puts it this way, "The Bible writers explicitly teach and continuously assume that the being of God is eternal, both as to the past and as to the future. God has always existed and

always will exist; He never began to be. He never will cease to be." (Buswell, p 40)

Ryrie quotes Berkhof as saying, "that perfection of God whereby He is elevated above all temporal limits and all succession of moments, and possesses the whole of His existence in one indivisible present" (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, pp 36-37)

Pardington states, "Eternity means existence without beginning or end:" (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 85)

Gen. 21:33, "And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God."

Deut. 32:40, "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever."

Deut. 33:27, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms;"

Ps. 90:2, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Isa. 41:4, "Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he."

Isa. 57:15,"For thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy...."

Hab. 1:12, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One...."

Rom. 1:20 mentions his eternal power and Godhead.

I Tim. 1:17, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

I Tim. 6:18, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

Rev. 1:8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Rev. 4:10 tells of the 24 elders casting their crowns before the one that "liveth forever and ever,".

Rev. 10:6, "And swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, and the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things which are in it,

that there should be delay no longer;"

Shedd mentions that the French Bible translates Jehovah by the term "l'Eternel".

Wordsworth related man's time in this life as an intervention of noise in God's eternal silence. Parents find times when their children get on their nerves noise wise and long for a moment of silence. I wonder if God gets sick and tired of the noise His children raise?

Bancroft quotes J. M. Pendleton on p 75. Pendleton relates that God is the only true eternal being. He existed in all of eternity past, which no other being has. He also mentions that God only will sit on God's throne.

"Eternity transcends all finite bounds of time,
Knows nothing of Duration, with successive years,
Before Thy vision, panoramic and sublime
Past, present, future, at one glance appears,
Unnumbered cycles pass before thy review,
The new is as the old, the old is as the new." (From an unnamed poet, Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. pp 74-75)

The doctrine has three aspects to it. a. God's existence cannot be measured in time. b. God's existence is above time. Men live in time. c. God is the originator and ruler of time. Indeed, we could even say that God's existence cannot be measured.

Man is a finite being and is limited to time. We overcome this limitation at times through memory of the past and predictions for the future. Haley's comet is predictable and is a very limited sense in which we know the future.

In closing a quote from Bancroft which is from an institutionalized person that was ask to describe God's eternity.

"It is duration, without beginning or end; existence, without bounds or dimension; present, without past or future. His eternity is youth without infancy or old age; life without birth or death; today, without yesterday or tomorrow." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 75) I am left to wonder why he was institutionalized!

The logical application is that if God is eternal then that is our guarantee of our own eternal existence from this point forward! That is why we can have a real trust in our salvation!

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GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE

It seems that all things are changing. The Eastern block crumbled. The mid-east became a hot spot. The price of gas bounces like a rubber ball. The television programming is changing. A recent survey showed that the once most popular Cosby show, was losing out by a majority to the Simpson's. Almost everything there is in the world changes.

Can you think of anything that is not changing, with the exception of God and things relating to him? There doesn't seem to be anything that is not changing. Thus in a world of drastic change, an unchangeable God should be very relevant to the people that we meet.

Immutability is another term that is often used for this doctrine. God is unchangeable, or immutable.

Immutable means according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, ".....not capable of or susceptible to change....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Thus, immutability may be a little better word for use with God. The idea of not capable of change would be a stronger idea than unchangeable. In reference to God there is no capability of change.

He is not capable of change thus cannot change. Ex. 3:14, ". . .I AM THAT I AM. . . ."; Nu. 23:19; Ps. 33:11-12; Mal. 3:6; Heb 13:8; James 1:17.

Bancroft mentions, "The self-existence and eternality of God may be considered arguments for His immutability. As an infinite being, absolutely independent and eternal, God is above the possibility of change." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permisssion of Zondervan Publishing House. p 75)

There is no change in God's nature, mind, character, thought or will. He never changes in greatness, goodness, intelligence, size, or quality.

Bancroft continues, "Immutability does not imply inactivity or immobility, for God is infinite in power and energy. Nor does it imply lack of feeling, for God is capable of infinite sympathy and suffering and of great indignation against iniquity. It does not imply that God is incapable of making free choices, for to God belongs the inalienable right to choose ends, and the means of attaining them. Nor does it prohibit God from progressively unfolding and carrying out His plans and purposes." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 79)

Theissen mentions that all normal change must either be for the better or for the worse. God cannot change for the better because He is already perfect. God cannot change for the worse for two reasons. First, He is perfect, so He cannot change and become worse. Secondly, if He changed for the worse He would no longer be perfect which would be impossible for His character.

Some suggest that the Bible shows that God changes, in that we no longer have the Law and sacrifices. The same God is unchanged but he has changed how He deals with man. This is not changing Him, but how He relates to man. This is logically acceptable. Let me illustrate: The sun never changes, yet it melts snow in one spot of the earth and dries clay in another part of the earth. The sun doesn't change.

An example of this is found in I Sam. 15:10, 29. This text mentions that God repents in the dealings with men but never does He repent in dealings with sin.

Another text that indicates that He does change in his dealings with man is Ezk. 24:14, "I the Lord have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God." The fact that He promises not to do things, indicates that He could if He so desired.

In the context of Ezekiel God gave His people every opportunity to turn to Him and they have not, so He pronounces this promise of judgment.

Jonah 1:1-3 and 3:10 also mention this idea of repent. The term repent actually means a change of mind, so really does not relate to the immutability question. (Bancroft Elemental Theology, p 77 discusses this further.)

APPLICATION:

1. His promises never change, once given to a people.

2. His moral character can never change thus His quest for our holiness will never change. That is in our walk and our ultimate holiness in eternity.

What is right is right no matter the time with God. With man, right and wrong shifts with the whims of the ungodly. What do you think about that last comment? Is it really accurate to relate the comment only to the ungodly? I'm not sure that it is. Christians tend to vary right and wrong quite nicely as well.

3. What He has promised in the way of salvation will never change. I Pet. 1:3,4.

4. It is a stern warning to the lost. His judgment has been set and it will come to pass no matter

how many cry peace as they did in Jerusalem. Jo. 3:18

The lost are surely lost for God will not change in His attitude toward sin, nor His set judgment.

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

Omnipresent means that God is present everywhere there is at any given moment. God is simultaneously everywhere at once and is present at all times.

Many years ago when I was young and foolish I went squealing around a corner and took off down the highway. That night my dad very casually said, "Where were you going in such a hurry this noon when you were heading east on Highway 30?" I had to wonder if he were omnipresent. I didn't know where he was, but was sure that I didn't think he was anywhere near when I was speeding!

God is everywhere in the universe present at the same time. The deist may hold to omnipresence however He will see God's presence as far off while He is omnipresent in his effect on the creation.

Anselm stated, "Nothing contains thee, but thou containest all things," (quoted by Shedd, William G.T.; "DOGMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984, p 340)

Augustine mentions that God "is not at some particular place. For what is at some particular place is contained in space; and what is contained in some space is body. And yet because God exists and is not in space, all things are in him. Yet not so in him, as if he himself were a place in which they are." (Shedd, p 341) How would you like to be a member of his congregation and trying to take notes?

Pardington, "He is present everywhere and there is no point in the universe where He is not" (Quoting Farr, Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 86) I'd add there is no point outside the universe where He is not.

Bancroft mentions, "He is present everywhere, and there is no point in the universe where He is not." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 87) Sound familiar? It is the same as Pardington's quote from Farr.

Strong, "By this [omnipresence] we mean that God, in the totality of his essence, without diffusion, or expansion, multiplication or division, penetrates and fills the universe in all its parts." (Strong, Augustus H.. "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907, p 279)

Do you agree with these Definitions? Let us consider the facts for a few moments.

1. Is He not larger than the universe? We don't know the limits of the universe but most assume there are limits. God, if there are limits to the universe is everywhere in the universe, and outside the universe as well.

2. Do you agree with the statement that God is everywhere there is to be? How about within the nonbeliever? We believe that a demon can't enter into the body of a believer because the Holy Spirit dwells there. Thus we must concede that quite probably the Spirit is not within the lost person. However, indwelling may well relate to His special manifestation while His presence is everywhere - even the nonbeliever. (He can be present in hell so this would be consistent. Christ descended to Sheol after the resurrection.)

The term "ubiquitous" may be a better word than omnipresence in that it has within its definition the idea of simultaneous presence everywhere. Ubiquitous relates to a being that is present everywhere at the same time.

My definition would be, God is totally unhindered by space or time and is in all places totally and completely at all times. His holiness limits his indwelling manifestation within the unrighteous, yet they are in Him. (Acts 17:27,28)

He is everywhere present in totality. In other words his big toe isn't in India and his heel in Japan.

I Ki. 8:27, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" The very least we can draw from this text is that the highest heaven is above the heavens of the universe. We know that the throne of God is beyond the universe.

See also, II Chron. 6:18, Ps. 139:7-10, Isa. 66:1, Jer. 23:23,24, Acts 17:28, Heb. 1:11, 12.

How do we explain the phrase in Gen. 11:7 which tells us that God came down to the tower of Babel? ("Come, let Us go down," vs 5 also).

The answer is that God usually manifests Himself in some specific place. At that point in time He was in heaven. In the 40 years of wondering He was over the Ark of the Covenant. In the days of the Temple He was in the Holy of Holies. Another example is Matt. 6:9, ".....Our Father which art in heaven....."

APPLICATION:

1. If we are in Him and He is everywhere then there is no way that Satan can get us out! We are secure. This may be a doctrine that would help teach security of the believer. We are in Him so

Satan can't carry us away, nor can we exit on our own power. God is much more powerful than Satan or us.

2. If we really believed that He is with us and in us then, you would think that we would clean up our acts some! Many Christian's lives do not reflect their belief in this doctrine.

3. If He is really this big then He is one to serve under, rather one to dictate to.

4. He is within us! We have a resident friend and strength! "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Jo. 14:23

5. It should be a warning to the lost. Amos 9:1-4 mentions the extent of God's ability to find those that try to evade Him. vs. 2-4, "Though they dig into hell, thence will I bring them down: And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them: And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good." (Jonah 1:1-3 also.)

I would like to quote Bancroft at this point.

The parish priest of austerity
Climbed up in a high church steeple,
To be nearer God so that he might
Hand His Word down to the people.
And in sermon script he daily wrote
What He thought was sent from heaven
And he dropt it down on the people's heads
Two times one day in seven.
In his age God said, "Come down and die,"
And he cried out from the steeple,
"Where art Thou, Lord?"
And the Lord replied,
"Down here among My people."

Selected

(Taken from the book, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Second revised edition Copyright 1976 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 80)

God is great, immense, limitless, and yet He desires to dwell among His people. Remember this

as you seek to minister to them.

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GOD IS OMNISCIENT

The term omniscient comes from two Latin terms, "omnis" meaning "all," and "scientia" meaning "knowledge." Calvin said of the term, "that attribute whereby God knows Himself and all other things in one Eternal and most simple act."

I like the thought of "and most simple act." It isn't really a biggy with the Lord. It isn't even an activity. It just is the way He is.

HIS KNOWLEDGE IS ALL INCLUSIVE:

God's knowledge is all inclusive (I Jo. 3:20). It includes all that is. It includes all that was. It includes all that will be. It includes all that is possible.

It includes the material world (Job 28:24). He knows the number of grains of sand on the beaches of the world as well as the pounds of dust on the books in my library.

It includes the animal world and all that are in it (Matt. 10:29). He knows of the needs of the animals, as well as their passing from life.

It includes the world of the dead (Job 26:6). He knows every soul in it and from what generation they came. None will be lost from His great accounting.

It includes the human world (Ps. 33:13-15, Matt. 10:30, Acts 15:8).

It includes the inner world of man, the minute details of life (Jer. 1:5, Ps. 139:15, Ps. 139:1-4, Ps. 56:8, Job. 14:16,17, Matt. 10:30, Prov. 5:21). From before our conception, throughout our days unto our returning to the dirt of his creation. From our thoughts to our intents, from our hair to our steps, from our rights to our wrongs, He knows all there is to know about us.

It includes the past, and the future world (Isa. 46:9-11).

HIS KNOWLEDGE INCLUDES MORAL PURPOSE:

It is always directed toward a good end. Even judgment is directed toward a good end - the culmination of God's great plan.

Man's knowledge generally is destructive. Smoking, war, fast cars, immorality, etc.

HIS KNOWLEDGE IS ETERNAL, COMPLETE AND PERFECT:

He has perfect knowledge of every detail of life for every believer throughout the past ages, as well as all of those that are to come. Indeed, He knows the detail of the lives of all lost people both past and to come. He knows the tides and the details of the sea. He knows the woods and the intricacies of the forest. He knows the deserts and the vastness of their dunes. (Acts 15:18, Job. 37:16, Heb. 4:13.

He promises to raise all of mankind to stand before Him in the future. He knows where to find each and every one of us, no matter where we die and are buried.

HIS KNOWLEDGE MUST BE UNDERSTOOD IN THREE WAYS:

First, it is not like man's. HEAVEN FORBID! We learn by comparing one piece of knowledge with another. He has His knowledge directly without comparison. He in eternity past knew all there was. He has always known all there is.

Secondly, it is not learned as is man's. He did not have to go to kindergarten to learn the ABC's. We learn step by step, fact by fact, and principle by principle, while there is no sequence to His knowledge.

Finally, His knowledge is complete and certain, while man's is incomplete and not certain. Man learns as he ages, he learns as he makes mistakes, and he learns as he is taught. God is free from all of these limitations.

HIS KNOWLEDGE IS ALWAYS USED WISELY:

His knowledge is always used toward good ends which shows His wisdom. His omni-sapience or all wisdom is usually covered in this section. Cambron is the only author I have found that separates and gives title to God's all wisdom.

He knows past, present and future as one entire whole. He knows all at all times without sequence. He knows all and uses that knowledge in a responsible manner to bring about His ends.

PROBLEMS WITH THE DOCTRINE:

1. How do we explain Deut. 8:2 if God knows all there is to know? "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no."

First of all, God communicates in a form that the people He is communicating with, can

understand. Would they have understood if God had said, "I'm omniscient?" No, I don't think so.

He was not doing this to learn something He did not know. He was trying them to see what was in their heart - to show them what was in their heart.

How do we explain Gen. 18:20,21? This speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah and God mentions, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not I will know." vs 21. The answer is the same as for the preceding text.

There is also the declaration of God, in the anthropormorphisms, as having physical features. He does not have the ears that the Psalmist mention, yet He does hear His people.

2. Isn't God too great to be interested in every detail of our lives? It is this point that adds to God's greatness! It does not detract from any of His attributes nor the doctrines that we hold concerning Him. He can see to the details of life while controlling nations. He provided food, water and raiment in the wilderness for 40 years, yet was able to lead Moses and the other leaders to what He wanted for the nation.

APPLICATION

He knows all there is to know about our particular problems and troubles!

I once read a poem that detailed the bitter, the hard, the fights, the wounds, the struggles of life, yet it ended with the thought that we can bear all that He allows because we know that He knows what is going on in our life.

The doctrine should be a warning to the wicked. Prov. 15:3 mentions that He sees evil as well as good. Prov. 15:11 - Sheol and destruction are before Him. The real threat is seen in Rev. 20:15ff where John describes The Great White Throne. This throne is where the judging of all the lost of all generations will be held. All that has gone on throughout the ages will be brought before those involved, and they will be judged accordingly.

The doctrine should be a warning to the erring Christian. Prov. 15:3 mentions that He sees evil as well as good. Heb. 12:6,7 mentions that He chastises His children. The judgment seat of Christ will be the occasion of the believer being judged according to his works. This will be a sad time, a time of losing of rewards and a time of acknowledging our short comings to the Lord face to face.

God's omniscience should be a consolation to the believer. Matt. 6:8 - He knows our needs before we have them. He numbers the hairs of our head. How can anything miss His attention to each and every one of us?

He knows our every feeling. He is our Father! We are His children! He feels for us as a Father feels for his natural children. A friend that I used to work with had married his daughter off on a Thursday evening. She had to go to work on Sunday and my friend and his wife felt very sorry for her having to return to work so soon. On the way to work she wreaked the car and had to have emergency room treatment. She called her folks in tears and my friend said, "I felt so sorry for the little kid but couldn't do a thing." Fathers hurt when their children hurt. He was very frustrated because he didn't have enough money to help the new couple out.

The difference with our heavenly Father is that He feels in a most perfect way for His children, and He can do something about it! He can comfort us for He is the God of all comfort. II Cor. 1:3. If there is a need of finance, He can intercede, if there is a need of emotion, He can lift us up, If there is a need of strength, He can empower us.

He knows what is best for us for He knows the future. HOW BOUT THAT ONE? We should pray as Jesus prayed, "...not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matt. 26:39b. We should not hurry into things which are not clearly His will. Wait upon His will.

At the same time we should be satisfied with the situation and position in life that He has given us. It is perfect for us at this time in our life.

He knows all the evil that others do to us whether it is a believer or a nonbeliever. We should learn to leave those things alone and not worry, fret or seek revenge, for He will keep close accounts of all things.

If we realize He knows everything. If we realize He can lead us. If we realize He cares and knows about even the little things. THEN We can let Him lead us in the smaller areas of our lives as well as those major moves. While living in Nebraska and Colorado I always went shopping for snow tires before winter set in. I went out to find snow tires in the mid 70's and found several very good buys which I had money to cover. I did not have peace about buying any of them. I decided not to get any for the first winter in several years. That winter we did not need snow tires once. God knew a light winter was coming along. If you don't have complete peace about something don't do it!

He knows all things which should bring us to confess our sins more quickly and completely! If we know He knows, why are we so slow to confess and correct our state before Him? Why don't we confess our sin immediately? It is illogical.

Ryrie lists four applications which I would like to include:

"Omniscience and security." We are safe in His hands for His hands are directed by perfect knowledge of what is and is to be. "Omniscience and sensitivity." His warnings are based on true and complete knowledge, thus we should be sensitive to mind them carefully. "Omniscience and solace." God knows what happened, as well as what might have happened and what will

happen from what happened. "Omniscience and sobriety." He relates this to our lifestyle and walk. (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 42)

CONCLUSION

Since we know all of these applications are true then we know that we have one Person on our side that is all of the following: Complete consolation, our Father, our Comforter, our Fortune teller (if I may use that term), our Avenger and our Guide.

Remember, He has the knowledge, and the only way that we can tap into it is to be communicating with Him through prayer and the Word.

Ryrie quotes A. W. Tozer (pp 61-62 THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY).

"God knows instantly and effortlessly all matter and all matters, all mind and every mind, all spirit and all spirits, all being and every being, all creaturehood and all creatures, every plurality and all pluralities, all law and every law, all relations, all causes, all thoughts, all mysteries, all enigmas, all feeling, all desires, every unuttered secret, all thrones and dominions, all personalities, all things visible and invisible in heaven and in earth, motion, space, time, life, death, good, evil, heaven, and hell."

"Because God knows all things perfectly, He knows no thing better than any other thing, but all things equally well. He never discovers anything, He is never surprised, never amazed. He never wonders about anything nor (except when drawing men out for their own good) does He seek information or ask questions." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, pp 41-42)

GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

The term omnipotent comes from two Latin words, "omis" meaning "all" and "potentia" meaning "power".

There have always been many questions raised in the area of this doctrine that are aimed at making difficulties for the theologian.

Can God make a rock too big for Him to lift? Can God draw a shorter than straight line between two points? Can God make two parallel lines meet? Can God make two mountains without a valley between? Can God commit suicide? Can He create a material spirit? Can He create a sensitive stone? Can He create a body without parts? Can He create a square triangle? Can He create a round square?

Let us end this foolishness by stating that He can do anything that He cares to do as long as it

does not contradict any of His other attributes.

Let us define the doctrine.

God is able to do all things that are consistent with His own nature and character. God cannot be untrue to Himself. His power is limited by His nature. God is not free from all restraints of reason and morality. He must and always does act within the confines of his character.

God is never exhausted by the exercise of His power neither is His strength diminished (Isa. 40:28). God is the only perpetual motion possible. He can go on working overtime, if there is overtime for Him, and never run out of energy, initiative, nor ability to cope.

Augustine, "God is omnipotent, and yet he cannot die.....How is he omnipotent then? He is omnipotent for the very reason that he cannot do these things. For if he could die, he would not be omnipotent."

Ryrie, "Omnipotence means that God is all-powerful and able to do anything consistent with His own nature. In actuality He has not chosen to do even all the things that would be consistent with Himself for reasons known ultimately only to Himself." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 40)

In other words He could have created fifteen earths side by side. He could have given them each a moon of a different color and caused a shuttle to move people from one earth to the other. He did not decide to do that, however.

God manifests His power in many ways. I want to list some of these before we move on.

In Creation: Jer. 10:12, Rom. 1:20
In Preservation: Heb. 1:3
In Nature: Jer. 10:13
In History: Dan. 4:17
In delivering Israel from Egypt: Ps. 114
In Heaven: Dan. 4:35
In miracles: Lu. 9:43
In the resurrection: II Cor. 13:4
In Redemption: Neh. 1:10, Lu. 1:35, 37, Eph. 1:18-23
In Security: I Pet. 1:5
In whatever He pleases: Ps. 115:3

Even in these we see only a part of His power. Job. 26:7, "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." I always wondered if there was a big hook and large string up on the north pole holding things up! Picture God hanging earth, as a Christmas tree ornament - on nothing!

These are only areas where He has revealed his power to us. He may have thirty million different ways of demonstrating His power for us in the eternal state, when He has time to explain things to us in a little greater detail.

Some other references that relate to the study:

Gen. 17:1, "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." God is addressed as "almighty" 56 times in the Scriptures.

Gen. 18:14, "Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

Ex. 15:11, 12, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? (12) Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them." The context is the Egyptian army having their long drink in the Red Sea.

APPLICATION:

Don't mess with Him FOR HE CAN CREAM YOU!

There is nothing that He can't do for us if it is within His will.

There is no way that the Devil can rip us out of God's hand. We are secure!

He is powerful enough to withstand all the national forces that might come against us or turn our forces to jelly.

If you have a hymnal handy, turn to "It Took a Miracle" and read it. (Peterson, John W.; "It Took a Miracle"; New York: Hill and Range Songs, Inc., 1948 by Crawford, Percy B.)

I trust that this section has brought you to appreciate your God a little more than before. If not, you might reread it, for the passages given declare a God that is mighty and powerful, and He is ready to hear your needs, be they humongous or minute. He is aware of His children and He is desirous of helping us do His work.
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GOD IS PERFECT

God is perfect or complete in all, and deficient in nothing. He has no flaws, He has no chips, and He has no hidden imperfections. He is as gold perfectly refined, with no impurities. He is perfect in all of His attributes.

Let us look at some of the areas where God's perfection is seen.

God's knowledge is perfect: Job. 37:16 mentions that He is "perfect in knowledge." There is nothing that He does not know, and there is no defect in that knowledge. So, don't think that when you step into that little secret sin that He won't notice, or that He will forget. His knowledge of our sin is perfect, His knowledge of your thoughts is perfect, and His knowledge of your deeds is perfect.

God's will is perfect: Rom. 12:2, "...ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Now, when you have gained knowledge of His will for your life, you don't need to second guess it, you don't need to worry about it, and you don't need to worry about opposition. His will is perfect and you only need to follow it.

God's law is perfect: Ps. 19:7, "The law of the Lord is perfect....." The Word is our guide for life. It is there to help us through the problems and trials of time. If we go to it, then we have perfect guidance, for It is perfect.

God's way is perfect: Ps. 18:30, "As for God, his way is perfect....." The only way to God is through Jesus Christ the Lord. That is the perfect way to God. God's paths, or way, is always correct and perfect, be it the way He is taking you or the way He is leading you. All His ways are perfect and complete.

God's work is perfect: Deut. 32:4, ".....his work is perfect....." What He has done in your life is perfect. What He wants to do in your life is perfect. What He will do in your life is perfect. So, why do we feel that we are inadequate, inferior, and ill prepared? Why can't we be satisfied with His perfect work in us? We are just the way He wanted us. Proper looks, shape, hair, eyes, mentality and personality. This is not to say that He can't change some of these items if He should desire, but He did a perfect work in you as you are at this point.

God's gifts are perfect: James 1:17 , "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above....." So, If you are a good evangelist, don't covet the good preacher or teacher their gifts. He gave the gift that He wanted you to have and it is perfect. Indeed, every gift is perfect, even if it is money, talent, spouse, education etc.

The usage of the term "perfect" in Scripture:

Old Testament usage: One of the main terms ["tamiym"] translated perfect in the Old Testament is also translated many times "without blemish" and is translated "complete" once. Complete seems to be a good definition of the term. (Lev. 23:15 = complete) This is the term used of the sacrificial lambs that were to be without blemish. God is without blemish, He is complete, and He is perfect in all that He is.

New Testament usage: Perfect is the translation of "telios." It also has the idea of complete.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament show the complete, perfection of God.

SUGGESTED PROBLEMS WITH THE DOCTRINE:

1. The same term "perfect" is used of both God and man. How can man be as perfect as God? (Noah was perfect, Gen. 6:9; Job was perfect, Job. 1:1; Satan was perfect in his original state, Ezk. 28:12.)

The answer is that created beings are held as perfect in relation to other created beings, and not God. God is a perfect being; His perfection is absolute! The term shows that the person or creation mentioned is complete and ready for operation. They are perfect in light of the perfectness that is available to them.

Only God is a perfect Being. We are perfect in our completeness to do the job. A car being moved off of the assembly line is complete and ready to roll, but the latest survey's show that if you inspect a car closely that there are usually at least twenty defects of some sort. It is a complete car, but it is not a perfect sort of car.

God's being is perfect. We are a perfect creation, but far from the classification of a perfect being.

2. Matt. 5:48 mentions that the believer is to be perfect. If the above is true, then how can man be perfect. Again, we cannot reach God's perfection, but we can achieve perfection in relation to other men. We can reach the perfection that is available to us. That perfection includes the spiritual standing that we have in Christ, the completely perfect and justified standing that we have before God because of the finished work of Christ.

That perfection includes the spiritual state - having all sin confessed and waiting for the next one to confess. This is the perfection that is available to us through Christ in this life.

The idea of Matthew is moral completeness rather than perfection. The New Testament idea is complete and ready to run. The car coming off the assembly line of a factory is complete and ready; All parts are installed and present.

God's perfection can certainly be our goal but we will not attain God's perfection because we are not purely spirit beings.

APPLICATION:

1. If He is perfect in all ways, then we can find ALL we need in Him. We need not look for fulfillment in the business world. We need not look for fulfillment in marriage. We need not look for fulfillment in the ministry. We need not look for fulfillment anywhere but in HIM! Fulfillment in these areas is not wrong but if we seek God to the best of our ability He will give

us the fulfillment that He wants us to have. Matt. 6:33 mentions that He will supply all of our need. If we seek after material things we may end up with more than we need.

2. The New Testament tells the believer to seek perfection. Matt. 5:48 tells us to be perfect as the Father is perfect. Col. 1:28, commands that we are to be working for the perfection of the saints (Eph. 4:11-12 also). Jas. 1:4 tells us that we will be perfect one day.

3. Since God's will is perfect we can trust in that will when the prices are up and our income is down and nothing seems to be going right and we just know that God has made a mistake. NO! He makes no mistakes. If you are in His will and things are down, you can KNOW that it is His plan for your life!

4. If He is perfect we should be moved to follow Him explicitly in our lives to gain the most out of our lives for Him! Our goal in life should be His perfect will for us. Nothing else should enter in to our decisions - only following His leading.

5. If He is perfect then we know man can never be perfect, so we SHOULD grow to tolerate those imperfections that bother us in our mates, our children, our pastors, our teachers, our neighbors and our co-workers.

6. We are all in the process of becoming perfect. Paul mentions that he isn't perfect yet in Phil. 3:11,12. NO MATTER HOW GOOD YOU ARE, YOU ARE NOT PERFECT. NOT EVEN IF YOU THINK THAT YOU ARE. God can improve on you if you allow Him to work.

7. We should realize we are all perfect (completed) in His eyes through Christ and that the new Christian is as perfect as the mature Christian - thus we have no grounds for feeling inferior or superior about our spiritual position.

A question came up in class one time concerning whether God can sin. We considered the possibility for a time and came to some conclusions: We didn't think He could, but that there was no real Scripture on either side that we could think of, however we drew some logical conclusions.

1. It would violate His purity. It would violate His righteousness. It would violate His holiness.

2. He could not condemn man if He were sinful.

3. The whole of Scripture would be a sham if He did sin. We know the Bible is truth and totally reliable so this would not be possible.

4. Sin was introduced by Satan - a created being - not by God. It was not present prior to Satan's fall.

5. Sin is defined thusly. Sin is rebellion against God. So how can God sin? The creator can do anything he wants, but the creatures can disobey the creator. A landowner can put up a sign saying keep off the grass. Anyone stepping on the grass is going against the owners wishes - except the owner. He is not bound by the sign.

In conclusion, God is perfect, so how can He sin and have imperfections? He cannot.

GOD IS INFINITE

The term infinite only appears in scripture once in Ps. 147:5, "Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite." The term seems to have the idea in the Hebrew of without number. (This is Strong's word number 4557 "mis-pawr") The term is used in purely mathematical thought of number, or is also used to tell of God's wonders that are without number. Ps. 40:5 mentions that His thoughts and works are so many that we can't number them.

Another term you may find is "immensity." Immense according to Webster is, ".....marked by greatness esp. in size or degree; esp: transcending ordinary means of measurement....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

What is the difference between immensity and omnipresence? Immensity is the size or extent while omnipresence is the fact that He is everywhere, or his presence if you will.

Infinite has two directions of definition. First, He is in size, limitless. Secondly, He is in characteristics, limitless to the extent of his attributes and nature.

He may be limited by some of his attributes. For example we saw that His power was limited in that He cannot act inconsistently with Himself. He cannot make a rock too big to lift. In this sense He has limitations within His attributes, however not in His size.

He is limitless. It is not that we don't know His limits, but that He is truly limitless.

Theissen says, "By the immensity of God we mean His infinity in relation to space." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949,p 122)

REFERENCES YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER: I Ki. 8:27, II Chr. 2:6, Jer. 23:24, Job. 11:7-9, Ps. 139:7ff, Isa. 66:1, Acts 17:28.

POSSIBLE PROBLEMS:

1. Does the person that rejects Christ diminish God's mercy? Does the person that rejects Christ diminish any of God's attributes? NO! That person rejects and refuses to accept those perfect

gifts of mercy, grace and salvation that have been set before him. God is not diminished in any way!

2. Ps. 78:41 mentions, "Yea, they turned back and tested God, and limited the Holy one of Israel." How do we answer this statement if we say that God is infinite and that man cannot diminish God? They limited what God could do for them but they set no limit on God as such. His attributes, character and nature were unaffected. He could not do the great things that He wanted to do for them.

3. Some suggest that man is infinite as well. Job. 22:5 mentions that man's sins are infinite. The thought being that, if we can sin infinitely, we must be infinite in other ways. WRONG! This is a different word than we have been considering. Our sin is infinite for it is toward an infinite God. Our sin is infinite for we can do nothing with it in and of ourselves. Our sin is infinite for it will go on for eternity if it isn't cared for. The infinite thought is carried into hell which is for all of eternity.

APPLICATION:

1. God is infinite so as we learn of Him we can know that we can never run out of things to learn about Him. We can study for years and never know all there is to know about Him.

2. Would it be safe to assume that the attribute of infinite is why God is so longsuffering? He allows man to run on as long as His justice will allow. He is infinitely gracious, at least to the limits of His justice and righteousness.

3. He is infinite in understanding. He can understand any mixed up mess or problem that we present to Him. Sometimes I have a big truck load of facts that just boggle my mind and I have a terrible time figuring out all the details of the mess. He instantly knows all of the ins and outs of such messes and has no problem in understanding. He is the one to go to when you have a mess that you can't sort out!

4. I wonder if this does not relate to the infinite types and looks of people. We are created in His image. He would have infinite creativity. I can be very pleased and thankful that I am one of a kind.

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GOD IS INDEPENDENT

What is the thing that teenagers seem to want most, until they get it? They want independence! When they get it, they begin to wonder just why they wanted it. It means responsibility. It means working. It means being on their own for support. It means paying their own dentist and doctor

bills. It means taking care of their own car if they can afford one. It means not having all the answers that they thought they had. It means many other things!

This is not to point fun at teenagers. It is to point out that independence isn't the ultimate high that we all think it is. It has a tremendous amount of responsibility attached to it.

Independence in the context of God is again similar to our own human experience, yet is so much more than the independence that we have. God has the perfect independence which naturally carries the perfect amount of responsibility. He is responsible for all that goes on in the universe.

This by the way is a philosophical argument against the Deist that says that God is far off. God would not be far off allowing the creation to go its own way if He were responsible.

In comparing the human/deity independence, we need to consider that the human grows into his independence. As a baby learns to move about in the home there are immediate limitations placed upon the child. As they move toward the nick-nack shelf they are warned that it is a no-no. As the child learns to handle things safely and carefully, then the parent may allow the child to play with the nick-nacks.

We have a very nice organ that was given to us by my wife's mother. Faith is very protective of it, yet we want the children that come to our home to enjoy those things. We had three grade schoolers that came some time back and they wanted to play the organ. I sat with them and gave them a brief introduction to how to use some of the options. Then I gave them a good warning that if they abused the organ that they would not be allowed to continue. I gave them complete independence to use the organ in light of not abusing it or our ears with volume. ALL WENT WELL! They operated independently and exercised great responsibility.

God on the other hand did not need to mature to gain His independence. HE IS INDEPENDENT by His very nature. He always has been, and He always will be independent. In fact the thought of always been, and always will be, are somewhat misleading in that they indicate the possibility of not being independent. This is not the case. He IS independent by nature and can be nothing else.

Let's define a couple of terms before we move on. Freedom is ".....the absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice or action....." (By permission. (From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) Totally free to choose without pressure.

Independent is, ".....not dependent:..... (1): not subject to control by others:.....Not requiring or relying on something else:....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.).

The difference between these two terms would be that INDEPENDENT is completely free from all encumbrances and the impossibility of encumbrance as well, FREEDOM indicates the possibility of encumbrance indeed, the term free indicates encumbrances may have been present in the past.

God's independence is determined by His nature and nothing that is without.

Independence includes all areas of His being:

1. His existence, which is underived and absolute Jo. 5:26. He relied upon nothing to exist. He exists because of His nature.

2. His knowledge, which is unlimited and true Heb. 4:13.

3. His action, which is at His will and discretion Gen. 1:1. He did not have to go through fifteen government agencies to get the zoning changed for a universe. He just did it without needing to ask anyone. (also see Acts 17:24)

APPLICATION:

1. He is free from all encumbrances and depends on nothing nor does He respond to outside pressures. We can also bend His ear anytime that we want and ask Him to do things for us and expect Him to respond to us!

At the same time we can bend His ear on one item that He says no to and keep bending His ear. He, however, is not encumbered by our petitions. He does not have to do as we ask Him to do!

On the light side, God is similar to a politician - free from outside pressures, doing what He wants. He is also free not to listen to those speaking to Him. (Politicians, once elected do little that the voters really want them to do. He votes on issues as he desires.)

2. There is no force outside His own being that can change his mind nor alter His character. He WILL BRING ALL THINGS THAT HE HAS PROMISED, TO PASS.

GOD IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

The word according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary means, ".....impossible to comprehend.....unintelligible....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

"...existential phenominology seeks to elucidate the existential nature of social structures by uncovering the surface institutional phenomena of the everyday, accepted world; by probing the

subterranean, noninstitutional social depths concealed from public gaze, by interpreting the dialectic between the institutional and the noninstitutional..." (SOCIOLOGY OF THE UBSURD. page 71)

Did you get that? Was it intelligible to you? That was a quote from a text book in a sociology class I took years ago. As time goes on and I reread this quote as an illustration, I find that I understand what it is saying - SCARRRYY!

Tozer introduces his chapter on incomprehensibility with the thought that we cannot answer the question "What is God like?" "This book is an attempt to answer that question. Yet at the outset I must acknowledge that it cannot be answered, except to say that God is not like anything; that is, He is not exactly like anything or anybody." (Tozer, A.W.; "THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"; Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1961, p 31)

A man named Spenser stated "God is the great unknowable." (The old song, "Getting To Know You" does not compute with God.) Someone reading Spenser said, "Spenser knows a lot about the unknowable."

He, being an infinite Being CANNOT be comprehended by finite beings. We mentioned Webster's definition. It contains a term which does not apply to God. "unintelligible." This implies something that can't be understood because you can't make sense of it. For example, the sound of computer data being transferred is unintelligible to the ear but with a computer you can understand it easily.

God is completely understandable when He communicates with us. The term incomprehensible has the idea that we can never comprehend all He is. Though we have been studying Him and His attributes we are doing so in our finite minds and we aren't even smearing the surface of what there is to know about Him. We can never in our finite minds comprehend His being.

He is however knowable. Matt. 11:27, "All things are delivered unto me by my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, except the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Through the Lord Jesus, we can know God in our limited capacity. (See also Jo. 17:3, Phil. 3:10, I Jo. 4:7.)

His greatness is unsearchable Ps. 145:3, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: and his greatness is unsearchable." We will take about one hundred pages, looking at God and we will only begin to study Him. If you studied God for the rest of your days, I am sure that you would never feel that you had studied God. You would not have totally searched out all the data concerning God.

His understanding cannot be searched Isa. 40:28, "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding." He can understand all things; He

understands all things. We in our finite minds struggle with many things because we cannot understand all things.

His works are great and unsearchable.

Job 5:9, "Who doeth great things and unsearchable, marvelous things without number;"

His judgments are unsearchable Rom. 11:33, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" I suspect that as the Lord begins judgment, we will stand confused as to why He does things as He will. He has perfect knowledge, perfect justice, and perfect understanding. We will falter before His use of such attributes. I trust that He will take time to help us understand things.

APPLICATION

1. If he is incomprehensible then we can have an eternal theology proper class and never run out of information to study. Would anyone care to sign up for it? I think that I will, because the Lord teaches it.

2. We should never become proud of how much we know of God, for even one that has studied God all his life is only beginning.

3. If He is unsearchable, and we now know that He is, then how can we ever think that we have nothing to study in our quiet times. Indeed, how can we be satisfied with only a few minutes of quiet time a day?

01600

GOD IS GOOD

Goodness is often equated with the benevolence of God. Goodness is ".....the quality or state of being good....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) Benevolence is the ".....disposition to do good.....an act of kindness....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Again the definition is limited, because in God there is not a state of being good (which holds forth the possibility of not being good), He is good by nature and is never anything else. He is incapable of anything else. Within the definition of Benevolence there is also a problem if applied to God. Disposition gives the idea of maybe good, maybe not good. He is GOOD.

The use of benevolence, if it is to be understood in light of the Dictionary definition, is not appropriate for God. God is "GOOD," and there is no possibility of disposition, because with Him there is no maybe. Ps. 25:8, "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way." (Read also the following texts: Ps. 33:5, Ps. 52:1, Ps. 103, Mk. 10:18, Rom. 2:4, Rom. 11:22.)

Goodness covers two areas, what God is in and of Himself, and what God is to His creatures. In other words goodness covers His character and the expression of His character.

HIS CHARACTER: Holy, True, Love

HIS RELATION TO OTHERS: Righteous, Faithful, Merciful, mercy, tender mercy, kind, kindness, loving kindness, pity, pitiful, good, goodness, compassion, grace, gracious, and longsuffering.

There is no opposite for this side of God. He is Good, and He cannot be bad.

Some might question this concept in relation to the fact that
He will judge and condemn the lost to hell. There is no divine attribute of wrath. Wrath is the logical and needed result of the attributes of holiness, truth, love and justice. The violators of His ways will feel this wrath. Within all of this is the fact that He is doing good. He is preparing the creation for eternity. This includes the removal of all evil.

Does this study bring new meaning to the idea that all things work together for good? He is in the process of doing good in your life, no matter how bad things seem to get. His work in you can only result in good.

GOD IS HOLY

Before moving on, please read Lev. 10:1-7 and Acts 5:1-11.

He IS to be reverenced. Sin is not allowable.

Oehler observed of God, "Holiness is glory concealed; glory is holiness revealed." (Quoted in Pardington. Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 79)

The term holy originally comes from the idea of "whole" or complete. Thus holy is, wholly given to a purpose.

The Hebrew term is "kadesh" which means separateness. The term really had nothing to do with holiness at first. The term harlot in Gen. 38:21 is "kadesh" - set apart for a purpose.

The Greek term is "hagios" which means set apart. Strong mentions, "Holiness is self-affirming purity. In virtue of this attribute of His nature, God eternally wills and maintains His own moral excellence. This definition contains three elements: first, purity: secondly, purity willing: thirdly, purity willing itself." (Strong, Augustus H.. "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907. This same quote is found on p 77 of Bancroft's CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.)

There are several areas which relate to God and holy:

God's people are to be holy. Lev. 11:41-45; I Thes. 4:7; I Pet. 1:15,16. Not sometimes holy, as many believers live today, but all the time holy. Unholiness is unacceptable. It is easy to talk about the little sins we allow, but term it as it is, UNHOLY, and it sounds a bit worse.

Things dedicated to Him are holy. Lev. 27:28 If we have given ourselves to Him, then we should also be holy. That is the standard, whether or not we like it, accept it, or live by it.

His habitation is holy. Deut. 26:15; Ps. 99:9; Is. 57:15. Think of it, we will one day share that habitation with Him. A holy habitation with no evil!

His throne is holy. Ps. 47:8 Is it any wonder Isaiah said when viewing the throne that he was undone and of unclean lips?

The Spirit of God is holy. Ps. 51:11 He is resident in you. He is another reason for us to remain sinless. Our "little sins" offend Him greatly.

Let me just list some other areas of His holiness: God swears by His holiness Ps. 89: 34-36; His arm is holy Ps. 98:1; God is holy and His name is holy Ps. 99:1-9; His promise to Abraham was holy Ps. 105:42; His name is holy Is. 57:15.

In what way is God set apart?

God is absolutely separate from all that is earthly or human. (Ps. 99:1-3, Is. 57:15) This is seen often in the Old Testament.

God is absolutely separate from all that is unclean. This would be deemed His moral holiness. (Psa. 99:4-9, Ps. 24:3,4) This thought seems to be the prevalent thought of the New Testament. Both ideas are found in Is. 6:1-5. He is lifted up and pure.

Is Love, or Holiness more prominent in His listing of attributes? The social gospel people seem to hold love as the prime attribute. Fundamentalists tend to hold holiness as the prime attribute. It has been said that Scripture states "Holy, holy, holy" not "Love, love, love." Dwell on that thought for a time.

One final point. The thought of God being holy and objects being holy may be difficult for some to understand. Holy has the idea of set apart, and in this sense anything can be holy.

APPLICATION:

1. We will naturally see our own unholiness as we view His holiness. Is. 6:1ff is a prime example of this concept. Isaiah realized his uncleanness. Cambron states, "When we think not of god's holiness, we think light of sin." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, pp 48-49)

2. The basis of his covenants is His holiness; they WILL come to pass. Ps. 89:34-36 (David); Ps. 105:42 (Abraham); Jo. 17:11.

3. The holiness of God demands a similar holiness in the lives of His people. I Pet. 1:15-16, "But, as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of life, Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am Holy." (see Ps. 99; Heb. 12:10 which tells us that we can partake in HIS holiness - contemplate that for awhile.)

4. His holiness is always in the background of all of His judgments. The following texts picture the scene of God's throne that Isaiah beheld. (Rev. 4, Rev. 20)

5. Our works, or life style can profane God's holy name. Amos 2:6,7 6. Our salvation is provided by a Holy God. If we remember our previous destination we will think more highly of His holiness and from what He has saved us. His holiness demanded that we be separated from Him thus Christ's righteousness allows us to approach Him.

7. His holiness is the only standard for our life and lifestyle. If we wonder if something is right, all we need to do is ask if it is holy.

GOD IS TRUE

Another term you may run into in this study is veracity. Veracity is ".....devotion to the truth: TRUTHFULNESS....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

God is called the true God. Jo. 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

God is called the God of truth. Ps. 31:5, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." Isa. 65:16, "That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth, and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth, because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hidden from mine eyes."

Strong tells us, "In virture of His veracity, all His revelations to creatures consist with His essential being and with each other. In virtue of His faithfulness, He fulfills all His promises to His people, whether expressed in words or implied in the constitution He has given them. (Strong's SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)

Ryrie mentions that God is consistent with Himself. This illustrates truth. We are true to ourselves when we are ourselves.

"True" can be used of the character of an object as well as the knowledge about the object. A gun barrel can be true or straight. We can also know about a gun barrel and know of it's true, or straight nature.

A man can be a true scientist by nature, but we may know nothing about the man except lies that someone has spread about him. We can know him to be true in nature because of his credentials but not know him truthfully because we know only of the gossip.

God is the true God for He matches the true God that is revealed in the Word. We can know there is a true - real - God, yet not know Him, or know much about Him. We need to understand BOTH!

God is the truthful God, for His knowledge conforms to His nature, or more exactly IS true knowledge. He is completely accurate, and there can be no inaccuracy.

All truth extends from Him and all truth conforms to Him. He is the ultimate standard of truth for He is truth. (Ps. 31:5, Ps. 119:126-128, Ps. 119:160.)

God's truth is related to many of His other attributes and characteristics. I will just list these for your further study.

Truth and light. Ps. 43:3
Truth and kindness. II Sam. 2:6
Truth and goodness. Ex. 34:6
Truth and uprightness. Ps. 111:8
Truth and righteousness. Jer. 4:2
Truth and peace. Jer. 33:6
Truth and grace. Jo. 1:17
Truth and life. Jo. 14:6

You will see that truth is defined in many ways as you live and learn. For example, Mary Baker Eddy stated that if something was real, then it was truth. The fallacy of this can be illustrated in the fact that Hitler was real but he wasn't truth.

APPLICATION

1. God is total truth so there is no lie within Him. Every promise and every Word are truth and to be trusted implicitly.

2. By a bit far off application, we might run along the following lines for a moment. When we ask the Lord what He wants us to do in a certain instance and He tells us, there is never any need for us to question His answer for one split second. We know He wouldn't josh us! He is totally and completely HONEST, AND HE WILL NEVER LIE OR MISLEAD US!

3. He will respond to us in all that is truth in the manner of our worship and prayers. Jo. 4:24, Ps. 145:18.

4. His judgments will be entirely based upon truth. No one can trick Him into letting them into heaven or out of hell. Ps. 54:5, Rom. 2:2.

5. The holiness and truth of God should dictate our ethics as men and women of God! I fear ethics are out the window in the ministry today. I would like to illustrate this in a number of ways so you will know what some good ethics are.

a. I was waiting in the office of a large evangelical church in Oregon. I could hear the business manager and the church secretary arguing. They were not heated, though voices were being raised. The high level of volume forced me to hear that the secretary thought that the church board should operate with business men of the community, in a manner consistent with Christian ethics. The business manager stated flatly that they should not operate with Christian ethics. That business manager knew little of proper ethics.

b. I have observed and heard of many pastors that leave a church in a small town and start another church in the same town. When on deputation, I had a meeting in a town of four hundred people with two fundamental Baptist churches. There is no need for two churches, two buildings, two budgets, two pastors. What a waste of God's money.

c. Most churches have a clause in their doctrinal statements and bylaws requesting that the pastor leave if he finds himself in a doctrinal difference with the congregation. There are men who remain, and continue to teach wrong doctrine. Some actually lead the congregation off into their false doctrine.

d. I have observed a pastor moving into an area and encouraging disgruntled people in a church to split, and then assuming the pastorate over their new church. (There were no doctrinal differences involved.)

e. Accepting a church they know they have differences with in doctrine and practice without telling them.

f. Candidating in three churches at one time and then choosing the best one that call's you. I have

seen this more and more in the late 80's and early 90's.

g. Flying to one church to candidate and candidating at another while you are there on the other people's money.

h. Accepting a church in one fellowship of churches while planning to take it into another fellowship.

i. Counting churches in your fellowship when the church hasn't had any association in years. When on deputation I found an address for a church in a fellowship directory. I was able to set up a meeting with the pastor. Upon arrival at the church the pastor asked me where I had heard about his church. I told him of the directory. He stated that the church hadn't been with that group in more than ten years.

j. Setting up a candidate appointment and calling two days before your date to speak and telling them you have accepted another church.

I trust that pastors, missionaries, and Christians in general will consider how they live their lives. I feel confident in saying that I believe God is embarrassed with His people, in this generation. Many Christians are less than truthful in their personal lives.

May we strive for the holiness and the truth of God in our personal and church lives.

01650

GOD IS LOVE

Define Human love, the love that we should have one for one another. Is it not self sacrificing, is it not an extreme desire to do for, is it not an extreme desire to be with, is it not the desire to spend time with the person?

So, is this the way you act toward God? It should be if you really love Him.

There are four types of love that we want to look at briefly.

1. Physical love. That which the world portrays as true love - that of the flesh. Impulse love. Soap Opera love. The love based on feeling, impulse, and desire.

This love is not the marry me type love. It is the use me type love. It is not the spend my life with me type love. It is the give me something to do tonight love.

It is based on looks, desire, lust, and convenience. It takes no commitment to be involved in this

type of love.

The "Let's live together" love is wrecking our society. This is the love that too many marriages are based on.

2. Natural love. The friend and relative love that one can feel.

Faith and I went to Ohio for a reception with Regular Baptist Press. I have a cousin that lived in the same city, so we called her and met with her for a couple of hours. She had gone through a divorce and just lost her mother. She was having a ruff time. I had a real concern for her welfare and her hurt. This is the natural love of family and friends.

This love often moves you to action on the other person's behalf.

3. Aesthetical love. That which you have for something of beauty or character.

Wyoming has some of the prettiest sunsets that I've run across in my travels across the western United States and the Far East. One night on the way to Torrington, WY in our 2nd year at Frontier School of the Bible, we noticed the sunset and I was excited way down deep to know I was going to watch this thing unfold as we traveled for about 45 minutes. I had a real sense of anticipation.

June Carter Stapleton, a charismatic faith healer believes that a person can be born again after viewing a beautiful painting. This is the aesthetic approach to salvation which is misleading many today. They are being given false hope in what is too commonly called the born again experience. Being born again comes from dealing with Almighty God about your sinful condition, not form watching a sunset, or looking at a beautiful painting.

4. Ethical love. This is the unswerving or unwavering determination to do good. This is the love that we should have for our mates.

The different levels of love that we have listed, may be the levels that a couple passes through on their way to the altar. They first get that fuzzy feeling when they are getting to know one another. They may then move into the area where they are deep friends. They may even begin to see the real beauty of one another, that inner beauty that comes forth. However, the love that a marriage needs to survive is the love that determines to do good for the other partner.

Couples may get married in the first level of love and find that they have worked through the other three to a solid marriage; however, a marriage in the first three levels is not usually very solid. The first three types of love lack the total commitment of the final level of love.

God's love is far above all four of these human levels of love. His love is that within Him that moves him to give of Himself to his creatures regardless of their merit. He does this of His own

will, and will do it eternally.

This love is seen in I Jo. 4:10 which shows that God sent Christ, in love to a people that did not love Christ, or God. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

GOD'S LOVE SHOWN

1. God loved Israel in the Old Testament: Is. 63:9, Is. 49:14-16. His love was not limited to Israel in the Old Testament. The pre-Israel times show God's love for all people. The gentiles were to be part of the overall program during Israel's time as well, except that Israel didn't share that which they had spiritually. This is seen in the system, of sojourners and strangers, that was included in the law. Those people coming to God through the Jewish people were to be accepted in as Jews. This system demands that God wanted gentiles to be a part of the system.

God's love for all people is also shown in the fact Jonah went to the Gentiles.

2. God loved the church in the New Testament: I Jo. 4:11, mentions God's love, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." He gave the church age the organization of the church for our benefit. He gave us the job that we should be about. The ministry of missions is so very rewarding to those that take part in it. God has shown great love for all peoples by opening up the gospel to all people.

3. God is love: I Jo. 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." God's very nature is that of love. He exudes love in all that He does for mankind. Even in judgment upon the earth after the fall, He left us an earth that is beautiful to behold. He gave to us many things to enjoy in this life.

GOD'S LOVE EXAMINED

1. HIS LOVE IS UNSELFISH: He has no thought of personal benefit, but seeks good for the object of His love. Israel was a small people yet He chose to benefit them. (Deut. 7:7,8 tells of His love for Israel.) The church is often made up of the weak and the poor, yet God ministers unto them. He desires a people who will return their love to Him.

2. HIS LOVE IS VOLUNTARY: A little boy once said, "If I was God I'd go to every country in the world and say, You guys love one another or else!" God does not operate in this way however. He gives his love and does not force that love upon those that reject it. Rom. 5:8 tells us that while we were yet sinners He acted by sending His Son. He did not await someone to approach Him. (I Jo. 4:10 also)

3. HIS LOVE IS RIGHTEOUS: His love for man never allows nor condones sin. Love that allows for sin is called sentimentalism. That is the willingness to do wrong for the sake of the

one you love. Ps. 11:7, "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." Ps. 33:5, "He loveth righteousness and justice....."

4. HIS LOVE IS EVERLASTING: Jer. 31:3, ".....I have loved thee with an everlasting love....." I Jo. 4:8 mentions that He is love and that He is eternal. It follows that His love is also eternal.

His love will not allow Him to tire of taking care of for His people. His love will not allow Him to tire of seeking to save the lost. His love will not allow Him to forget His promises to us.

5. HIS LOVE IS ACTIVE: Jer. 31:3, ".....with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jo. 3:16 - love caused God to send His Son. Eph. 5:25-27 tells that Christ died because of His love for us.

A love that acts is a love that lasts in marriage. A love that acts is a love that is real and beneficent when it is God's love.

6. HIS LOVE IS YET UNSATISFIED: He will have satisfied love when we are with Him. Zeph. 3:17, ".....he will rest in His love....." The context of this phrase is the end times. As long as there are believers, He will be active on their part. As long as there are lost, He will be actively seeking them.

7. HIS LOVE IS DIRECTED: He has objects for His love. Before we list some of these, might we consider a question? Can there be love without an object of that love? No. Since God is Love there must be an object of that love. Before creation what was the object of the Fathers love? This demands that there be plurality in the Godhead. Christ is the object of that love. Indeed, there must be a perfect illustration of love within all three members of the Godhead.

a. God loved Christ, His beloved Son: Matt. 3:17, ".....This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jo. 3:35; 17:24.

b. He loves those who love Christ: Jo. 16:27, "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." I Jo. 3:1

c. He loves Israel: Jer. 31:3,4 ".....I have loved thee with an everlasting love....." This love will again act on their behalf as they return to Him as a nation.

d. He loves the world: John 3:16

e. He loves all mankind: Matt. 5:43-48 mentions that He gives sun and rain to all mankind. Jo. 3:16 tells that He gave His son for all.

8. HIS LOVE IS UNIVERSAL: John 3:16 He loves all of His creatures, be they obedient or rebellious. Parental love both acts by hugging and by spanking. Both the hug and the swat are expressions of love from the parent.

APPLICATION

1. As we realize His love, we will love Him. As our love for Him deepens, our commitment to Him will also deepen.

2. As we realize He loves us, our response should be to return that love through our beings verbally, physically, and spiritually. I Jo. 4:11 tells us that because He loved us we should love one another. He loved us enough to send His son. We should respond by sending our sons and daughters to His service. The Hymn writer in O Zion Haste mentions this. The song tells us to give of our sons, wealth, and prayer. All three are needed.

3. Strong mentions, "By love we mean that attribute of the divine nature in virtue of which God is eternally moved to self-communication." (Strong, Augustus H.. "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907,p 263)

Indeed, any love, be it God's or man's, desires to communicate to the object of that love. By application, is that why communication breakdowns in marriage are so serious. Is it not partly that the love once present has no desire to communicate, or is it that the love is not present? Poor communication may show serious signs of a deterioration in the marriage.

4. Paul finishes his second epistle to the Corinthians with the following statement, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

Such a simple way to assure ourselves of the Lord's presence and love - be perfect, be a good comfort, be of one mind, and be in peace.

GOD IS JUST

To put it in the vernacular, "Your gonna get yer just desserts!" To put it in the vernacular in the reverse, "He's gonna get his just desserts!"

Strong tells us, "Buy justice and righteousness we mean the transitive holiness of God, in virtue of which His treatment of His creatures conforms to the purity of His nature, righteousness demanding from all moral beings conformity to the moral perfection of God, and Justice visiting non-conformity to that perfection with penal loss and suffering." (Strong's SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)

Cambron states, "Justice is judicial holiness - that judicial act of god which demands the penalty for those who have not measured up to the righteous commands of God." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 50)

God's justice is activated by His righteousness. All non-conformity to His perfection will be met

with personal loss and/or suffering. When God acts in a just manner, He is not rewarded for doing right. He has acted within and in keeping with His own character and nature. He by nature is just and can do no other than justly.

God's justice is seen in the following texts: Zeph. 3:5, "The just Lord is in the midst of her; he will not do iniquity; every morning doth he bring his justice to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame." Deut. 32:4, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

God's justice is just in a perfect manner. He cannot be unjust. He will meet out justice to the saved and lost alike. To the lost there is final judgment by works, yet no matter how good the works, the lost person will still be in eternal torment. Good works are as filthy rags. How does this judging by works, yet eternally tormented, work? We don't know because the Scripture is silent on the subject. Some feel that there will be levels of torment, however there are no proof texts for this thought. It is only a logical deduction from the facts that we have.

To the saved there is final judgment of our works, yet no matter how good the works the saved person will feel them insignificant in light of seeing the Lord. The result of good works for the believer is reward. We might add also, that no matter how poor the good works, the eternal salvation is not affected - only the reward of the individual.

APPLICATION

1. Since God is all knowing and He knows how people treat us - since He is completely just and will see to it that just desserts are set - then why do we spend so much time wondering, worrying and fretting over how so and so feels about us? Or what so and so said about us? God is the great settler of scores. He will settle ALL accounts.

Now, we all know what I have been saying, but the hard part is committing these types of things to Him for His final work. We tend to try to hang onto those things and find little ways of getting back - in a nice way of course! LEAVE IT UP TO GOD AND YOU WILL FIND MORE PEACE.

2. On the reverse of what we have just mentioned. If you see an account that is long overdue for settling, don't argue with God, don't fret with God and don't question God in his not dealing with the person. God knows what is best in every situation and may desire to allow something to go on longer than you think He should. HE IS THE SETTLER OF ALL ACCOUNTS, AS WELL AS THE SETTLER OF ALL ACCOUNTS, WHEN HE IS READY TO SETTLE THEM!

3. I can relax in my own confidence that if I have truly sought God's will and have truly attempted to the best of my knowledge to do right, that God will be the one that will show me up to be right or wrong.

There is nothing that any person can say that should shake me or cause me concern. When we all gather round, He will be the one that sets all records straight.

This is probably one of the great lessons of the book of Job. He was faced with several very intelligent, spiritual men who knew what his problem was. They felt free to tell him as well. Indeed, you will have those that will tell you in what area you have erred! God will set them straight when the time comes.

Job in the end was justified and all knew that he had done nothing wrong to deserve such troubles. There may be times when people become very vicious in their attacks upon you - relax and know that you have done correctly and that God will do correctly at His appointed time.

A pastor in California told me of a man in his church that was very opposed to the pastor. He thought the pastor was wrong and that God wanted the pastor to leave. The man worked in the church as hard as he could to move the congregation to ask for the pastor's resignation. He finally was satisfied when the pastor, in total frustration over the unresponsiveness of the congregation, resigned. I arrived at the church the night of the pastor's going away party. The man in question unloaded his burden on me and admitted that he had been wrong. He had, since the pastor's resignation, tried to convince the congregation that they really did need the pastor. It was too late and the damage was done. The pastor left.

The point? That pastor does not need to worry and relive that man's wrong. That pastor needs only to allow the Lord to settle the accounts. Indeed, the man had already settled with the Lord through confession and forgiveness, though he may suffer loss of reward for that period of his life.

4. In looking through these many attributes of the Lord, I have been time and time again impressed with the idea that all His attributes function so smoothly together. For example his holiness meshes well with His justice to bring about the punishment of those that sin.

Tozer makes a point that is very important and it is in relation to this line of thinking. "God's being is unitary; it is not composed of a number of parts working harmoniously, but simply one." (Tozer, A.W.; "THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"; Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1961, p 94) His attributes are not a list of characteristics that work harmoniously together but His very nature is the sum and substance of all these attributes.

His attributes are not separable, but are a unit.

01700

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Faithful means ".....steadfast in affection or allegiance.....firm in adherence to promises or in observance of duty....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

God's faithfulness is a bit more than even this definition. The term "steadfast" indicates that someone sticks with affection. The term "firm" indicates the same thought of stick to it. In God's case there is no thought of steadfast and firm. In His case it is part of His nature to be constant in His affection and adherence to promises. He can do nothing else. He cannot, at any point in time, stop His affection or cease to adhere to His promises.

I would like to just list some attributes of God's faithfulness and add references and comments as needed.

a. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS LONG IN DURATION Deut. 7:8-10

He is just as faithful now as He was three trillion years before the creation. He will be just as faithful three trillion years into eternity as He was when He set the decrees in eternity past. There is nothing that will deter Him, nor alter His course. He will be faithful to Himself and to us throughout eternity. To cease to do less is not within His character.

b. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS FAR REACHING IN ITS EXTENT Ps. 36:5, "...thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." I have known many Christian farmers that would say a hearty Amen to that comment from the Psalmist.

c. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS SURE Ps. 89:33, "Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor allow my faithfulness to fail." Nothing, not Satan, not man, not anger, nothing can cause God to be less than completely faithful.

d. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS ASSURES THE UPHOLDING OF CREATION Ps. 119:90, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations; thou hast established the earth, and it abideth." Link this verse with Gen. 8:22 which states, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." and you have a good basis for a bold declaration that the fanatics that warn of nuclear annihilation, which warn of the sun exploding, which warn of a premature ice age, are wrong!

e. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS AS A GARMENT Is. 11:5, "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his waist." A garment is something that is close to you and important to you. So, God's faithfulness should be close to you and important to you.

f. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS GREAT Lam. 3:23, "...great is thy faithfulness." His faithfulness is just as great as He is. As you begin to understand the greatness of God, you will begin to understand the faithfulness of God.

g. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS SET IN HEAVEN Ps. 89:2, "For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever; thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens." When we understand His promises, and understand that they are backed by the faithfulness of the One that lives in heaven, we can then understand how sure those promises are.

APPLICATION:

1. His faithfulness guarantees all promises and warnings that He has given, will come to pass. Heb. 10:23, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised),"

2. His faithfulness guarantees the continuance of the universe until His plan is completed. Ps. 119:90, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations; thou hast established the earth, and it abideth."

3. His faithfulness guarantees our fellowship with Christ. I Cor. 1:9, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

4. His faithfulness guarantees our victory over temptation. I Cor. 10:13

5. His faithfulness guarantees us that we will be kept from evil. II Thes. 3:3

6. His faithfulness guarantees our forgiveness for our sins of everyday life. I Jo. 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

7. His faithfulness guarantees our being preserved until the Day of Christ. I Thes. 5:23,24

8. His faithfulness guarantees our ability to trust Him in all circumstances - even trials. Ps. 119:75

9. His faithfulness is not dependant upon our belief. II Tim. 2:13

NOTE OF INTEREST: Faithfulness and mercy are found in the same verses at times. Deut. 7:8-10, Ps. 36:5, Ps. 89:2.

GOD IS MERCIFUL

Walvoord relates a comment that explains the relationship between some similar terms. "Other terms are used to describe God's goodness: (1) benevolence, which is goodness in its generic sense as embracing all creatures and securing their welfare; (2) complacency, which is that in God which approves all His own perfections as well as all that conforms to Himself; (3) mercy, which is God's goodness exercised on behalf of the needs of His creatures; and (4) grace, which is God's free action on behalf of those who are meritless, which freedom to act has been secured

through the death of Christ." (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, Vol. I & II, 1988, p 147)

Pardington and Bancroft agree on mercy. Pardington states, "Mercy has been defined as that eternal principle of God's nature which leads Him to seek the temporal good and eternal salvation of those who have opposed themselves to His will, even at the cost of infinite self-sacrifice." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 81 and Bancroft, Emery H./Ed. Mayers, Ronald B.; "CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976, pp 83-84)

Cambron mentions "There is very little difference in the meaning of mercy and grace. Mercy, generally speaking, is used in the Old Testament, and grace in the New Testament. Old Testament mercy and loving-kindness go together. Someone has said that mercy is negative, and loving-kindness is positive. Mercy is shown to the disobedient, and loving-kindness is showered upon the obedient - both together mean grace." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 45)

The term mercy is applied to both God and man. Again, we must point out that man may show mercy and know of the characteristic, yet God's mercy is infinitely more than ours. His mercy is perfect and infinite, while ours is imperfect and finite.

God's mercy is always extended and applied perfectly. We need to use mercy in our everyday lives with one another. The one thing that Christians seem to lack today is mercy toward others that disagree with them. There is good reason to disagree with some of the brethren, but Christian love and mercy are certainly needed as well.

A couple that we knew wrote a letter to tell us that they had gone into the Charismatic movement. When teaching, I always tried to relate the theology lessons I was teaching to life and proper application. We were studying the Holy Spirit's ministry to us at the time, so I asked the class to write a letter of doctrinal rebuke to the couple, using Christian love. The class went to work. They said that writing the letter was no problem, but that doing it in Christian love was the really hard part. They were well versed on theology, but lacked in their understanding of, and ability to share Christian love. The letters did show a great knowledge of doctrine, and I might add they showed that the students had learned much about Christian love in the short assignment.

Is there a difference between love and mercy? Love is a strong feeling or love for another which develops from time spent with the other. Mercy on the other hand is the forbearance and patience that is shown to the one loved when they wrong you. Mercy seems to be the outworking of love. The love of the Father for His creatures extended salvation to mankind.

Walvoord suggests three areas in which God's mercy is operative. (p 147) a. To those that have trusted Him and they are invited to fellowship with Him. b. It will be extended once more to

Israel when God begins to work with them again. c. When a sinner accepts the salvation offered so freely.

The giving of His Son was the supreme manifestation of mercy to us. He has provided through His mercy for all of mankind, but man must respond individually to benefit from that mercy.

SCRIPTURAL COMMENTS CONCERNING GOD'S MERCY

a. God's mercy assures us of His continued watchfulness over us. Deut. 4:31 If He took the trouble to save us, surely He would watch over all the details of that salvation for all time.

b. God's mercy assures us of forgiveness of our sins. Micah 7:18, "Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy." THAT IS ENCOURAGING!

c. God's mercy assures us of our status as children of God. II Cor. 1:3 We are His children and nothing can affect that relationship.

d. God's mercy assures us of His love. Deut. 5:10 He has chosen to show us mercy - why would He ever choose not to continue in those things in which He has engaged.

e. God's mercy is available through prayer. Neh. 1:11

f. God's mercy was extended to the Gentiles because of Israel's unbelief. Rom. 11:30 We can glory in the great mercy that He gave to the gentiles. He did not need to, He was not required to, nor were we worth that act of mercy. He decided to do so for our benefit.

Is God's mercy conditional? Yes and no. God's mercy, in general, is unconditional. He cares for the universe, He provides seasons for food etc., yet His mercy is limited when it comes to those that reject Christ and His free salvation.

God's mercy, in specific, is conditional. a. His mercy to the saved seems conditional and varies with the believer's walk before Him. (I Chron. 17:13) B. His mercy to the unsaved is conditional upon their acceptance or rejection of His son.

THE GREATNESS OF HIS MERCY is declared through the Scripture: I Chron. 21:13, Ps. 57:10, Ps. 86:5, Ps. 89:2, Ps. 108:4, Ps. 119:64, Ps. 136.

MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S MERCY

a. His mercy is seen In the caring for all His creatures: Ps. 145:9, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." This includes the continuation of the universe, as well as the caring for His creatures in their everyday life.

b. His mercy is seen in the helping of His people even when they do not deserve it: Neh. 9:17-21, 27-32. Many of His children live in sin, yet God continues to uphold them. The longsuffering of God in these cases may not extend forever. Some find that He will ultimately take them home. Others live long lives. His mercy is extended according to His own good pleasure.

c. His mercy is seen supremely in our salvation through Christ: Eph. 2:4-8 The fact that mercy was extended to gentiles is purely mercy. That may seem like a funny statement, however it is very true.

APPLICATION:

1. His mercy should stir up the mercy in the believer. Lu. 6:36, "Be ye, therefore, merciful, as your Father also is merciful." When we relate to one another, we should extend mercy as mercy was extended to us.

2. His mercy should motivate us toward commitment. Rom. 12:1, "I beseech you therfore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." God extended mercy to us through salvation. This should bring us to the place where we desire to do things for Him. The common response to a large gift is gratitude and service.

The logical response of being saved would be to share that salvation with those that remain lost.

3. His mercy should move us toward unity and away from self-centeredness. Phil. 2:1-4 In Christ, we share the same mercy. None is greater than the other, and none is less than the other.

4. His mercy can be removed. I Chron. 17:13, "...I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee," Within this thought, we should be quick to mention that He is also quite often longsuffering. He normally gives numerous opportunities before withdrawing mercy.

5. How do we show mercy to nonbelievers? Give them the Gospel. Beyond the gospel you can share with them in the material and emotional realm as you have opportunity.

6. How do we show mercy to believers? Help them materially or physically as we can. This may mean, give money, give possessions, give help, or give emotional support. The use of our tongue in a gentle and kind way at all times would certainly help. You can assume the best in all situations. You can forgive, even those that are miserable, lousy, no-good creeps. Forgive all types in other words. Confronting others with their sin is also a method of showing mercy. It shows that you care for them, and that you want to keep them from further trouble.

01750

GOD DECREED

What are the Decree's? When asked this question one person suggested they were an Indian tribe. This is true however we need to give some serious thought to another group of decrees. The decrees of God.

We should up front know that the term only appears in our New Testament one time and it is used in relation to a decree or order from Caesar. (Lu 2:1)

BASIS FOR THE DOCTRINE:

1. I Pet 1:20 mentions in relation to Christ "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." (see Rev 13:8 also)

The Trinity arranged some things that were going to occur as they contemplated creation and all of its ramifications. Christ's crucifixion and other items were set in eternity past.

2. Rev 17:8 states there were names in the book of life before the foundation of the world. That is a whole study in itself. Are the names of the redeemed there before the foundation of the world, or is it the names of all mankind? Are names added, or are they taken away?

3. Matt 13:35 states that there are things kept secret from the foundation of the world. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Christ revealed some of these things when He spoke of the kingdom in mystery form. There may be things that are yet to be revealed.

4. The kingdom has been set from the foundation of the world. Matt 25:34. It was set and it will come to pass at the scheduled time and circumstance. The prophets were not coming up with new information for the future. They were just revealing what the Lord had shown them, revealing what was set before creation.

5. There was a choosing before the foundation of the world according to Eph. 1:4. The different items that we have already mentioned are part of the decrees of God.

6. Heb 1:10 mentions that the Lord set the foundations of the world.

The above items will indicate a basis for the doctrine of a decree of God that involves several parts.

The first question is this, "Is there one decree or numerous decrees?"

DEFINITION:

The Westminster Shorter Catechism mentions that "The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby for his own glory He hath forordained whatsoever comes to pass." (Hodge, Charles; Gross, Edward N. Ed.; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, p 535)

THE ONE DECREE POSITION:

The decree/decrees are the overall purpose and plan of God by which He has determined all that He desires to come to pass.

This discussion does not concern any of His attributes - it is all outside of Himself. God's decree has as its primary purpose the glory of God. Eph. 1:6, 12, 14 ". . .praise of his glory. . . ." Thus, the decree is doxological, and not soteriological or dispensational.

Scripture is plain on the fact that God is sovereign and is free to do whatever He pleases, as well as whatever He wills. He set all in motion for His own good purpose.

God decreed in two manners: DIRECTIVE WILL: He decreed to certain ends: The death of Christ, our salvation, and future judgments. PERMISSIVE WILL: He also decreed to allow certain things: Adam's sin, unbeliever's crimes, and falling asleep while reading boring theology books.

Dr. Houghton of Denver Baptist Bible College suggested that the decree was "His eternal purpose (plan) according to the counsel of His own will, whereby, for His own glory, He has foreordained whatso-ever comes to pass."

The one decree position declares that God's plan is in effect and all is based upon that fact. All things, His promises, His prophecy, and His dealings with man.

Bancroft seems to hold to one overall plan in his "ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY" where he entitles it "THE COUNSEL OF GOD," using the terminology of Eph. 1:11. (He has a lengthy discussion on this topic on p 106ff.)

THE ONE DECREE - BUT SEVERAL DIVISIONS WITHIN IT POSITION:

Chafer in his "MAJOR BIBLE THEMES" states, "The decree of God includes those events which God does Himself and also includes all that God accomplishes through natural law, over which He is completely sovereign. More difficult to comprehend is the fact that His sovereign decree also extends to all the acts of men, which are included in His eternal plan." (Taken from

the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 43)

While he speaks of "The decree" singular he also holds to, "subdivisions such as His decree to create, His decree to preserve the world, His decree of providence, or His wise guidance of the universe." (Taken from the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 44)

The interesting part is that in Walvoord's revision of the seven volume set, this section is entitled "DIVINE DECREES" - plural.

Pardington quotes Strong, "By the decrees of God we mean that eternal plan by which God has rendered certain all the events of the universe, past, present, and future." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, 93)

He lists two areas of decrees: First decrees: Nature, creation and preservation, and Second decrees: providence and redemption.

THE PLURAL DECREE POSITION:

Theissen has a very detailed discussion on page 147ff. He holds to the directive/permissive decree thought of the previous author.

We see by one of his comments, he is also a one purpose - plural decree man. "The decrees are sometimes represented as one decree." (he quotes parts of Rom. 8:28 and Eph. 1:11) "In each case it is one purpose. Though to us the decrees appear to be many purposes, to the divine mind they are in reality but one great all - inclusive purpose." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, pp148-149)

There is little difference between these positions, other than the definition of terms. All view God as having one overall purpose or decree, which contains all the subheadings that are normally discussed.

FACTS ABOUT THE DECREES:

1. God has a plan - singular. Eph. 1:11. This might be likened to a large diamond. One stone.

2. God has many aspects to that plan or purpose. It is not just one big blob out there. It has many facets for our examination and learning. In relation to the diamond illustration, the plan or

purpose is the stone, while the facets and sides make up the individual, distinct parts of the stone.

Pardington lists eight such facets. a. The stability of the universe, Ps. 119:89-91; b. The outward circumstances of nations, Acts 17:26; c. The length of human life, Job. 14:5; d. The mode of our death, Jo. 21:19; e. The free acts of men both good and evil, Is. 44:28; Eph. 2:10; Gen. 50:20; I Ki. 12:15; Lu. 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:27, 28; Rom. 9:17; I Pet. 2:8; Rev. 17:17; f. The salvation of believers, I Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:3,10,11; g. The establishment of Christ's Kingdom, Ps. 2:7,8; I Cor. 15:23; h. The work of Christ and His people establishing it, Phil. 2:12,13; Rev. 5:7.

3. Other authors discuss a different set of decrees and how they relate to one another.

They normally list seven decrees and discuss the order in which they came about. Many theology books only discuss the first four, due to the fact that most agree on the final three.

There are groupings of people that hold to different orders of occurrence. I would like to list two listings of information from two different authors before we get into the groupings.

The decrees that are listed are those to elect, to create, to allow the fall, and to provide salvation.

Walvoord:

SUPRA	INFRA	SUB	ARMINIAN
ELECT	CREATE	CREATE	SIMILAR TO
CREATE	FALL	FALL	INFRA EXCEPT
FALL	SALVATION	ELECT	ELECT IS BASED
SALVATION	ELECT	SALVATION	ON FOREKNOWLEDGE
APPLY SALV.	APPLY SALV.	APPLY SALV.	

(Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, Vol. I & II, 1988, p 104-106)

Theissen:

	SUPRA-LAPSARIAN	INFRA-LAPSARIAN	SUB-LAPSARIAN
1.	ELECTION/SAVE SOME REPROBATE THE REST	CREATE	CREATE
2.	CREATE	PERMIT THE FALL	PERMIT THE FALL

3. PERMIT THE FALL PROVIDE SALVATION PROV. SALVATION
FOR THE ELECT FOR ALL

4. PROVIDE SALVATION ELECTION ELECTION

(Theissen, p 343)

The Supra-lapsarianism listing is usually identified with Hyper-Calvinism. Supra-lapsarian is from two terms "supra" meaning "before or above" and "lapsus" meaning "fall." These people hold that God elected some to salvation and the rest of mankind to hell. He then decreed the creation, to allow the fall and the provision of salvation.

Infra-lapsarian is from "infra" meaning "below" or "subsequent" and "lapsa" meaning "fall." They see God decreeing to create, then allow the fall, provide salvation for the elect, and finally to elect.

The Sub-lapsarian holds the same as the infra, with the one exception that salvation was provided for all of mankind, not just the elect.

I might just mention one teaching that you might run across in your study. Amyraldian is the teaching from Moise Amyraut (1596-1664). He is listed as a semi-Calvinist.

Buswell believes that Calvin was probably an Infra from what he sees in his work. Calvin does not discuss the issue specifically but does have information relating to it.

A possible answer to some of this is the idea of having one decree. It would eliminate this discussion. God just decreed one decree all at once, and involved in that decree were all the facets and parts.

If you like a sequence then the Sub position would, I believe, be the majority view among fundamentalists. That is not based on research, but observation. It seems to be most consistent with the idea of Christ dieing for the world. Walvoord, however (p 162) mentions that the infra is the desirable over the sub. He mentions this as the "moderate Calvinist" view.

The decree, or plan in God's mind was immediate and complete - without sequence. The decree, however in its different parts must occur in time as a sequence. Pardington mentions a similar thought. "To our view the decrees are many, because they are worked out successively in time; but in their nature and from the divine standpoint they are one. What a plan is to an architect, that, so to speak, the decrees are to God." (Pardington, p 94,95)

Augustine (Confess., XII. xv. as quoted in Shedd, William G.T.; "DOGMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984, p 395) "God willeth not one thing now, and another anon; but once, and at once, and always, he willeth all things that he willeth; not again and again, nor now

this, now that; nor willeth afterwards, what before he willed not, nor willeth not, what before he willed; because such a will is mutable; and no mutable thing is eternal."

If the decree is the overall plan of God then there are a number of terms that can be studied in the Scripture along this line: decrees, counsel, ordination, good pleasure, predestinate, and election.

PROBLEMS:

1. This thought of decrees seems very much like fatalism in its presentation; however it is strongly held within this view that man has and uses his free will - thus, dispelling any hint of fatalism.

2. This also seems to some, to show that God is responsible for evil. This is not true, in that He allowed evil to develop, however He had nothing to do with developing it Himself.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE:

We need to know a little about the plan of God that we so often talk about. The plan of God was set before the foundation of the world and as part of God's activities we should find it of interest and importance.

APPLICATION:

1. He is sovereign and nothing is a surprise to Him, nor is anything going to happen outside of His plan. In short you can't jump out of His plan for your life and ruin everything. We may stray from that plan, but if we are attempting to walk with Him there is no way that we can ruin His plan for us, indeed, His plan for us includes those DUMB side trips that we so often seem to take.

2. His plan will come to pass! The Devil will not stop what God wants to do. We will not stop what God wants to do. He will bring all things to pass as planned before the foundation of the world.

3. He has a specific plan for your life! No matter what happens - even if you run into roadblocks - He is controlling, even the road blocks.

4. Knowing that God has a plan for each of us, and knowing what He has done for us, it is then logical that we should do all we can for Him. In His devotional, Spurgeon mentions this thought and puts it into proper place with God's sovereign rule. "O anxious gazer, look not so much at the battle below, for there thou shalt be enshrouded in smoke, and amazed with garments rolled in blood; but lift thine eyes yonder where the Savior lives and pleads, for while He intercedes, the cause of God is safe. Let us fight as if it all depended upon us, but let us look up and know that all depends upon Him." (Spurgeon, Charles H.; "MORNING AND EVENING"; Mclean, VA: Macdonald Pulishing Co., p 223)

01800

GOD'S NAMES

INTRODUCTION: In the Eastern area of the world in ancient days, and to some extent today the name of a person had meaning.

In Holland in years past, the person was called by a first name and the addition of "from" and then the town of residence was added. A missionary we met once was ..... Van Dussen. His forefathers were from Dussen.

What good is there in a name? It identifies you as different from all other people.

It may mold your personality. If your name is Nerdly, how are you going to grow up.

It may mold your future. Who would hire a man named Herkimer Snodgrass to be a car salesman or movie star.

It may help in many ways. If your name is Rockefeller, you may find many doors open to you.

What is the meaning of your name? My name is English in background. My first name means stone valley. How that relates to me I am not sure.

If I stated that your name was a dumb name and that anyone that has that name is a complete waste of time, how would you feel? Our names are important to us. Our GOOD name is important to us!

God is very much like this. His names can give us much information about Him and His ministries to us. God's name is very important to Him as well. Indeed, He goes to great lengths to protect His good name. Read Ezek. 20 sometime and notice that God acts, so that the people will not pollute His name.

I would like to just give an overview of some of the names of God, and some of what we can learn about Him from His names.

I trust that you will spend some time on His names in the years to come. I believe that it will be profitable for you to do so.

I would refer you to Strauss's THE FIRST PERSON for more information than we will cover here. (Strauss, Lehman; "THE FIRST PERSON"; Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967, p 129-244)

Buswell mentions, " The name of God is more than merely His name; it is the epitome of His character and of His activity." (Buswell, James Oliver; "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, p 35)

Pardington breaks nine names into the following categories: "The principal names of God are nine, falling into three classes of three names each and suggesting, many think, the trinity." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 87)

The three primary names for God are "God," "LORD" and Lord.

FIRST

1. God - Elohim: "el" means "strength or the Strong One" and "ohim" comes from verb "Alah" which means "to bind oneself by an oath." Pardington.

Walvoord mentions, "The derivation of this name is somewhat obscure. Some trace it to a root which means 'the strong One,' and others to a root which denotes 'fear.'" He feels the overall meaning would relate to "reverence." (Walvoord, John F. editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, Vol. I & II, 1988)

Ryrie opts for the idea of Strong one. (Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 45)

Pardington mentions that "el" and "eloah" are used as abbreviations for Elohim. He also mentions that Elohim is a plural noun, but it is used to indicate a single God. The trinity seems to be indicated in this usage of the word. (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 88)

The idea of the trinity is not ascribed to by liberals and Jews. The Jews naturally do not want a trinity. They attribute this to a plural of majesty and not indicative of numbers.

Walvoord indicates that the trinity is not always indicated. The context would or would not indicate it. Gen. 1:26 would be an example of this, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness;...."

The term is used in Deut. 6:4, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:" This uses the plural term in a passage that states that He is one thus showing very clearly the trinity.

This term is used of God and other gods as well. Ryrie mentions the term appears in relation to deity 2,570 times and 2,310 of those times it refers to God the true God.

2. LORD - YHWH:

Spelling varies with the author. Walvoord & Chafer use Yahweh; Pardington uses Yahwe; and Ryrie uses YHWH. Ryrie mentions that it occurs about 5,321 times in the Old Testament. (p 47)

The Jews felt that God's name was too sacred to pronounce so they eliminated the vowels and pronounced just the consonants. We do not know how to pronounce this name due to the loss of the vowels.

Ryrie mentions that the Jews substituted the term "adoni" for YHWH until the postexilic days when they combined the term adoni and the term YHWH to form a word that would remind the reader to use the term adoni. This became our term Jehovah. The English equivalent is Jehovah. The term Jehovah and Elohim occur together in Gen. 2:4. The name comes from the verb "havah" which means "to be and to become" (Pardington) It relates to the "'self-existent One who reveals Himself," or, "the Coming One.'" (Pardington, p 88)

Yahwe is translated as "LORD" - with all capital letters in the King James. This is the term used for the true God. Chafer mentions that this name is defined in Ex. 3:13,14 where it is stated, "I am the I am."

Walvoord lists some things we can know of God through this name. "He does not change. . .He is the King who will reign forever. . .He is the Author and creator. . . ." (Walvoord, p 172)

This is the name Eve used of God in Gen. 4:1. It was used by people in Seth's day, Gen. 4:26. It was used by Noah, Gen. 9:26. It was used by Abraham, Gen. 12:8; 15:2,8.

3. God Adonai: Gen 15:2 "Lord" is adonai. "means master, or husband." (Pardington p 88) An application of this is the fact that Christ is Master and Husband, as was God in the Old Testament.

SECOND

There are three names linked with "El."

4. Almighty God: El Shaddai comes from two terms. El meaning the strong one, and Shaddai which comes from the term "shad" used in Scripture of a woman's breast, thus most view the name to mean God the one that supplies or nourishes.

There are some that relate this to another word which gives the idea of powerful.

Still others as Ryrie relate the term to the Akkadian word "shaddai" which means mountain, thus it means of God, "the Almighty One standing on a mountain."

5. Most High, or Most High God: El Elyon comes from "Elyon" meaning "highest." Gen. 14:19 mentions, "the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." The terms first usage was by

Melchizedek when he blessed Abraham. Gen. 14:19. This is a name that is used in relation to the gentile nations.

6. Everlasting God: El Olam comes from "Olam" which seems to show God's eternal aspect. The Greek equivalent is "aion" or "age." Ps. 90:2; Ps. 100:5

THIRD

7. LORD God: Yahwe Elohim is used in Gen. 2:17-15 which shows the term in relation to man, and God as our creator. Gen. 2:16,17 shows the term used in relation to man, and God as our master. Gen. 2:18-24 shows the term used in relation to man, and God as our ruler. Gen. 3:8-15, 21 shows the term used in relation to man, and God as our redeemer. Gen. 24:7; Ex. 3:15,18 shows the term used in relation to Israel, and God as their God.

The name has some very deep implication for the believer. We are to allow the Lord to be all these things for us.

8. Lord LORD: Adonai Yahwe emphasizes the Adonai part of master. Gen. 15:2; Gen. 15:1,8; Deut. 12:1

9. LORD of hosts: Yahwe Sabaoth comes from "Sabaoth" meaning "host or hosts." I Sam. 1:3; Ps. 24:10. This name is used in relation to battle or hard times for the Jew individually or nationally.

Pardington also lists seven names that are compounded with "Yahwe". (p 91,92)

Jehovah-jireh: "the LORD will provide" Gen. 22:13,14
Jehovah-rapha: "the LORD that healeth" Ex. 15:26
Jehovah-nissi: "the LORD our banner" Ex. 17:8:15
Jehovah-shalom: "the LORD our peace" Jud. 6:24
Jehovah-ro'i: "the LORD my shepherd" Gen. 16:13; Ps. 23
Jehovah-tsidkenu: "the LORD our righteousness" Jer. 23:6
Jehovah-shammah: "the LORD is present" Ezek 48:35

The New Testament gives us further terms:

The Son: The Son is properly named, "Lord Jesus Christ." Walvoord mentions, "He is Lord because He is God, Jesus because of His humanity, and Christ because of His office as Prophet, Priest, and King and the Messiah of the Old Testament period." (Walvoord, p 175) He also mentions there are about 300 other terms that are used to refer to Christ.

The Holy Spirit: Walvoord mentions there are about 20 names for the Holy Spirit.

Walvoord mentions some metaphoric names for God as well: King, Law-giver, Judge, Rock, Fortress, Tower, Refuge, Deliverer, Shepherd, Husband, Husbandman, and Father.

Ryrie develops for us the terms "theos," "kurios," "despotes" and "FATHER" (pp 49,50). I have adapted this material for your reference:

1. theos: The Septuigent usually translates elohim with theos. It is used of the following: Primarily of the True God; false gods, Acts 12:22; the devil, II Cor. 4:4; of sensuality, Phil. 3:19; of Christ, Rom. 9:5.

The use of the term shows God to be: The True God, Mat. 23:9, Rom. 3:30; a unique God, I Tim. 1:17, Jo. 17:3, Rev. 15:4; a trancendent God, Acts 17:24, Heb. 3:4; A Savior, I Tim. 1:1, Titus 1:3.

2. kurios: The name occurs 717 times in the New Testament. Luke uses it 210 times and Paul 275 times. It can mean the following: sir Jo. 4:11; owner Lu. 19:33; master Col. 3:22; idols I Cor. 8:5; husbands I Pet. 3:6

3. despotes: This name gives the idea of ownership as opposed to kurios which shows authority and supremacy. It is used by the following: Simeon Lu. 2:29; Peter Acts 4:24; martyrs Rev. 6:10. The term is used of Christ in II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4.

4. FATHER: The term is used of God in the Old Testament 15 times and in the New Testament 245 times.

This will give you a basis for a study concerning the names of God. I could easily envision a sermon or lesson series spending one session for each name. I believe this would be very beneficial to help believers understand their God.

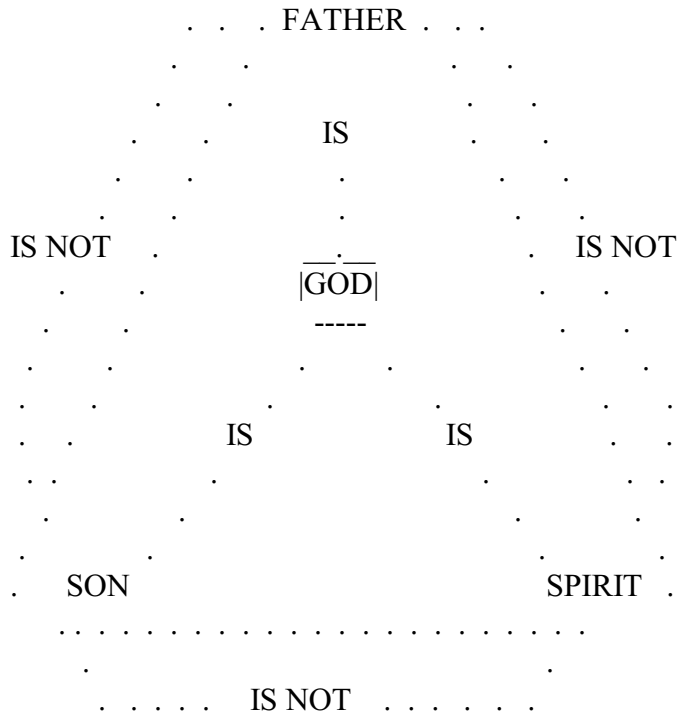
By way of conclusion let me quote from the Psalms.

Ps. 8:1, "O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth...."

01850

GOD THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

An ancient diagram of the Trinity shows the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit at the three corners of a triangle. In the center of the triangle is the term God.



This is one of the best diagrams and illustrations of the trinity that I have run across.

We know that there are three persons in the trinity.
We know that there is the Father.
We know that there is the Son.
We know that there is the Holy Spirit.
We know that these do not operate in succession.
We know that these operate simultaneously.
We know that these are all a unity within God.
We know that there are subordinations among the three.

What we don't know is that they are all God. At times we tend to begin to think of them as individuals. They are all God, and as such they all deserve worship, adoration and all those things that we tend to think of as, for God the Father.

They are distinct in person and purpose yet the three are recognized in the Scriptures:

The Father: Rom. 1:7, "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father...."

The Son: Heb 1:8, "Unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever...."

The Holy Spirit: Acts 5:3-4, "Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost.....thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God"

There are some reasons why there are distinctions:

1. IDENTIFICATION: There is the obvious, in that there needs to be a way of distinguishing the three members of the Trinity from one another.

2. MINISTRY: There is a specific area of ministry for all three persons of the Trinity. The Father is the Prime mover and planner. The Son is the prime activator. The Holy Spirit is the prime messenger between God and man.

3. SUBORDINATION: The three have definite ministries and places in the overall scheme of the decrees. The Father seems to be the one that set the plan into motion, while the Son is the one that provided the possibility of the plan's completion, through His shed blood. The Spirit is the person that moves in the universe and in man to do the work of the Father. (It is to be remembered that the Son also was about the work of the Father.)

4. MAN'S LIMITED UNDERSTANDING: Some might suggest that this is to help us grasp the concept of God. Man cannot comprehend God and so God put his Being into the terms that we could understand with our mentality. This would be similar to anthropomorphisms. To me the terminology used and the frequency of use would indicate that the three are very real and not to be viewed as anthropomorphisms.

We want to look at a few instances where all three are involved, but in different ways.

1. THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST:

THE FATHER: overseer
THE SON: participant
THE HOLY SPIRIT: ministering

2. IN CREATION:

THE FATHER: planner
THE SON: instigator
THE HOLY SPIRIT: actuator

3. IN REDEMPTION:

THE FATHER: planner
THE SON: provider
THE HOLY SPIRIT: applier

4. IN TEACHING:

THE FATHER: desire
THE SON: example
THE HOLY SPIRIT: illuminator

5. IN POWER:

THE FATHER: authority giver
THE SON: proclaimer (Acts 1:8)
THE HOLY SPIRIT: source (Acts 1:8)

6. IN ETERNITY:

THE FATHER: light (Rev 22:5
THE SON: (Do a research paper for me.)
THE HOLY SPIRIT: (Do a research paper for me.)

GOD THE FATHER: There are five areas in which He is the Father.

a. He is the Father of all creation. He planned and instigated the creation of the heavens and the earth. Mal 2:10, Acts 17:29, Heb 12:9, James 1:17.

b. He is the Father of Israel. Ex 4:22

c. He is the Father of Christ.

d. He is the Father of all believers. Jn 1:12

e. He is the Father of all mankind. This is accepted and taught by many religions, both past and present. Acts 17:22-31 Verse 29 mentions, "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God...."

What is the Father to you? a. He should be your comfort. b. He should be your strength. c. He should be your hope. d. He should be your concentration in prayer. e. He should be your guide in holy living. If He is not these things to you, then you are not enjoying the God that saved you for His joy, His purpose, and His glory.

GOD THE SON:

1. He is the Son of man. This is a title that the Lord used of Himself. Lu 6:22

2. He is the Son of God. He is completely and totally God. Mk 1:1

3. He is the Son of Mary. He is completely and totally man. Matt 1:20-21

4. He is the Son of David. He is descended from the royal line of David, so that He can sit upon David's throne in the Millennial kingdom. Isa 9:6-7, Lu 1:30-33

What is the Son to you? a. He should be your savior. b. He should be your brother. c. He should be your example. d. He should be your message. e. He should be your reason for serving.

Again, if God the Son is not these things to you, you are then missing out on the true joy and power of Almighty God.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT:

1. He is the Spirit of God. He is in close relation to the Father. Matt 12:28

2. He is Spirit of the Lord. He is in close relation to the Son. Lu 4:18

3. He is the Holy Spirit. He is Himself. Lu 11:13

4. He is the Spirit of truth. Jn 14:17, Jn 15:26

What is the Spirit to you? a. He should be your guide. b. He should be your teacher. c. He should be your comfort. d. He should be your illuminator.

If God the Holy Spirit is not these things to you then you will not be in close communication with the God that extended His mercy to you through salvation.

Guthrie, Shirley C. Jr.; "CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES"; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1968, has some good quotes from history if you have the book available to you.

Do we not see God the Father as the one over us with power to judge, God the Son as the one in front of us with power to cleanse, and God the Holy Spirit as the one in us with power to minister?

CONCLUSION:

The thought that was mentioned earlier is worth reconsidering. This is the God that we serve. He is not just the Father, He is not just the Son, and He is not just the Holy Spirit. This demands that we never concentrate on one or two to the exclusion of the other.

We tend to separate, divide and isolate the members of the trinity for our purpose of study, and I fear we leave them that way at times. He is all three AS WELL AS ONE.

01900

TRINITARIANISM

When waiting for a train in Ireland, I was reading the Graffiti on the wall. One caught my sense of humor. "Do you have a split personality? Good! I do too! That makes four of us.
1+1=4

God the Father + God the son + God the Holy Spirit.
1+1+1+=1

It is amazing what you can do with mathematics!

The trinity of God is His tri-personal existence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Dr. Miller mentions, "The essence is simultaneously three persons and three persons are simultaneously one essence." (Used by permission. Miller, Dr. David; Theology Class Notes; Western Baptist College; Salem, OR)

The Athanasian Creed states: "We worship one God in trinity and trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance." (Quoted in Bancroft's ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY. Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 65)

Bancroft mentions, "The trinity is therefore three eternally interconstituted, interrelated, interexistent, and therefore inseparable persons within one being and of one substance or essence." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 65)

Trinitarianism involves: 1. His unity as god and the distinction of persons in the Godhead.

Can we illustrate the Trinity? We can come close; it is impossible, due to the fact that we cannot really fully understand the Trinity. Nor is there anything like the trinity which can be our illustration!

Let us look at some illustrations of the Trinity.

1. St. Patrick used the Shamrock to explain the Trinity to the Irish. There are three petals that are unique and distinct while the three are one plant.

2. Some have suggested an equilateral triangle. This type of triangle has three equal angles and sides. If you take one angle away then you do not have a triangle.

3. Others suggest three matches held together and burning. One flame, however there are three distinct parts to the flame.

4. An egg. There are three distinct parts. Put in a blender and you have one mix. (Probably the essence of the three is different.)

5. A rope with three strands, yet one rope.

6. A tree. Branch, leaves and root.

7. The sun. Light, heat and motion.

8. Water. Solid, liquid and steam.

9. Butterfly. Egg, larva and butterfly.

10. Plant. Seed, flower and stem.

11. The color television is of interest. It produces on a black and white program a distinctly black and white picture however if you look closely you will see that the screen is made up of blue, green and red dots or lines. Your eyes perceive black and white. If you take any of the three colors away you no longer have a black and white picture to watch. All three colors are showing the same picture however there are three distinct colors.

12. Dr. Miller suggests a picture made up of a circle with lines going diagonally, vertically and horizontally.

This gives the three differences while making up one whole.

The problem with these illustrations is that they all fail in some way or another.

FALSE VIEWS OF THE TRINITY

Unitarianism: The unitarians trace their roots to Arius or Arianism. They feel that the Father created the Son.

Sebellianism: The Father was the God of the Old Testament, The Son was the God of the New Testament and The Holy Spirit is the God of this time. There is only one God but He has manifested himself in three different ways in three different times.

Tritheism: This holds to three separate Gods.

Swedenborgianism: There are three elements to God. Just as there are body, soul and spirit in

man, there are Father, Son and Holy Spirit in God.

WHO IS GOD?

A. He is the Father: Jo. 6:27, "for him hath God the Father sealed."; Rom. 1:7; Gal. 1:1,3. He is not only the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, but He is the Father of all living, and in a special sense the Father of the believer.

B. He is the Son: Matt. 1:22-23 tells of the announcement of the incarnation of God as the son of Mary. (Lu. 1:35 mentions the incarnation as well.) He is declared to be the Son of God in Jo. 5:25. Jo. 20:28 shows that Thomas knew that Christ was God.

C. He is the Spirit: Acts 5:3,4 tells of Ananias and Sapphira lying to the Holy Spirit. They would not have died if this had not been God. Attributes of deity are used of the Spirit as well (Heb. 9:14; I Cor. 2:10).

GOD IS ONE.

God is a unity even though there are three persons within that unity. This is seen in both the Old and New Testaments. Deut. 4:35, I Ki. 8:60, Is. 45:5, Mk. 12:29-32, I Co. 8:4-6.

GOD IS THREE. The term Trinity is not used in Scripture, however, the trinity is hinted at in the Old Testament.

1. Many times God is a plural noun Gen. 1:1,26; 3:22; 11:6,7; 20:13; 48:15; Is. 6:8.

2. Gen. 11:7 is concerned with the tower of Babel and the Lord is going to go down to see. The verb "come" is plural and this requires a plural speaker. The speaker is speaking to two or more. "Come let us go down...."

3. Lord is distinguished from Lord. Gen. 19:24, "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;" Hos. 1:7, "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord, their God....". (This is God speaking of Christ.)

4. The Lord has a Son. This is a little used text, yet is of great importance. Ps. 2:7, "I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."

5. Gen. 1:1,2, mentions that God created and that the Spirit moved upon the waters.

6. Gen. 6:3, "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man...."

While the trinity is hinted at in the Old Testament the Trinity is taught in the New Testament.

1. In the baptismal scene we see the Trinity clearly Matt. 3:16,17. Christ is being baptized, The Father is speaking, and the Holy Spirit is descending.

2. John depicts the trinity quite clearly Jo. 14:16,17. In this text we see Christ asking the Father to send the Spirit.

3. Matt. 28:19 mentions all three in the baptismal formula for the church age.

4. Peter clearly mentioned the trinity, I Pet. 1:2. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

5. Paul also mentions the trinity in one of his prayers, II Cor. 13:14. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."

We can see the Trinity in the creation, if we draw a number of passages together. When we view creation, WHO DONE IT?

1. THE SPIRIT: Gen. 1:2
2. THE WORD: John 1:1-14; Heb 11:3
3. GOD THROUGH CHRIST: Eph. 3:9
4. THE SON: Col 1:15-19
5. GOD BY CHRIST: Heb 1:2 (Christ upholds all things. Heb 1:3)
6. THE FATHER AND THE SON: Prov. 30:4
7. THE FATHER FOR HIS PLEASURE: Rev 4:11

WITHIN THE GODHEAD THERE IS A SUBORDINATION:

Some theologians get upset when you speak of subordination, or differences in duties within the Godhead, yet the Scripture clearly teaches this aspect of God. A few points and references on this subject will suffice.

1. God sent Christ: Jn 6:29; Jn 88:29,42
2. Christ was fulfilling God's plan: Jn 10:18
3. God is the head of Christ: I Cor 11:3
4. God is Christ's Father: Jn 20:17

APPLICATION

1. Each person of the Godhead has a different ministry to us, thus fulfilling all our needs. a. The Holy Spirit teaches, convicts, illumines and helps us in our prayers. b. Christ takes our burdens and saves us. He also presents us to God righteous. c. The Father controls our lives - guides our lives. He is our Father and someone that is approachable on a very intimate basis.

If the above is true then we have no reason to look outside of the Trinity and the Scriptures for fulfillment in any area of our lives.

2. When we study the word, we must not overemphasize any one of the God head to the exclusion of the others. The exclusion will cause an unbalanced view, if not a cultic view of God.

He is God, He is plural in persons, He is all that we have in the way of deity, and He is all that we need in salvation. He is all that is needed by man, creation, or the spirit world. He has brought all into existence and He continues to uphold that creation. He may present Himself in different duties or places of ministry, yet He is fully God in all three of these persons.

SERVE HIM AS HE OUGHT TO BE SERVED.

01950

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How do we acquire the fear of the Lord?

2. How can we learn to fear Him more, and fear Him in the proper sense?

3. How can we teach the fear of the Lord to children? To adults?

DEFINITION: Most agree that it is a reverential fear - reverence - awe. The fear for life or pain is not involved generally. It is holding God with much respect. Jeremiah put it this way, "Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? For to thee doth it appertain, forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee." Jer. 10:6,7

God is to be loved. Our earthly fathers were to be feared when we were in error, however when there was no error we respected them highly and enjoyed their love.

Natural man has no fear of the Lord. You can see this in many ways in our society, the television and the screen for example. They don't care what they show or say about God. Indeed, they teach explicitly against the things of the Lord.

The printed page also pictures man's lack of fear for God - the way they treat the Lord's people - their rejection of God and His Word.

Many believers do not fear the Lord. You can see this in our society - the empty churches - especially on prayer meeting nights. In the lack of commitment to giving as they ought. In the needs of the missionaries. In the life style that many Christians live.

THE FACTS:

1. Believers are to fear the Lord.

a. Lev. 19:14, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord." Can you imagine the lowness of a person that would trip a blind person?

b. Deut. 8:6, "Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him." They should fear the Lord in relation to the judgment that they face before Him. II Cor. 5:10-11

2. The fear of the Lord is a very necessary part of our mental maturing process if we are to be men and women of God.

Prov. 9:10 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." This is reiterated in Ps. 111:10 also. Notice that if we fear the Lord we are only BEGINNING in wisdom!

3. What is the fear of the Lord? Prov. 1:7 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." Notice that if we fear the Lord we are only BEGINNING in knowledge.

We just saw that the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom and now we see that it is the beginning of knowledge. It would seem appropriate for the student to begin to fear the Lord. The obvious truth that comes forth is that if you don't fear the Lord, then you are neither wise nor knowledgeable! Is that something that you want to admit to?

Prov. 1:29 mentions that we may choose not to fear the Lord, and hate knowledge - indeed it seems that if you hate knowledge you may opt for not fearing the Lord. "Because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord."

Prov. 2:1-6 "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

Here are some items to notice in relation to understanding the fear of the Lord.

Vs. 1 Receive the words of the writer. Hide his commandments with yourself.

Vs. 2 Listen to wisdom. Apply understanding to your heart.

Vs. 3 Cry after knowledge. Lift up your voice for understanding. (Ask for it I would assume.)

Vs. 4 Seek after wisdom as you would seek silver. Most today are totally into seeking gain - we should seek wisdom with such fervor! Seek after wisdom as if you were looking for hidden treasure. Have you ever watched one of those treasure search shows where they have gone looking for the lost treasure on a sunken ship in the far reaches of the world? They spend literally thousands of dollars searching for this treasure.

I saw a special concerning a supposed treasure buried in this country. There are several people that think they know where it is buried. They are digging deep holes in people's lawns and pastures trying to locate this treasure. They think that the next hole is the place! Their entire being is taken up with this search.

God tells us to search for wisdom in this same manner. WOW! The neat part is that in verse six it says that God is the source of that wisdom and HE GIVES IT!

Vs. 5 THEN YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THE FEAR OF THE LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Vs. 6 "FOR THE LORD GIVETH WISDOM; OUT OF HIS MOUTH COMETH KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING."

It seems quite evident that to fear the Lord is a very wise thing to do.

SIDE BENEFITS TO THE FEAR OF THE LORD

1. We should hate evil. Prov. 8:13 "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the perverse mouth, do I hate."

I made a comment in my college Genesis class once concerning the Homosexual community of San Francisco, CA. One of the students reacted in total disgust. His remedy was not acceptable, for he wanted to drop a bomb on the city, but his disgust for the sin was RIGHT ON!

Ps 15:4 tells us to see vile as vile and not as acceptable! HATE EVIL not watch it on TV. HATE EVIL not participate in it. HATE EVIL not help it along by condoning it. HATE EVIL not teach or preach in a manner that would allow people to think it all right.

2. We can overcome evil in our lives by fearing the Lord. Prov. 16:6 "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."

3. We can be kept from evil by fearing the Lord. Prov. 19:23 "...he shall not be visited with evil."

4. We can have a satisfied life. Prov. 19:23 "The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he who hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil." Prov. 14:27 "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

5. The fear of the Lord is the cure for envying sinners. Prov. 23:17 "Let not thine heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long." All the day long is quite a purposeful statement as well.

6. When linked with humility the promise is: Riches, honor, and life. Prov. 22:4 "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life.

7. It should give rise to praise and glorifying of The Lord. Ps. 22:23, "Ye who fear the Lord, praise him; all ye, the seed of Jacob, glorify him...."

8. We will be watched over by God if we fear Him. Ps. 33:18, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon those who fear him...."

9 We will have no needs if we fear Him. Ps. 34:9, "Oh, fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no lack to them that fear him."

10. We will be blessed if we fear Him. Ps. 115:13, "He will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great."

11. There is a lengthening of days for those that fear the Lord. Prov. 10:27, "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened."

12. The woman that fears the Lord will be praised. Prov. 31:30, "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

13. His mercy will be toward us. Ps. 103:11, "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him."

There are cases where man should just plain out and out fear the Lord. If the person is unsaved he should be in fear of his eternal soul. Lu. 12:4,5 "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

THE BELIEVER CAN FEAR THE LORD OR -- FEAR MAN.
THE BELIEVER CAN FEAR THE LORD OR -- FEAR CIRCUMSTANCES.
THE BELIEVER CAN FEAR THE LORD OR -- FEAR THE DEVIL.

God is our light, salvation and strength according to Ps. 27:1, thus why would we fear anything outside of Him?

The believer has due cause for concern if he is living in continued sin. Heb. 12 mentions that the Lord will chasten if there is a need. This chastening can and does at extreme times go unto death. Acts five mentions the Ananias and Saphira sin unto death.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The fear of the Lord should bring us to fearlessness. The fear of the Lord should bring us to righteousness. The fear of the Lord should bring us to service. The fear of the Lord should bring us to a proper love for Him. The fear of the Lord should bring us to God in every way that He desires us to come to Him.

2. II Cor. 7:1 mentions, "Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

"PERFECTING HOLINESS!"

And to the above we might well add Ps. 86:11, "Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name."

And one more from Deut. 10:12, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,"

I would like to mention a quote from A.W. Tozer's "THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"/pp 121-122. Take time to read it if you have the volume available to you.

I trust that you will not stop with this study of God but continue to "ACQUAINT THYSELF WITH THEY GOD."

This concludes our study of the Person of God. I trust that now that you have the knowledge, that if you haven't already done so, you will get to KNOW your God.

02000

CHRISTOLOGY
AN INTRODUCTION

CHRISTOLOGY is the study of Christ, a study of all that pertains to Jesus Christ our Lord.

I would like to introduce our thoughts with some of the thoughts from Dr. Walvoord's preface in his book on Christ:

"Eight hundred years ago Bernard of Clairvaux penned the beautiful hymn:

'Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy prescience rest.'

"Ever since the holy Babe was laid in the manger in Bethlehem of Judea, devout souls have found in Jesus Christ One who is the worthy object of their worship, whose ineffable person compels their love and obedience. As the Word of God expressed in human form, Jesus Christ has drawn all believing souls to Himself. Although no other person is the object of more scriptural revelation, human pens falter when attempting to describe Him.

"The poet, biographer, theologian and orator alike confess their inability to delineate the glories and perfections of our blessed Savior. Charles Wesley expressed the aspiration of those conscious of their limitations when he composed this great hymn:

'O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The tripumphs of His grace.'

"The impossible task of circumscribing the glories of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ stems from the infinity of His person and the omnipotence and omniscience of all His works. From Genesis to Revelation Jesus Christ is the most important theme of the Bible and almost every page is related in some way to either His person or work. Christianity is Jesus Christ. No other subject is given more complete revelation and yet the half has not been told." 1

There are many reasons for making a study of Christ even if we were not vitally interested in knowing more about our Lord and Savior. Let's examine some of the reasons.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING CHRIST

1. CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF HISTORY. Our calendars reflect his presence on earth. The entire dating system of the western world centers on the appearance of the Lord in man's history.

Most countries celebrate His birth. Even though it is tied up with Santa Claus and commercialism, it is the birth of Jesus that is celebrated.

Even if we were to reject His claims to deity, if the man was this important we ought to at least study Him from a natural curiosity as to his power over history.

Bancroft mentions in his ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY:

"Jesus Christ is the central figure of the World's history. The world cannot forget Him while it remembers history, for history is His story. To leave Him out would be like astronomy without stars, or like botany with the flowers forgotten. Horace Bushnell said, 'It would be easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky and to separate and erase one of the primary colors, than to get the character of Jesus out of the world.'

"The history of the race since its inception has been the history of the preparation for His coming. The Old Testament foretells His coming in type, symbol, and direct prophecy. The history of His people Israel is a story of expectation, of yearning, of preparation.

"The fact of Jesus Christ is not only firmly imbedded in human history and written upon the open page of Scripture, but it is also experientially embodied in the lives of millions of believers and interwoven in the fabric of all civilization worthy of the name." 2

2. CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF OUR LIFE. If we are to follow His example we must know why He is a proper example, and then know His life so we can imitate Him. (I Jn. 2:6; I Pet. 2:21ff) Man naturally seeks a model to pattern himself after. Even in small children it can be observed that a child often takes a parent as a model. The model changes over time, and it is the believer's responsibility to teach and preach the idea that Christ is the only person after whom believer should pattern his life after.

3. CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF THE BIBLE. All of Scripture deals with Him, His work on the cross and His future coming. He is seen from Genesis to Revelation. The Bible is called "christocentric" because of this fact. The book of Genesis in 3:15 prophecies for the first time, the coming One that will take care of Satan. The book of Revelation ends with the Lord bringing to a close all that God had planned for mankind.

Some references that relate to this thought: Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Luke 27:44; John 5:39.

4. CHRIST IS TO BE THE CENTER OF OUR STUDIES. We are told to grow in our knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and that this will bring glory to Him. The study will automatically, as we apply our learning, bring us into conformity with Him, and this will also bring glory to Him, for people will see Him in us rather than ourselves. II Pet. 3:18

5. CHRIST SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF OUR REVELATION OF GOD. If we desire to

know of God then we need to know of Christ. The Lord told the disciples that if they had seen Him they had seen the Father. We can know much of the character of God the Father if we study God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Jn. 14:9b; Jn. 1:14.

6. CHRIST SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY. Christ is Christianity and Christianity is Christ. You can have all the religions of the world and their leaders, however if you remove their leaders, their religion can go on, indeed some have done so. Confusiousism, Islam etc. Without Christ Christianity cannot exist.

There seems to be many in our land that are trying to usurp Christ and His position in Christianity. It seems that many are trying to see how little of Christ they can present and still call themselves a part of Christianity. The liberal spectrum relegate Him to a mere man that some of them hope existed, yet they still call themselves Christians. The term Christian comes from the thought of Christ being the leader of the follower. If they hope that he existed then shouldn't their religion be Hopechristianity?

7. CHRIST SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF OUR MESSAGE. If we are to refute the isms and cults of our day we must know the Christ of the Bible for there are many other Christs being presented today.

There have been "Christs" that have come to complete the work that Jesus Christ our Lord supposedly failed to finish. Sun Myung Moon is one of these latter day LUNARtics that claims to be completing the work that the Lord had failed to accomplish.

THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

Is the pre-existence of Christ of concern to us? Is it really important to our study of Christ? Most Certainly, for if He be not pre-existent then He be not God! If He be not God then we waste our time in this endeavor called Christianity! It should also be very clear that if Christ was not pre-existent then He was not God, and that He WAS a liar.

An associated question is this, "Is pre-existence the same as eternality?" No. He could have existed before His birth but only have existed since say, creation. Thus, he would not be an eternal being. This is not an acceptable line of thinking. He is eternal as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are eternal. All three members of the Godhead have always existed in eternity past and will always exist eternity future. Eternality is not pre-existence, however a denial of pre-existence almost always leads to the denial of eternality.

The following verses show both pre-existence and eternality.

1. John revealed this in the first chapter of his gospel. John 1:1.
2. Christ revealed this Himself. Jn. 10:30; Jn. 8:58; Jn. 17:5, 24.
3. Paul revealed this. I Cor. 10:4,9; Phil. 2:5-7; Col. 1:17; (See also Matt. 23:37; Jn. 3:13, 31;

8:42; 16:28-30; II Cor. 8:9.)

CHRIST MINISTERED BEFORE HIS BIRTH

1. HE PARTICIPATED IN THE DECREES: He undoubtedly participated in the decrees and the planning of the ages since He is God. It would be ludicrous to suggest that the Lord Jesus was not consulted in the plan of the ages since that plan hinged upon His obedience to the plan. The Father did not require the Son to manifest Himself to man, the Father did not require the Son to become flesh and blood, and the Father did not require that the Son should submit Himself to the death of the cross! Christ did it voluntarily in response to His own personal love for His creatures that were lost and damned to everlasting torment with the Devil.

2. HE CREATED ALL THINGS: Col. 1:16 says all that needs to be said on this subject so we will just quote it. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers - all things were created by him, and for him;" (See also Jn. 1:3; Heb. 1:2)

3. HE SUSTAINS ALL THINGS: Not only did the Lord Jesus create all things but He maintains all things. He is in the position of guaranteeing that all of creation will continue on until the time of the consummation. Col. 1:17

CHRIST SEEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IN RETROSPECT

The Old Testament has much information relating to the Messiah to come, as well as general information about Christ. We might take note of something that Christ did as He was walking with two on the road to Emmaus. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27

Moses, being the writer of Genesis recorded two accounts relating to Christ. One was a look forward to the fact of His coming work in the spiritual realm, Gen. 3:15 and the second was on the occasion of three men appearing to Abraham just prior to the destruction of Sodom, Gen. 18:1-33. Moses goes on in Ex. 40:38 to mention the cloud of smoke and fire that was over the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and mentions that this was God. (See also Ex. 13:21; Ex. 33:9-23; Num. 9:15.) We will see in a future study that these appearances of God were the Angel of the Lord and that the Angel of the Lord is none other than Christ Himself in pre-incarnate appearances.

THE NAMES OF GOD THE SON

1. Jesus: The term Jesus is found in the Gospels around six hundred times, while in the rest of the New Testament about seventy times. It might be an interesting side light to mention that outside the Gospels the name Jesus is normally, in fact usually linked to other names of the Lord, such as Christ and Lord.

It should be noted in Acts that there is an elevation or uplifting of the term Jesus, to a higher plain, if you will, by the linking of his earthly name with the titles that honor him.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36

We might want to, in response to this text, limit our usage of the name Jesus and concentrate of the Title that God Himself has given Him, Jesus Christ the Lord. I once had a college professor that regarded the Lord so highly that he never used the term Jesus without linking it with Christ the Lord.

Jesus is the primary name before the death, burial and resurrection.

Cambron mentions of the name Jesus,

"Jesus is the personal name of the Lord. It is His earthly name, the name under which He was born, lived, and died. It is the name of His humiliation, of suffering, of sorrow. It is the name of the One who humbled Himself. The name Jesus, at the time of our Lord, was not uncommon, there were many who were named Jesus. Jesus is the Greek form for the Hebrew word Joshua, and both mean "Jehovah our Saviour." This name, Jesus, was the one which was nailed over Him on the cross." 3

2. Christ: We see an interesting contrast in the number of times that Christ appears in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. The ratio seems to be about the opposite of the name Jesus. Christ is found in the Gospels about fifty times while it is found about two hundred and fifty times in the rest of the New Testament.

Christ is an official name which points to the fact that He was, and is, the anointed one of Israel. Indeed the name Christ means the anointed one.

The main distinction in the names is that Jesus was used before the cross and Christ was used after. Jesus is the name that much of the world believes in while it is the Christ that the believer places his trust in. Jesus is the name of the humanity of God while Christ is the name of God the Son's exultation.

Is it incorrect to use the term Jesus? No, definitely not, however the overuse or overemphasis of the humanity of Christ will ultimately detract from the overall teaching about the Son of God.

3. Messiah: The Hebrew term for anointed one is Messiah. The Old Testament always looked forward to the anointed one and now the New Testament reflects back upon the anointed one that came and completed the work that His first appearing required, yet still looks forward to the second appearing which will tie all plans for mankind together.

4. Lord: This is the New Testament equivalent of the Hebrew term Adonai or master. This is the term for Christ's Deity. As we progress through the study of the Lord Jesus we will see that He truly was almighty God come in the flesh and that this term is quite appropriate for Him.

5. Jesus Christ: Cambron mentions that this combination of terms sets forth His humanity but that He now is exulted, while the combination "Christ Jesus" depicts His present position contrasted with the fact that He was once humiliated. 4 This is a good distinction in the terms.

The fact that Jesus is his earthly name should lead us to desire to be like Jesus in our everyday life, for He certainly set forth the prime example for man to follow in his own humility.

6. Christ Jesus: This arrangement of the terms should lead the believer to realize that He is now exulted and that He once was humiliated, but that He now is fully and eternally exulted to His rightful place in Heaven. To constantly use His earthly name Jesus and to constantly dwell on His humiliation seems to be a great disgrace to who He really and truly is today. He is the very Son of God, and always has been, but for thirty some years of His life He walked as we walk in the world that He might provide for the likes of us the salvation that His love brought down to us. He had no intention of remaining in that humiliation for the rest of time!

7. The Lord Jesus Christ: This is the fullest title given to the Lord and should be considered for our usage in this day in which many are concentrating only on His earthly "Jesus" ministry.

Eph. 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

What a declaration we make when we use the term. We realize and admit to the humiliation, the deity and the Lordship of the One that gave His life for our sin!

8. I Am: Ex. 3:13,14 mentions this term in the Old Testament. "...I AM THAT I AM...." Jesus mentions that He is the I AM in Jn. 18:4,5.

What a bold declaration, and should we wonder why the Jews were out to kill Him? He was laying clear claim to being the God of Abraham and Moses - Him, the carpenter from Galilee! Absurd!

The term "I AM THAT I AM" depicts one of the attributes of God in that He is conscious of Who and What He is. This is called the self-consciousness of God. Christ was most certainly conscious of the fact that He was God in the flesh!

9. The Son of God: Lu. 1:35, "The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Christ is no mere man as many of the isms and cults of our day suggest, but He is God in God's complete form. He is the Son of God as well as the Son of Man which we will see next. He was as much God as if he had never been man, and He was as much man as if He had never been God. I do not know with whom that quote originated, for I heard it from a college professor many years ago and he has long since gone to be with the Lord, so I cannot ask. I have never run across it in any of my research so assume that it might have been his own statement. At any rate it is a good description of the total deity and the total humanity of Christ in the flesh.

10. The Son of Man: This was a title that the Lord used of Himself. It is of interest to note how people like to be identified. I once had an employer that was known as "Dick" by most people, yet those who knew him well, knew that he preferred his given name "Richard." Richard was the preferred name, yet he allowed others to call him by the less formal name.

In my first years of teaching one of the students felt a little overburdened with calling me Mr. Derickson and began a long standing tradition of calling me Mr. D. It was not a name of derision, but one of great respect. They felt that they wanted to be close to me with a familiar name while still giving the respect that they desired to convey by using the Mr.

Son of Man seems to be the preferred name of the Lord for Himself. Knowing the Lord and how He lived and how much He loved us, I suspect He liked the term because it identified Him very closely with those that He came to save. "Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Lu. 9:58

Cambron observes that this is a title for the Kingdom which He was offering to the Jewish people.

"The title, the Son of man, is found eighty-eight times in the New Testament: once in Acts; once in Hebrews; twice in Revelation; and eighty-four times in the Gospels; not once in the Epistles. The Epistles concern the Church, not the coming kingdom of the Millennium." 5

(He goes on to mention that Ezekiel's use of the title is in conjunction with Second coming information.)

11. Son of Abraham: Matt. 1:1 shows a direct link between the father of the Jews, Abraham, and the Lord Jesus via the king of Israel, David. The genealogy of Christ in Matthew was very important to the Jewish mind. It was a bold declaration that this Jesus was the descendant for whom all of Israel had been waiting.

12. Son of David: Mk. 10:47, "When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me"

13. Son of the Highest: Lu. 1:32, "He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:" Still another bold

declaration to the Sonship of Christ and the Fatherhood of God.

14. Second Man: Paul uses this term in I Cor. 15:47 to tell the believer of what we will one day be when God is finished with His work in him.

15. Last Adam: Adam was the being by which sin entered into the human race, and Paul relates this thought to the idea that Christ is the last Adam in that Christ was the being by which sin exited mankind, that is as we, mortal man, respond properly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (I Cor. 15:45)

16. The Word: Jn. 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word...." In that great passage of John one we see all of the glory and pre-existance of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has always been here, He has always been with the Father, and He always has been God.

17. Emmanuel: Matt. 1:23, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

18. Savior: Probably one of the most meaningful of names is this. The Savior. A very simple term that has so many ramifications for the lost as well as the saved. It is Christ that came to save man, it is Christ that provided access to God, and it is Christ that allows our entrance into God's presence.
Yes, a very important term! It is of interest that in Lu. 2:11 the Savior is used in relation to the terms Christ and Lord. The message was concerning a Savior, the Christ and soon to be Lord. The earthly name of Jesus seems to be of little importance even at the announcement of His birth.

19. Rabbi: Jn. 1:38 relates this term to the realization of some of his followers that Jesus was their Rabbi or Master. The thought of master or teacher in later Jewish writings is that of one that is to be highly respected. In many cases the teacher is to have preferred treatment over all others including parents. The respect seems to be evident even in Christ's own time. Vine mentions that the term translated Rabbi stands in contrast to servant. This shows the relationship between student and Rabbi.

20. Master: Matt. 9:11 uses this term of Christ's relationship to His followers. It is the same Greek term that is translated Rabbi in the above reference. It is the term "didaskalos" which means master or teacher. This is the term that is used of teachers in the Ephesians 4:11 text which speaks of the men that God has gifted for the equipping of the saints.

CONCLUSIONS

1. We are about to enter into a study of the One that has given most to save us from our miserable selves. I trust that we will not only see the Jesus of Nazareth, but also the Christ of our salvation in a new and powerful manner!

2. The information already given should bring the sinner to their knees before the savior for salvation, and the believer to their knees in regret for their feeble view of the Savior and their service to Him!

END NOTES:

1. Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 7-8.

2. Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 121.

3. Mark G. Cambron, D.D., "BIBLE DOCTRINES", Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, pp 60,61.

4. Cambron; p 66.

5. Cambron; p 68.

CHRISTOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION

HANDOUT

I. PURPOSE

REASONS FOR STUDYING CHRIST:

1. CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF HISTORY.

2. CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF OUR LIFE.

3. CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF THE BIBLE.

Matt. 5:17 Luke 24:27
Luke 27:44 John 5:39

4. CHRIST IS TO BE THE CENTER OF OUR STUDIES.

II Pet. 3:18

5. CHRIST SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF OUR REVELATION OF GOD.

Jn. 14:9b Jn. 1:14

6. CHRIST SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

7. CHRIST SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF OUR MESSAGE.

II. PRE-EXISTENCE

THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

1. John 1:1
2. Christ revealed this Himself.

Jn. 10:30 Jn. 8:58
Jn. 17:5 Jn. 17:24

3. Paul revealed this.

I Cor. 10:4,9
Phil. 2:5-7
Col. 1:17
(See also Matt. 23:37; Jn. 3:13, 31; 8:42; 16:28-30; II Cor. 8:9)

III. PRE-INCARNATION

CHRIST MINISTERED BEFORE HIS BIRTH

1. HE PARTICIPATED IN THE DECREES

2. HE CREATED ALL THINGS Jn. 1:3; Heb. 1:2

3. HE SUSTAINS ALL THINGS Col. 1:17

CHRIST SEEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IN RETROSPECT

1. Gen. 3:15
2. Gen. 18:1-33
3. Ex. 40:38
4. The Angel of the Lord

IV. PROPER NAMES

HIS NAMES

1. Jesus Acts 2:36
2. Christ
3. Messiah
4. Lord
5. Jesus Christ
6. Christ Jesus
7. The Lord Jesus Christ Eph. 1:3
8. I Am Ex. 3:13,14; Jn. 18:4,5
9. The Son of God Lu. 1:35
10. The Son of Man Lu. 9:58
11. Son of Abraham Matt. 1:1
12. Son of David Mk. 10:47
13. Son of the Highest Lu. 1:32
14. Second Man I Cor. 15:47
15. Last Adam I Cor. 15:45
16. The Word Jn. 1:1
17. Emmanuel Matt. 1:23
18. Savior Lu. 2:11
19. Rabbi Jn. 1:38
20. Master Matt. 9:11

CONCLUSIONS:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is a proper understanding of Christ important:

To the believer?
To the lost?

2. Why is Christ's pre-existence important to:

The believer?

The lost?

3. Just how do you relate personally to the Lord in the area of each of these names?

1. Jesus 2. Christ 3. Messiah
4. Lord 5. Jesus Christ 6. Christ Jesus
7. Lord Jesus Christ 8. I Am 9. The Son
10. The Son of Man 11. Son of Abraham 12. Son of David
13. Son of the Highest 14. Second Man 15. Last Adam
16. The Word 17. Emmanuel 18. Savior
19. Rabbi 20. Master

4. Attempt to describe Who Jesus is in twenty-five words or less with the thought in mind of trying to communicate that description to a lost person.

5. What changes in your life are needed to bring you into a proper life that would be honoring to Christ? Jot them down and make some commitments to work on those areas of your life.

02050

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

The deity of Christ is paramount in the study of our Lord. If He is not God then we have no purpose for continuing this study, no purpose for continuing on with church attendance, no purpose for reading the Bible, and no purpose for following any of the Lord's teachings. Indeed we may as well close all churches and call home the missionaries. There is no purpose to Christianity.

Now that we have set forth the importance of the Deity of Christ we can continue with our study:

There are two basic classes of people that have been confronted with the Biblical record.

Those that have read, understood and rejected the Biblical record and those that have heard something about the Biblical record and Christ and that have not pursued what they have heard or have accepted one of the false beliefs set forth concerning Christ.

C.S. Lewis in "MERE CHRISTIANITY" mentions, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse."

IF NOT GOD? WHAT THEN?

There are some possibilities that we must look at if Christ was indeed not God. First of all some have suggested that he was a great moral teacher, but not God. He told people that He was God

to add weight and authority to His teaching.

Is the thought of being a great moral teacher, and a liar at the same time, sort of hard to swallow? It should be obvious to any person that considers the possibility, that a liar is not a moral person, and would have difficulty being a great moral teacher.

Others suggest that He was a legend. He may have existed in some historical period past, yet the stories were legends handed down over many years. We have proof that the gospel accounts are within 50 years of Christ's time on earth. It is not easy to believe that the apostles started something that was false and turned it into a legend in that short a time.

That would be similar to one of my friends sitting down and writing a gospel on the life of Mr. Derickson in which he stated that I was God and that I raised people from the dead. Even 50 years from now I rather doubt that anyone that had any knowledge of either party would hold to such stories.

It could also be suggested that he was a crazy man, but just didn't know it. There is no indication in the scriptures that the disciples, other people or even His opponents thought that this was the case. Had the Jewish leaders thought this I'm sure that they would have given some indication.

If any of these be true then we must conclude that the Lord was quite effective in his hoax, whatever it was, because the apostles and many early Christians believed that He was God and that He would do as He promised. They believed it so much that they died for that belief. (I believe my wife is divine and heavenly but I sure won't die for that belief. I may die because of that statement, but I won't die over the belief.)

On the other hand if none of these thoughts be true then one is left to realize that Christ was more than mere mortal man, and that He was God Himself.

We need to make note of one item before we continue further. There are a number of references which indicate Christ knew things not normally to be known. There are also indications, such as miracles which might show His omnipotence. These are not listed, because there is some question as to whether Christ was using His omniscience and His omnipotence during His earthly walk, or if He was relying perfectly upon the Holy Spirit for His information and miracles. We will discuss this question in a future study.

I. HIS NAMES PROVE HIS DEITY:

A. The Word: Jn. 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The fact that He was in the beginning demands deity, and then the bold statement of John "and the Word was God" is rather difficult to find a meaning other than that Christ was God - deity.

B. Son of God: Matt. 8:29 mentions that the Demons recognized Christ as the Son of God. Lu. 1:35; Jn. 5:18; 19:7; I Jn. 5:20.

C. Lord: Lu. 2:11, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Only God can be a Savior for mankind! Acts 10:36 identifies Christ as the Lord of all. Phil. 2:10,11 mentions that all creation will bow before Christ and recognize His Lordship. The Septuagint used "kurios" for Jehovah in the OT. This is the NT Greek word translated Lord. This might make for an interesting study for you sometime!

D. Holy One: 30 times God is called "the Holy One" in Isaiah.

The obvious application of Acts 3:14 would be that Peter thought Christ to be that "Holy One" of Isaiah. "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you."

E. God: Jn. 20:28, "Thomas answered and said unto him My Lord and my God" Again, just how plain does the Scripture need to be for us to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the God of the universe - total and full deity?

II. HIS WORKS PROVE HIS DEITY:

A. Creation: There is ample information to show that Christ was an integrated part of the creation of Genesis one and two. Paul in Colossians mentions this as a bold fact of life, while John seems to be quite plain in his meaning as well in John one.

Col 1:16, "For by him were all things created...."

Jn 1:3,10 "All things were made by him...." and "...the world was made by him...."

B. Preservation: The creation was not left to maintain its own way through the ages. The design of creation was such that there would be need of maintenance and that labor was for Christ to undertake.

Col 1:17, "...and by him all things consist."

Heb 1:3, "...and upholding all things by the word of his power...."

Not only is the Lord presently occupied in preserving the creation, but He is also active in the preservation of all promises set forth in the Word which includes the preservation of the believer! If Christ be preserving our beings for the eternal state, and we know that He is, then we can have all the assurance of our salvation that we need. It is God Himself that is giving us that constant watchfulness.

C. Forgiveness: Only God has the power, prerogative and desire to forgive man of his sins. Christ forgave sins on several occasions in the Gospels while still here on earth, thus indicating that he had the power, prerogative and desire to do so. It is of interest also that the people involved accepted His statements of such forgiveness as fact, not fiction.

Not only in His earthly ministry did He forgive sin, but also in his ministry on the cross he brought about the forgiveness of sin for mankind.

Mk. 2:5, "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee."

Col. 3:13, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

D. Answers prayer: Only God can make a promise to answer prayer. Only He can give the promise, and only He can give the answer. In John Christ makes the following comment about prayer and His power to complete it. "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." Jn. 14:14

E. Resurrection: He will raise the dead, not only the righteous but the unrighteous. (Jn. 5:21, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth them life, even so the Son giveth life to whom he will.") This ref. would also show that He could give eternal life which only God can give. (Vs. 28-29 mention the righteous and unrighteous being raised.)

At times we forget that there is provision of eternal existence for all of mankind whether they desire it or not. All mankind will continue for eternity, but the quality of that existence is the problem. Some will have eternal joy, while others will have eternal torment.

F. Judging: Only God can judge mankind. God is the lawgiver and the judge of those that do not follow His law. God has committed that judgment to His son according to John, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" Jn. 5:22; v 27 also.

Acts 10:42 mentions again that Christ will judge and that it will be the living and the dead.

III. HIS ATTRIBUTES PROVE HIS DEITY: He has the same attributes as God.

A. Eternal: A few comments to show this will be sufficient since we saw this in our introduction to Christ.

He was before John. Jn 1:1
He was before Abraham. Jn 8:58
He was before creation. Jn 17:5,24

He was before birth. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah through thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, form everlasting." Mic 5:2; (see Heb 1:11; Isa 9:6; Rev 1:11 as well.)

He always has been and always will be. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jn. 1:1; (see I Jn. 1:1,2 and Is. 9:6 also.)

B. Self-existence: He has life within Himself. He does not depend on the Father or the Holy Spirit for life, for He is an integrated part of them and they have life without need of anything external to themselves to continue to exist. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Jn. 1:4

C. Immutability: He is unchangeable. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Heb. 13:8; (see Heb. 1:10,12) There is nothing that can ever change about the character and being of the Lord.

D. Omnipresence: He is everywhere totally present. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20

Matt. 28:20 tells us that he promised to be with us always. If he is with me and with the missionary in Japan at the same time and always he must be, then He is omnipresent.

The very fact that he indwells every believer also shows his omnipresence.

E. Omniscience: Let's just list some information for your study.

He knew the time and manner of His exit from this life: Matt 16:21; Jn 12:33

He knew who would betray Him: Jn 6:66-71

He knew the character and certain end of the age: Matt 24:21-28

He knew the Father: Matt 11:27

He knows all there is to know - all things: Col. 2:3, "In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Jn. 16:30; 21:17

F. Omnipotence: He is all powerful. If He created - and He did - this one is obvious to the most casual observer!

Paul tells us that he will subdue all things unto Himself as well as change our bodies and fashion them like his own. Anyone that can do that is POWERFUL! Phil. 3:20,21

G. Holiness: In Him is no sin - perfect Holiness. He is called the "Holy One" in Acts 3:14. He was to be holy when conceived according to the angel speaking to Mary in Lu. 1:35.

H. Righteousness: He has no sin. It is a little bit absurd to even suggest that He could have sin for He is divine! "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" I Jn. 2:1

I. Love: His love was shown in His humiliation, in His life and in His death. He paid a supremely high price for the redemption of mankind, and so many reject it so easily when they are confronted with His free gift.

IIII. WORSHIP OF CHRIST PROVES HIS DEITY:

A. He accepted the worship of men: (Matt. 15:25ff, "Then came she and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me."; Jn. 9:35-39 - v 38, "And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him.")

There are two references that show God is to be worshiped, but not man or angels. Acts 14:11-15; Rev. 22:8-9

B. He deserves worship: As God He certainly should be the focus of our worship. He is as deserving of worship as the Father, though the focus of Scripture seems to be on the Father. As we worship, we praise and give honor and glory to the Father.

Jn. 5:23 holds forth a stiff statement that we would do well to consider. "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father, who hath sent him."

C. God calls for Him to be worshiped: Not only are men to worship Him but the angelic host is called to worship Him as well. "...And let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1:6

V. CHRIST AND WRITERS OF SCRIPTURE CLAIMED HE WAS DEITY AND EQUAL WITH GOD:

The authors of Scripture recorded the words of Christ on the topic and held them to be as true.

"Therefore, the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." Jn. 5:18

"I and my Father are one." Jn. 10:30

"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." Jn. 14:7

"Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" Jn. 17:5

Matt. 26:63-64; Jn 12:45; Phil. 2:6a; Col. 2:9

VI. HIS PERFECT LIFE DEMANDED DEITY:

He lived a perfect and righteous life while on earth and no man can possibly do that. He must have been God!

VII. HIS DEATH DEMANDS DEITY:

He chose when and where to die. This is not a choice that man is offered. He laid down His life - no one took it from Him. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." Jn. 10:17-18

VIII. HIS VOLUNTARY SUBORDINATION TO THE FATHER SHOWS HIS DEITY:

He willingly placed Himself, from a place of equality to a place of subordination to the Father. Only an equal could voluntarily subordinate oneself to God. We are subordinated to God, as are all creatures because of our creation. We can do nothing except be subordinate. Christ on the other hand had that choice thus He must be God!

His subordinate position is pictured in I Cor. 11:3 where Paul is picturing the relationship of the woman to the man.

"But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

This is a subordination of office, position and function, yet it has absolutely nothing to do with essence. He is just as much God now as He was before the subordination.

Indeed, a question that is stirring in many circles today is whether this was an eternal subordination or something that took place sometime into the program of God. Post - decrees would be the best place if it is not eternal. Subordination does not change what Christ is. Subordination does not change what believers are.

A. Christ stated that the Father was greater.

Jn. 14:28, "...for my Father is greater than I".

B. The Lord is begotten of the Father. This shows a subordinate place in the scheme of the ages. Jn. 3:16 mentions this.

C. Christ was dependant upon the Father.

Jn. 5:19, "...Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for whatever things he doeth, there also doeth the Son in the same manner."

D. Christ was sent by the Father.

Jn. 8:29, "And he that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. (Jn. 17:8 as well.)

E. Christ was under the Father's authority.

Jn. 10:18, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

F. Christ received authority from the Father.

Jn. 13:3, "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God"

G. Christ received His message from the Father.

Jn. 17:8, "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me...."

H. Christ's kingdom was appointed by God.

Lu. 22:29, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me,"

I. Christ will deliver His kingdom to the Father.

I Cor. 15:24, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

In closing I would like to share some thoughts with you.

REDEEMED

The God of all eternity, the God that designed the stars. The God that looked down to observe

one lost sinner that observed the magnitude of His creation.

The Christ of eternity, the Christ that created the stars. The Christ that came down to save one lost sinner that observed the magnitude of His love.

The Spirit of eternity, the Spirit that placed the stars, the Spirit that came down to indwell one lost sinner that succumbed to the wonder of His leading.

The sinner of hell, the sinner that deserves nothing. The sinner that rises to dwell in the heavens of the God that sacrificed all for his redeeming.

APPLICATION:

1. His deity guarantees all that He said is going to come to pass. All that He prophesied, as well as all that He promised.

2. If He told us to go with the Gospel, why don't we? He is one person that we ought not disobey.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST
HANDOUT

The deity of Christ is paramount in our study of the Lord.

C.S. Lewis in "MERE CHRISTIANITY" mentions, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse."

IF NOT GOD? WHAT THEN?

1.

2.

3.

I. HIS NAMES PROVE HIS DEITY:

A. The Word: Jn. 1:1
B. Son of God: Matt. 8:29; Lu. 1:35; Jn. 5:18; 19:7; I Jn. 5:20.

C. Lord: Lu. 2:11; Acts 10:36; Phil. 2:10,11.
D. Holy One:
E. God: Jn. 20:28

II. HIS WORKS PROVE HIS DEITY:

A. Creation: Col 1:16; Jn 1:3,10
B. Preservation: Col 1:17; Heb 1:3
C. Forgiveness: Mk. 2:5; Col. 3:13
D. Answers prayer: Jn. 14:14
E. Resurrection: Jn. 5:21;
F. Judging: Jn. 5:22; 5:27; Acts 10:42

III. HIS ATTRIBUTES PROVE HIS DEITY:

A. Eternal:

He was before John. Jn 1:1
He was before Abraham. Jn 8:58
He was before creation. Jn 17:5,24
He was before birth. Mic 5:2; (see Heb 1:11; Isa 9:6; Rev 1:11 as well.)

B. Self-existence:

C. Immutability: Heb. 13:8;

D. Omnipresence: Matt. 18:20; Matt. 28:20

E. Omniscience:

He knew the time and manner of His exit from this life: Matt 16:21; Jn 12:33

He knew who would betray Him: Jn 6:66-71

He knew the character and certain end of the age: Matt 24:21-28

He knew the Father: Matt 11:27

He knows all there is to know - all things: Col. 2:3, "In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Jn. 16:30; 21:17

F. Omnipotence: Phil. 3:20,21

G. Holiness: Acts 3:14; Lu. 1:35

H. Righteousness: I Jn. 2:1

I. Love:

IIII. WORSHIP OF CHRIST PROVES HIS DEITY:

A. He accepted the worship of men: Matt. 15:25; Jn. 9:35-39
B. He deserves worship: Jn. 5:23
C. God calls for Him to be worshiped: Heb. 1:6

V. CHRIST AND WRITERS OF SCRIPTURE CLAIMED HE WAS DEITY AND EQUAL WITH GOD:

Jn. 5:18
Jn. 10:30
Jn. 14:7
Jn. 17:5
Matt. 26:63-64
Jn 12:45
Phil. 2:6a
Col. 2:9

VI. HIS PERFECT LIFE DEMANDED DEITY:

VII. HIS DEATH DEMANDS DEITY:

VIII. HIS VOLUNTARY SUBORDINATION TO THE FATHER SHOWS HIS DEITY:

A. Christ stated that the Father was greater. Jn. 14:28

B. The Lord is begotten of the Father. Jn. 3:16

C. Christ was dependant upon the Father. Jn. 5:19

D. Christ was sent by the Father. Jn. 8:29

E. Christ was under the Father's authority. Jn. 10:18

F. Christ received authority from the Father. Jn. 13:3

G. Christ received His message from the Father. Jn. 17:8

H. Christ's kingdom was appointed by God. Lu. 22:29

I. Christ will deliver His kingdom to the Father. I Cor. 15:24

APPLICATION:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it important to know that Christ was totally God?

2. How might you need to know this information in the future, as you go out into the world to witness to others?

3. If Christ is totally God and He gave us Matt 18:18-20, what should your response be to Him?

02100

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

Winifred Kirkland once spoke of the fact that we often miss knowing Christ because of His familiarity. We think we know all there is to know of Him so we don't consider him as we ought.

"In talking about Jesus Christ our Lord many fundamentalists seem to lift Him to super human plateaus where we see only a dim and hazy image, while in reality the Scriptures depict Him as a patient, loving, and enduring figure to be held as a pattern for our Christian lives.

"In many places throughout the Gospels we see Christ as a very patient person. His disciples were constantly giving Him reason to despair, yet He always explained and re-explained each thing until it was clear in their minds. The Pharisees were often trying to lead Christ into a corner where they would have surely pounced upon Him, yet He always was in control. The high point of the patience portrayed by the Son of Man was at His trial. People were beating Him, mocking Him, and spitting on Him, yet never once did He lose His temper.

"The love this man poured out upon the nations of the earth was immeasurable, and not universally accepted. He gave His life on the cross as the payment for all mankind's sin, yet not all have returned His love, and as a result many will spend eternity without that love.

"Christ's physical endurance amazes many people. This man was up very early in the morning praying, spent all day with the crowds about Him, teaching and healing, and continued His work into the night. Many today think they've done a big day's work if they put in eight hours. The type of life that Christ submitted Himself to requires a real commitment to the job to be done.

"The total of just these three brief points, His patience, His love, and His commitment, show that Jesus Christ was truly a great and dynamic human being, which in no way detracts from the fact that He was God walking among us." 1

Why is it important for Christ to be Human? Since we have seen that He was Deity what difference does humanity make? As Almighty God He was able to care for the sin of the world. He was able to do all that man could not. He satisfied God's requirements for atonement. What difference does His humanity make?

1. He can't be our example if He is God only. God, an infinite being cannot really set a followable example for finite man. We would be incapable of following that example.

2. He could not pay for man's sin if he were not locked into humanity in some manner. The requirement is for man to die. If Christ was to take upon Himself the penalty he must be man.

3. He could not defeat the devil evidently without this step according to Heb. 2:14.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST DECLARED

I. HE HAD A HUMAN BIRTH

He was born of a woman. He was born of Mary according to the Gospels and Gal. 4:4. He was born of a virgin as well. We will cover this in more detail in the incarnation. (Matt. 1:18-2:12,

Lu. 1:30-38; 2:1-20) Evans has a paragraph that would be good for consideration if there is any doubt in the mind as to the validity of the virgin birth. See footnote 4.

II. HE HAD HUMAN TERMS APPLIED TO HIM

He was called the Son of David: Matt. 1:1, Matt. 12:23, Matt. 15:22. To be a true son of David, He would have to have been of the seed of David, and human.

He was called the Son of Abraham: Matt. 1:1. The same applies here as in the previous comment.

He was born of the seed of David: Rom. 1:3. This passage adds proof to the previous two points. The thought of seed indicates a physical relationship.

He was a Descendent of Adam: Lu. 3:23-38 shows the genealogy tracing back to Adam. This is another proof of the physical, human aspect of Christ's nature.

This fulfilled a promise to: Eve, Gen. 3:15 and Ahaz, Isa. 7:14. Again this strong physical, human link to man is seen.

Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua: He had a human name as well as physical descendency.

He was called a Carpenter: Mk. 6:3 Along with his human name, descendency we see that He was involved in a physical occupation, that of a carpenter. If only God why would He need to subject Himself to such things. Indeed, if only God, why go through the process of birth, growing, learning, and the other mundane things of human life?

He was called a man: I Tim. 2:5 The apostle Paul was quite in error if this Jesus were only God.

He was flesh and blood: Heb. 2:14 To be flesh and blood, is to be human. We have no other creature on earth that has flesh and blood that are not animal or human. With all of the characteristics of a human, then He must have been human.

III. HE HAD HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

He was one of the early home schoolers: Lu. 2:40, "And the child grew, and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him."

He matured as other humans mature: Lu. 2:52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

He was taught but probably not in schools: There is a possibility that he had some teaching in

the synagogue. Lu. 4:16 shows that he could read in the synagogue. Jn. 7:15 mentions that the Jews marveled at his knowledge.

He visited the temple: Lu. 2:41,46,47 tells us that he visited in a big way and shocked a few teachers.

He knew the Scriptures: Lu. 4:17 tells us that he had a working knowledge of the Scriptures. Enough of a knowledge to find a certain passage in Isa. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet, Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written," Matt. 4:4 and the context are the testing in the wilderness and it shows that he had a good understanding of the Scripture.

His knowledge of the Scriptures may well have come from a combination of three things, His teaching from His parents, His own personal study and His communion with the Heavenly Father.

IIII. HE HAD ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF HUMAN NATURE

He had a human body: Heb. 10:5 mentions his body. Heb. 10:10 tells us that we are sanctified by the offering of His body. "By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Matt. 26:12 tells of Jesus body being anointed. Jn 2:21, "But he spoke of the temple of his body." Heb. 2:14 mentions he had flesh and blood.

He had a human body after the resurrection: His body was human, even though it was glorified. Lu. 24:39, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

He had a soul: Matt. 26:38 Indeed it sorrowed. Jn. 12:27, Act. 2:27,31.

He had a spirit: Mk. 2:8, "And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, why reason ye these things in your hearts." Mk. 8:12, Lu. 23:46, Jn. 13:21.

Since it has been shown that He had a human body, a human soul, and a human spirit, then He must have been human.

V. HE HAD THE INFIRMITIES OF THE HUMAN BODY

He became tired: Jn. 4:6, "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat by the well; and it was about the sixth hour." He became tired and weary, just as we.

He became hungry: Matt. 4:2, "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was

afterward hungry." (Also Matt. 21:18)

He became thirsty: Jn. 19:28, "After this Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst."

He slept: Matt. 8:24, "And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves; but he was asleep."

He was tempted: Heb. 2:18, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to help them that are tempted." Heb. 4:15.

He was limited in knowledge: Mk. 13:32, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels who are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mk. 11:13 tells of Him approaching a fig tree with leaves to see if there was fruit on it. Mk. 5:30-34 mentions the woman that touched his garment. He asked who touched his clothes. Some might suggest that this was a rhetorical question or that he wanted her to identify herself and that He really knew who it was. Jn. 11:34 relates that Christ asked where they had laid Lazarus when He came to raise him. "And said, Where have ye laid him...."

Since all of these be human traits, it seems very logical to assume that He too was human.

VI. HE WAS KNOWN AS A MAN

He was called a man by Himself: Jn. 8:40, "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth...." If He were less than a man, then He is a liar.

He was called a man by John The Baptist: Jn. 1:30, "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man who is preferred before me; for he was before me." John was related to Him, indeed, possibly grew up playing with Him. Surely He would know if He were human or not.

He was called a man by Peter: Acts 2:22, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know;"

He was called a man by Paul: Acts 13:38, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins;" I Cor. 15:21, I Cor. 15:47, Phil. 2:8.

He was known as a man: Jn. 7:27, "Nevertheless, we know this man...." Jn. 10:33.

He was known as a Jew: Jn. 4:9, "Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

He was thought to be older than He was: Jn. 8:57 (around 30 at this time.) "Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

He was accused of blasphemy for calling Himself other than man: Jn. 10:33, "The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." If the Jews did this they were assured in their own minds that He was a man.

He had the appearance of a man post-resurrection: Jn. 20:15 relates that Mary took Him for a gardener. Jn. 21:4,5 tells that the disciples didn't know who He was when He was standing on the shore.

He appeared in human form in glory: I Tim. 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus,"

He will come in the same form: Matt. 16:27,28; 25:31 mentions his coming again, and Acts 1:10-11 mentions that He will come as He went. The disciples saw him go in bodily form.

He appeared in his bodily form in power: Matt. 26:64,65, "...Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

He will judge the world as a man: Acts. 17:31, "Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; concerning which he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

If He were not a man, then He was one of the great tricksters of all time. He fooled people from, close friends to acquaintances, from uneducated to highly educated, and from low class to high class. Such an accomplishment, if He were not human, was nothing short of trickery and falsehood.

VII. HE DISPLAYED THE EMOTIONS OF A HUMAN

I will list some references and the emotion/emotions that are mentioned.

Matt. 26:36-44 tells of His being depressed, His sorrow, His weakness of the flesh, and most likely disappointment in his disciples.

Mk. 3:5, "And when he had looked round about on them with anger...." (He is angry with the jews because they were waiting to see if He would heal on the Sabbath.)

Lu. 10:21 tells us that He "rejoiced in the Spirit".

Lu. 22:44, "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly...." (This is the agony in the

garden.)

Jn. 11:35, "Jesus wept."

Jn. 12:27 tells us that His soul was troubled.

Jn. 13:21 - troubled in spirit.

Jn. 13:23 - loved.

VIII. HE NEEDED SPIRITUAL HELP

He prayed: Mk. 1:35, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. Lk. 22:44, "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly...."

The thought of needing help gives added meaning to the disciples going to sleep in the garden just before His arrest. How saddened He must have been when His best friends would not pray with or for him.

I have a number of times been in prayer meetings and asked for prayer for a real burden. The real burden usually came when no one prayed for my request. I wonder at times when a pastor asks for requests in a worship service, and people respond with real needs and hear him pray briefly for, "these requests of your people." Yes, God hears and He will probably answer, but there must be some disappointment.

He was empowered by the Holy Spirit: Acts. 10:38, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." If Christ needed to be empowered then surely He must have been human.

IX. HE NEEDED TO BE A MAN

There is seldom reference to any need of His humanity, but it was a necessary requirement within God's overall plan. Paul mentions in I Corinthians 15:20-23. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Not only does this text declare Christ's humanity, but it points out the need of that humanity.

Without humanity, Christ could not provide the perfect life to sacrifice. Without humanity,

Christ could not provide the sacrificial death on the cross. Without humanity, Christ could not provide the resurrection of the saints.

As man fell by representation in Adam, so man had to be represented by man in the plan of redemption.

It would seem that His humanity is of great necessity!

APPLICATION:

1. While teaching at a Bible Institute, we had a couple of days when high schoolers were invited on campus to encourage them to consider the school in their future plans. Friday after the event was winding down I had already wound down and was ready for crashing. I knew that this lesson had to be ready before Friday was over. I finally went back to the office and started. I came up with a dozen plans for not doing it so I could go crash. I forged on ahead step by step until I was at this point in the lesson.

I was very encouraged by the verses that told of what Christ did during His walk here on earth as man. He was tired and was up early etc. I could really relate to what I was reading and typing. I was encouraged to know that He kept going even when He was tired. IT ENCOURAGED ME GREATLY! He indeed, should be our encouragement to go on when we are ready for a crash time!

"MAKE JESUS KING!

"When Queen Victoria had just ascended her throne she went, as is the custom of royalty, to hear The Messiah rendered. She had been instructed as to her conduct by those who knew and was told that she must not rise when the others stood at the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus. When that magnificent chorus was being sung and the singers were shouting, 'Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' she sat with great difficulty. It seemed as if she would rise in spite of the custom of kings and queens, but finally when they came to that part of the chorus where with a shout they proclaim him King of kings suddenly the young queen rose and stood with bowed head, as if she would take her own crown from off her head and cast it at his feet. Let us make him King and every day be loyal to him. This is the secret of peace." J. Wilbur Chapman 2

QUOTES THAT COUNT

Evans quotes two authors that are of interest as the humanity of Christ is introduced. You might read these if you have his book available to you. The quotes are from Sinclair Patterson and James Denney. (P 53)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Derickson, Stanley L., Paper done for English Grammar and Composition, Western Bible Institute, 1-27-70

2. Stanley I. Stuber and Thomas Curtis Clark, "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH", New York: Association Press, 1949, p 93.

3. Evans "The narrative of the virgin birth need not stagger us. The abundance of historical evidence in its favor should lead to its acceptance. All the manuscripts in all the ancient versions contain the record of it. All the traditions of the early church recognize it. Mention of it is made in the earliest of all the creeds: the Apostles' Creed. If the doctrine of the virgin birth is rejected it must be on purely subjective grounds. If one denies the possibility of the supernatural in the experience of human life, it is, of course, easy for him to deny this doctrine. To one who believes that Jesus was human only it would seem comparatively easy to deny the supernatural birth on purely subjective grounds. The preconceptions of thinkers to a great degree determine their views. It would seem that such a wonderful life as that lived by Christ, having as it did such a wonderful finish in the resurrection and ascension, might, indeed should, have a wonderful and extraordinary entrance into the world. The fact that the virgin birth is attested by the Scriptures, by tradition, by creeds, and that it is in perfect harmony with all the other facts of that wonderful life should be sufficient attestation of its truth." Evans mentions "THE VIRGIN BIRTH", by James Orr, D.D. as a good book for further study. Taken from: "THE GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE"; Evans, William; Copyright 1974, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 54

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

I. HE HAD A HUMAN BIRTH

Born of woman: Gal. 4:4

Virgin birth: Matt. 1:18-2:12, Lu. 1:30-38; 2:1-20

II. HE HAD HUMAN TERMS APPLIED TO HIM

Son of David: Matt. 1:1, Matt. 12:23, Matt. 15:22

Son of Abraham: Matt. 1:1

Born of the seed of David: Rom. 1:3

Descendent of Adam: Lu. 3:23-38

This fulfilled a promise to: Eve Gen 3:15, Ahaz Isa. 7:14

Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua:

Carpenter: Mk. 6:3

Man: I Tim. 2:5

Flesh and blood: Heb. 2:14

III. HE HAD HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

He was an early home schooler: Lu. 2:40, Lu. 2:52, Lu. 4:16, Jn. 7:15.

He visited the temple: Lu. 2:41,46,47

He knew Scripture: Lu. 4:17, Matt. 4:4

IIII. HE HAD ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF HUMAN NATURE

He had a human body: Heb. 10:5, Heb. 10:10, Matt. 26:12, Jn 2:21, Heb. 2:14.

EVEN AFTER THE RESURRECTION HE HAD A HUMAN BODY - GLORIFIED! Lu. 24:39

He had a soul: Matt. 26:38, Jn. 12:27, Act. 2:27,31

He had a spirit: Mk. 2:8, Mk. 8:12, Lu. 23:46, Jn. 13:21

V. HE HAD THE INFIRMITIES THE HUMAN BODY

He was tired: Jn. 4:6
He was hungry: Matt. 4:2, Matt. 21:18
He was thirsty: Jn. 19:28
He slept: Matt. 8:24
He was tempted: Heb. 2:18, Heb. 4:15
He was limited in knowledge: Mk. 13:32, Mk. 11:13, Mk. 5:30-34, Jn. 11:34

VI. HE WAS KNOWN AS A MAN

He was called a man by Himself: Jn. 8:40

He was called a man by John The Baptist: Jn. 1:30

He was called a man by Peter: Acts 2:22

He was called a man by Paul: Acts 13:38; I Cor. 15:21; I Cor. 15:47; Phil. 2:8

He was known as a man: Jn. 7:27; Jn. 10:33

He was known as a Jew: Jn. 4:9

He was thought to be older than He was: Jn. 8:57

He was accused of blasphemy for calling Himself other than man: Jn. 10:33

He had the appearance of a man post-resurrection: Jn. 20:15; Jn. 21:4,5

He appeared in human form in glory: I Tim. 2:5; Matt. 16:27,28; 25:31

He appeared in his bodily form in power: Matt. 26:64,65

He will judge the world as a man: Acts. 17:31

VII. HE DISPLAYED THE EMOTIONS OF A HUMAN

Matt. 26:36-44
Mk. 3:5
Lu. 10:21
Lu. 22:44
Jn. 11:35
Jn. 12:27
Jn. 13:21
Jn. 13:23

VIII. HE NEEDED SPIRITUAL HELP

He prayed: Mk. 1:35, Lk. 22:44

He was empowered by the Holy Spirit: Acts. 10:38

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THE INCARNATION

Incarnation comes from a Latin term meaning enfleshment. In our study it is the enfleshment of

God. It is God made manifest in human flesh.

In Theology, the Incarnation speaks to that act of servanthood by which the Second Person of the Trinity stepped into the flow of mankind as man, taking upon Himself all that man is and limiting Himself to function within mankind's parameters.

John 1:14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

The incarnation is carried in both Matthew and Luke's account of the life of our Lord.

This coming to mankind of man's God was not without its own set of unique circumstances. God could not just appear as man, for He needed to be entirely man which required of God that He experience all that there is to be experienced by man.

This presented a minor problem, how can God be born of man? There needed to be a Fatherhood from God and a motherhood by woman. This unique combination produced not only the God-man Jesus Christ, but it also produced a man with no sin nature which was also a prerequisite.

One of the hallmark doctrines of Christianity, one of the fundamentals if you will, is the virgin birth. Both Matthew and Luke mention the virgin birth. Matt. 1:18, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was in this way: When, as his mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit." Luke 1:26,27,34 ("...a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph....")

Both are quite clear on the fact that Joseph was not the father of Jesus. Matt. 1:20, "...Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." Lu. 1:35, "And the angel answered, and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

In Matthew's genealogy he uses the term begat all the way through, but does not use it in relation to Joseph. This would seem to be a significant omission.

Without the virgin birth there are a few problems:

a. You have to call the Bible and God a liar, for the Scriptures plainly declare the virgin birth.

b. You have to see Christ, the incarnate God, as a being that takes over a human being that has a fallen nature. If this human, taken over by a God has a fallen nature, then for the God to live a perfect life He must force the human, against his will, to live that perfect life. The ramifications of this are great.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE INCARNATION

Ryrie details the purpose of the incarnation in one of his books. I would like to quote his outline and then adapt it for our discussion.

"...to reveal God to men...to provide an example for living...to provide a sacrifice for sin...to destroy the works of the devil...to enable Him to be a merciful and faithful High Priest...to fulfill the promise of a son to sit on the throne of David forever...." 1

A. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF DECLARING HIMSELF TO MAN:

Often I have introduced my children to groups of people and I often add, You won't know them long before you know where they got their humor. Often the child takes on the characteristics of the parent, so even in humans we can see that if you know the son you can know something of the father.

This same aspect is true of God the Father and God the Son, only in even a more real sense. The Son is the Father and the Father is the Son. They are of the same nature and of the same character. They are one. The "Father" and "Son" distinctions speak of differences of person and of position, but say nothing of differences of nature. They are truly one, and if we know one we know the other. If we are to know about God we need to study His Son and His life while on earth. We need to look at his characteristics, mannerisms, and way of life and then we will know something of The Father. Christ Himself declared that if a person knew Him, then the person also knew God the Father.

B. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF GIVING US AN EXAMPLE TO LIVE BY:

We know enough of the maturing of children to know that they often take a model to pattern themselves after. Even in adulthood we often pattern ourselves after our heroes. God knowing His creatures, desired to give them a model that was WORTH emulating. Many of our models are so very flawed, yet we pattern ourselves after them.

God desires that we pattern our lives after the life of Christ the man that lived the perfect life. Indeed the outworking of this concept is seen in a familiar text that we normally don't tie with this thought. "Be ye holy for I am holy." I Peter 1:16. If we follow Peters admonition we will naturally pattern ourselves after the Lord.

As we take Christ as our model we take not only the man Jesus as our model, but we take as our model the God of the universe. (I Pe. 2:21; I Jn. 2:6)

We all know what instruction books are, don't we? You know, those books that we get with the modern conveniences that tell us how to run things. They often include instructions of assembly that appear to have been written as practice for a Greek class.

Well, in a sense God wanted us to have an instruction manual for life. The Lord Jesus came to show us how it was done. The sad part of it is, there aren't to many today that read their perfectly lived instruction manual. We are to walk as He walked.

How do you relate to that today? Do you walk as Christ walked, following all the laws of man perfectly, being righteous at all times, always having a proper reaction to people even when they are being nasty to you? WOW! SOME EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW!

C. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING SALVATION TO MAN:

Heb. 10:1-10 tells of the one perfect sacrifice that was made by Christ.

Man was unable to save himself from the quagmire that he inserted himself into, so the Lord God was the only hope for man in his lost state. If God had not interceded there would have been no saving man from his lostness. God needed to become the sacrifice that could die for the sins of man, because nothing on this earth was worthy and righteous enough to pay the penalty. Since God cannot die, there was but one thing for God to do and that was to become man. As man He could die and provide the way of salvation for all of mankind.

Within this idea is the fact that He provided eternal life to man. Jn. 6:51, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is may flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Jn. 10:10, "...I am come that they might have life...."

From what John mentions, it is hard to determine how anyone of any faith, or of any belief, could think that they can do anything to gain their own salvation. Christ came that we might have life! Without Christ there is no life and we need to know that, believe that, teach that, and preach that!

D. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF SETTING HIS VICTORY OVER SATAN:

Getting even is one of the hallmarks of lost mankind and it is feared of many Christians as well. We want to lash out when someone does something mean or says something nasty.

This is not the case in God's dealings with the Devil. He was not looking to get even with Satan for his actions in the garden of Eden, nor was He trying to get even for the multiplied millions of things that he has done through time.

God was simply preparing the way for the removal of all fallen angelic beings. Their judgment is set according to Revelation 19 and 20, and their final end will be in the Lake of Fire. This judgment is set and sure, yet God has postponed the execution of that judgment for a time. In the end when Christ is bringing together all that needs to come together, the Devil will be delivered to his final, eternal domain. I Jn. 3:8, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might

destroy the works of the devil."

The devil had to be conquered on his own turf. He is the god of this world and needed to be met in the world of man. Christ was victorious!

Ryrie tries to make the point that this victory was had in His incarnation. I'm not sure that this is the case. The incarnation does not seem to be anything that would cause victory. What could have occurred in the birth of a child that would hinder a spirit being involved in an angelic conflict? The birth itself had no power, nor authority to accomplish anything other than to set the stage for the work of Christ on the cross. The cross and resurrection proved that the devil no longer held death over man's head.

E. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING A HIGH PRIEST FOR MAN:

Under the law the believer was to approach God only through the priest and the sacrificial system. The priestly system was to give the path for man to God.

In our own age this is a heavenly path. We don't have to wait till the tabernacle opens at 8:00 a.m., we can go directly to the high priest that is sitting beside the Father and He will intercede on our behalf. We can study of Christ's ministry in this capacity in Hebrews five.

Not only is He our High Priest, but he is able to be sympathetic to our situation as He intercedes, for He too was in the flesh, to know and feel. Heb. 4:14-16, Heb. 2:17-18 also. In a sense God came to be man partly to know what it was like to live as man from the inside out.

F. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING AN EVERLASTING KING FOR ISRAEL:

Lu. 1:31-33 in the announcement of Christ's conception to Mary this was prophesied. "...and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: (32b) "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (33)

To have an everlasting king, God had to provide in some manner, for the fulfillment of that concept. Man is only an everlasting being through the work of Christ. There is no man, even believing man, which can fulfill the promises of the Old Testament prophets concerning the great things that this king of Israel is going to do.

G. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING A PROPER JUDGE:

Again, man is not capable of filling the job that God needed done. Not only did God need a perfect sacrifice, a perfect king for Israel, but he also needs a perfect judge so that none in the end can cry foul, or unfair. They will see that the judge is Christ Himself, and they will know that their judgment is sure, just, and deserved. Jn. 5:22,27, "For as the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" "And hath given him authority to execute judgment

also, because he is the Son of man."

H. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING A HEAD FOR THE CHURCH:

This concept is not easily grasped when one is trying to organize a church. Just how do you go about making Christ the head of an organization when He isn't there to occupy a chair of the board. Naturally, the concept is that of His guidance through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Word and prayer.

In jest someone suggested that it is great that God provided a head for the church, for had He not, we would have had as many heads as members and nothing would be done. Christ is the head, the brains, the motivation, the leadership, and the help of the church, and yet so many times we make our decisions based on our own desires and comforts, rather than seek out what the Head of the church might have in mind.

Eph. 1:19-23 shows Christ being placed over all including the church. This specifically is in relation to the resurrection, but is a result of the incarnation.

II. CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE INCARNATION

A. Christ came from heaven to earth to dwell.

I have a friend that was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He is probably about the only good friend that I have ever had outside my own family. I didn't understand him for several years. He was very strange and standoffish. My other friends could not stand to be around him. I often tried to figure him out, but finally stopped and accepted him as he was.

My wife and I went to Pennsylvania for six weeks one time, and found there was a whole state full of people just like my friend. NOW, before I alienate all Pennsylvanians let me be quick to comment. I have talked with others from that state and find that they are very standoffish until they get to know you and then they will do anything for you. I have come to enjoy many different kinds of peoples due to the groundwork laid in my life by a Pennsylvanian! THANKS!

We tend to think at times that we can't face missions due to the culture shock, deputation, new organization and all that. We feel that facing a new culture will be just too much for us. Let's consider the most extreme culture shock of all time. Christ faced not only a new set of living conditions, but a new set of beings.

It is also of note that John mentions it was a step down for the Lord. At times we feel that we are rather special, yet Christ had to come down to our level, and I might add that was not just a little trip down either. Jn. 6:51, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven...."

B. Christ left the riches of heaven for the poverty of the earth. II Cor. 8:9, Lu. 9:58.

C. Christ left the glory of heaven for the plainness of earth.

When our family moved from Oregon to begin teaching at Frontier School of the Bible, we left two good salaries for a "life of faith" in Wyoming. Not only did we leave the good income, but we left one of the lushest, nicest areas for the low income ministry. We also left the green, gorgeous area of the northwest for one of the dryer, more desolate states of our union.

Christ left all to place himself in this world. SOME STEP DOWN! Jn. 17:5, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

D. Christ left the equality with God for the servant hood of earth, from the top of the chain of command to the lowest of low. In our war with Iraq in 1991 we were pleased to be introduced to a man by the name of Norman Swartskopf, the general that lead our forces in the mid-east, or Stormin Norman as he was called. Had he been reduced to the level of raw recruit, he would not have suffered a part of the demotion to which Christ submitted Himself. Indeed, the Lord went from as high up to the lowest, in that moment of conception. Phil. 2:6-7

And we groan and moan when one of our children tells us that they feel called to be a minister, or missionary. Shame on us Church!

E. Christ left the form of God (or spirit) for the form of man.

In the series Star Trek, and Star Trek the Next Generation, the transporter always fascinated my science fiction mind. Just what would it be like to be changed from matter into energy to be transported somewhere. At times the imagination even wondered, what would it be like if The Enterprise lost you and you went out into space as pure energy? What would it be like to become something completely and totally different?

Christ a Spirit being became man, a material being. (Phil. 2:6-7) Some adaption for Him to go through!

These changes were for the most part temporary while Christ was on earth, however his manly form seems to continue on now, and the indications are that it will continue on for eternity.

III. THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INCARNATION:

THE VIRGIN BIRTH WAS NECESSARY

A. It fulfilled prophecy: Isaiah mentioned that there would be a virgin birth, so the birth of Christ was a fulfillment of this prophecy. This is seen in Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

B. It maintained Christ perfect through the conception process: To maintain Christ's perfectness without a sin nature, there had to have been some means by which man's sin nature was not transferred from the father to the child. This was accomplished by eliminating the earthly father.

Ryrie leaves the door open to there not being a need for the virgin birth. "What was the purpose of the Virgin Birth? It need not be the necessary means of preserving Christ sinless, since God could have overshadowed two parents so as to protect the baby's sinlessness had He so desired. It served as a sign of the uniqueness of the Person who was born." 2

The virgin birth most definitely was needed to produce Christ without a sin nature. Yes, God could have overshadowed, or declared no sin nature, yet this is not the way God normally operates.

The virgin birth is much to broad a subject for this work so the reader is referred to existing theologies and commentaries for further discussions on the subject.

IV. THE INCARNATION HAS ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

Christ will always be in the glorified body state, it would seem.

A. He will sit on the throne of David. Lu. 1:31-33

B. He will give us glorified bodies like His own. Our bodies will last for eternity thus; we might assume that His will do the same.

IV. PRACTICAL VALUES OF THE INCARNATION

A. It makes clear, the perfect life Christ lived, and that sin was not an integrated part of that life, nor was sin essential to life.

B. It gives us a God that does know all there is to know about us. He is not afar off nor is he an uncaring God. He is a God that knows and cares for us on our own level.

C. We have mentioned that if we know Christ, we know God. We often give lip service to such teaching, but do we as believers in this century really understand the ramifications of such teaching? If we really wanted to know God the Father, then we would walk with Christ and follow His teachings. So many today concentrate only on Christ which is wrong, but others dwell only on the epistles, while others bury themselves in the Old Testament. All such concentrations are incorrect. We should have a balance between all the sections of Scripture. Even in our daily Bible reading, we should read from a variety of sources in the Word.

"This Lord Jesus is the indispensable Revealer of God. He is the Forgiver of sins, and He is the final judge. The alternative to these claims is undeniable and clear. There is no logical

alternative to the truth as the Lord spoke it, other than that He was demented or an impostor. Both these alternatives are unthinkable. But the bit is here. You cannot accept some of His teachings and dismiss others, and still call Him a good Man, an honest Teacher and a worthy Example.

"Can you know God apart from Him? If you answer yes, you are on the opposite side from the Lord Jesus Christ -- He said you cannot....To know Him is to know the Father, for He and the Father are one."

William Culbertson; THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED 3

For your further study: Matt. 20:28; Jn. 1:14; Jn. 3:13; Jn. 3:17; Jn. 6:51; Rom. 1:3; Rom. 8:3; I Cor. 15:47; II Cor. 8:9; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7,8; I Tim. 1:15; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:9; Heb. 2:14; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 10:5; I Jn. 3:5.

ENDNOTES:

1. Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. P 56

2. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 243

3. William Culbertson; THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED, source unknown

THE INCARNATION

HANDOUT

Incarnation comes from a Latin term meaning:

In Theology, the Incarnation speaks to that act of servant hood by which the Second Person of the Trinity stepped into the flow of mankind as man, taking upon Himself all that man is and limiting Himself to function within mankind's parameters. Jn. 1:14

Both Matthew and Luke mention the virgin birth: Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:26,27,34

Both are quite clear of the fact that Joseph was not the father of Jesus: Matt. 1:20; Lu. 1:35

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE INCARNATION

Ryrie details the purpose of the incarnation in one of his books. I would like to quote his outline and then adapt it for our discussion.

"...to reveal God to men...to provide an example for living...to provide a sacrifice for sin...to destroy the works of the devil...to enable Him to be a merciful and faithful High Priest...to fulfill the promise of a son to sit on the throne of David forever...." 1

A. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF DECLARING HIMSELF TO MAN:

B. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF GIVING US AN EXAMPLE TO LIVE BY:

I Pe. 2:21; I Jn. 2:6

C. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING SALVATION TO MAN:

Heb. 10:1-10; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 10:10

D. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF SETTING HIS VICTORY OVER SATAN:

I Jn. 3:8

E. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING A HIGH PRIEST FOR MAN:

F. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING AN EVERLASTING KING FOR ISRAEL:

Lu. 1:31-33

G. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING A PROPER JUDGE:

Jn. 5:22,27

H. GOD WAS IN THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING A HEAD FOR THE CHURCH:

Eph. 1:19-23

II. CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE INCARNATION

A. Christ came from heaven to earth to dwell. Jn. 6:51

B. Christ left the riches of heaven for the poverty of the earth. II Cor. 8:9; Lu. 9:58

C. Christ left the glory of heaven for the plainness of earth. Jn. 17:5

D. Christ left the equality with God for the servant hood of earth. Phil. 2:6-7

E. Christ left the form of God (or spirit) for the form of man.

III. THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INCARNATION:

THE VIRGIN BIRTH WAS NECESSARY

A. It fulfilled prophecy: Isaiah 7:14
B. It maintained Christ perfect through the conception process:

Ryrie leaves the door open to there not being a need for the virgin birth.

"What was the purpose of the Virgin Birth? It need not be the necessary means of preserving Christ sinless, since God could have overshadowed two parents so as to protect the baby's sinlessness had He so desired. It served as a sign of the uniqueness of the Person who was born." 2

IV. THE INCARNATION HAS ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

IV. PRACTICAL VALUES OF THE INCARNATION

"This Lord Jesus is the indispensable Revealer of God. He is the Forgiver of sins, and He is the final judge. The alternative to these claims is undeniable and clear. there is no logical alternative to the truth as the Lord spoke it, other than that He was demented or an impostor. both these alternatives are unthinkable. But the bit is here. You cannot accept some of His teachings and dismiss others, and still call Him a good Man, an honest Teacher and a worthy Example.

"Can you know God apart from Him? If you answer yes, you are on the opposite side from the Lord Jesus Christ -- He said you cannot....To know Him is to know the Father, for He and the Father are one."

William Culbertson; THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED 3

For further study: Matt. 20:28; Jn. 1:14; Jn. 3:13; Jn. 3:17; Jn. 6:51; Rom. 1:3; Rom. 8:3; I Cor. 15:47; II Cor. 8:9; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7,8; I Tim. 1:15; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:9; Heb. 2:14; Heb. 2:17;

Heb. 10:5; I Jn. 3:5.

ENDNOTES:

1. Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. P 56

2. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 243

3. William Culbertson; THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED, source unknown

02200

THE NATURES OF CHRIST

CHARACTERS OF THE DEBATE: The main characters of the debate over the Natures of Christ were Athanasius and Arius. We want to take a short look at these two men.

Athanasius was born 296 A.D. in Alexandria Egypt, and died in 373 A.D. at Alexandria. He was described as a small energetic monk according to one encyclopedia. He held to the deity of Christ. He could not conceive of non-God being a part of God. He felt that Christ did things that only God could do. (Creation: Col. 1:15ff; Redemption.) He wrote several books concerning the topic of the incarnation of Christ. He also suffered periods of exile because of his beliefs. (Cairns mentions five.)

Arius was a man that loved controversy. Some suggest that this may have been the reason for some of his thinking. He wanted to dispute with the authorities or stated standards.

You will run into people in this world that function in this fashion. There was a Christian in Denver years ago that loved to talk about spiritual things and when the conversation was low, he oft times would begin a good discussion by taking a position theologically that was totally in error, just to see what he could stir up. Rather than drop the false doctrine, he would argue as hard as he could from the heretical position. It was good for both parties, because it challenged both to really understand what they believed and quite often they wound up knowing more about the heresy than the heretic would have known. Arius, however was firm in his beliefs and stuck by them through much trouble.

Arius was born in Libya or Alexandria in 256 A.D. and died in Constantinople in 336 A.D. He was a deacon and then a presbyter and his teaching grew out of a reaction to a sermon entitled "The Unity of the Trinity." This sermon was delivered in Alexandria by the bishop Alexander.

He wanted to avoid a polytheistic concept of God. In other words he saw God as one God and wanted to reject any idea that there was more than one God.

He was educated under the teaching of Lucian. Cairns mentions of Lucian, "Another rather satirical and, for that reason, valuable witness is Lucian, who wrote a satire upon Christians and their faith about 170. Lucian described Christ as the one 'who was crucified in Palestine' because he began 'this new cult.'" 1

Arius began his trouble in 318 A.D. and was banished in 321 A.D. His banishment was in Illyria. He was condemned at the Synod of Antioch in 325. He was later to be restored to fellowship with the church, but died on the eve of the ceremony.

Though Arius and other of the church fathers held to doctrines that we would detest today, we need to understand that these men were in the first decades of systematizing doctrine. They did not have the great works on theology that we have today, and they had few commentaries that they could dig into. Their knowledge of the word was growing, and far from complete.

Even today we are defining doctrines that have not been properly studied, over the centuries, and we will continue to define doctrines for centuries to come. The Bible is much deeper than man's mind can ever dig!

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEBATE: Alexander of Alexandria saw to the condemnation of Arius at the Synod of Antioch. Arius fled to the palace of Eusebius the bishop of Nicomedia, who was a schoolmate.

Constantine, the emperor, saw a possible split in the empire coming due to the controversy, so tried to stop this split from growing. He wrote both parties however to no avail. This shows how closely the church and state were tied together. A religious debate was threatening the empire. He called the Council of Nicaea in the summer of 325 AD. He invited 300 bishops but less than 10 were from the west. Constantine presided over the council and also paid the expenses.

There were three positions presented to the council:

a. Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia and a minority present held that: "Christ had not existed from all eternity but had a beginning by the creative act of God prior to time." "...Christ was of a different (heteros) essence or substance than the Father." Christ's life showed him to be divine but "...created out of nothing, subordinate to the Father and of a different essence from the Father. He was not coequal, coeternal of consubstantial [of same substance or essence I think] with the Father." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTURIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 143) He was divine but not deity.

b. Athanasius "insisted that Christ had existed from all eternity with the Father and was of the

same essence (homoousios) as the Father, although He was a distinct personality." "...if Christ were less than he [Athanasius] had stated Him to be, He could not be the Savior of men." "...Christ was coequal, coeternal and consubstantial with the Father...." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTURIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 144)

c. Eusebius of Caesarea "...proposed a moderate view which would combine the best ideas of Arius and Athanasius. Over two hundred of those present followed his views at first. He taught that Christ was not created out of nothing as Arius had insisted, but that He was begotten of the Father before time in eternity. Christ was of a like (homoi) or similar essence to the Father. His creed became the basis of the creed that was finally drawn at Nicaea, but that one differed from his in its insistence upon the unity of essence or substance of the Father and the Son." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTURIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 144) 2

The creed set forth at this council had undergone changes before coming to us as the Nicaea creed which is held to, and quoted by many churches and theologians today.

Arius wanted to preserve Christ as an INDEPENDENT being. He also wanted to hold to a MONOTHEISTIC God. His error was in saying that Christ was a separate being from God.

Athanasius held to a monotheistic God with three personalities. This allowed for the personality of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit yet also allowed for the unity of one God.

Arius saw Christ as a creature and not as God. He was given divine glory but was not God. Arius felt that the traits of Christ's humanity were showing that he was not God but man. (Christ learned, Christ depended on God, Christ is separate from God.)

Athanasius felt that to be divine you must be God. There are some considerations that relate to this point of Christ being God.

Ignatius a bishop of Antioch, in 112 A.D. (about 14 years after the writing of the Revelation) stated a clear belief in the oneness of God and man in Christ. He attributed Christ to the union of Mary and God. He mentions "God in man" as a clear indication of his belief in the dual makeup of the Lord.

Even Irenaeus believed Christ to be God. He lived around 180 A.D. He mentioned his belief that Christ was with God in the beginning, as well as His part in the creation. He makes clear statement that Christ always existed with God the Father.

Dionysius Bishop of Rome (259-68) mentioned that he felt that God, Christ and the Holy Spirit were one. Tertullian also spoke of this. (160-220 A.D.)

Nowhere does the Scripture tell us that Christ was created. Why would anyone assume that He was? Scripture seems clear on the subject. Jo. 1:1-18 shows Christ to be God. cf Rev. 19:13.

Col. 2:9, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This is a quite plain statement from the Father, through the writer of Scripture.

Heb. 9:11-14 mentions that Christ the perfect sacrifice entered into the holy of holies in the heavenlies and presented His blood. This cannot be done by an imperfect created being - be it man or some other being.

Heb. 9:16-17 shows that God made a covenant or will with man. The will could not take effect until God died. Christ being God died and fulfilled this requirement. If Christ was not God then this requirement has not yet been met.

Rev. 22:13 tells us of Christ, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

Augustus Strong in his Systematic Theology mentions of Arius' view, "This view originated in a misinterpretation of the Scriptural accounts of Christ's state of humiliation, and in mistaking temporary subordination for original and permanent inequality." 3

Arius stated that Christ was created, prior to the heavens and the earth, to mediate between God and man.

He did not grapple with the thought of how anyone less than God - a perfect God - could be a perfect sacrifice? Nothing that is created is perfect. Only God is perfect. Micah 5:2 mentions of Christ, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." How can anything less than God satisfy God's requirements for salvation and mediatorship?

ADDITIONS TO THE DEBATE: During the centuries other thought has come forward on the natures of Christ. We want to look briefly at a number of these teachings, as well as look at some of the modern day religions that follow similar thinking.

There will be a brief discussion of the teaching followed by modern day groups and in some cases a few references that might be of help.

A. EBIONISM: Ebionism would have us believe that there was no divine nature and that Christ was only a man. The Ebionites were Jewish Christians that saw Christ as a prophet and Messiah. They were around for the first six centuries. They also rejected Paul's teachings.

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: Christian Science; Spiritualism; Jehovah Witnesses; Modern Theology; Mormonism; Hinduism; Islam; Confucianism; Unitarianism; Unity; Hare Krishna. Jn. 1:1; 14; Philip. 2:5-7; Jn. 8:58.

B. DOCETISM: Docetism is the belief that Christ's body, only seemed real, and that the crucifixion and resurrection were only illusions. These people were found in the first few centuries. Matter was sinful to them. Some say in jest, that they believed that Christ was a spook.

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: Gnostics; Some liberals. Matt. 2:1; Lu. 2:52; Heb. 2:14.

C. ARIANISM: Arianism is another early church heresy denounced at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. They believed Christ was created or begotten but not eternal and lower than God.

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: Moon (Unification Church); Mormon.

D. NESTORIANISM: Nestorianism teaches that Christ is one body had two natures and two persons but these were not united. Nestorius also taught that Mary hadn't given birth to Jesus.

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: I don't know of any at the present. By our verbiage at times I wonder if some fundamentalists don't preach a Nestorian doctrine even though we don't believe it. We hold up Christ as totally God with all His attributes yet talk about things that He did not know or could not do. This borders on two natures and two persons in one body. Philip. 2:1-7; Matt. 1:20.

E. EUTYCHANISM: Eutychanism was started by Eutychus in the late 300's A.D. He saw Christ as having two natures to begin with but the two were so perfectly mixed that they became one nature thus denying Christ's divinity and humanity and taught a one nature Christ. This was a perfect blending - no human - no divine - just resultant Christ. You might say that this is the "Mix Master Mixer" version.

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: Unity

"The movement stresses positive thought, prayer, and faith as guides to health, happiness, and prosperity." 4

"'The Bible says that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but the Bible does not here refer to Jesus o Nazareth, the outer man; it refers to the Christ, the spiritual identity of Jesus, whom he acknowledged in all his ways, and brought forth into his outer self, until even the flesh of his body was lifted up, purified, spiritualized, and redeemed, thus he became Jesus christ, the word mad flesh.'"

"Unity teaches that within all of us there is an 'inner Christ,' with perfection, a divine awareness...." 5

Lu. 22:41-44.

F. CERINTHIANISM: Cerinthianism teaches that Jesus was merely mortal but that Divine came upon him for a time. Cerinthus also held no special birth for Christ either. It is said that the Apostle John left when Cerinthus entered, fearing the roof would fall upon a heretic of this magnitude.

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: Theosophy

Kauffman tells us:

"Such principles in it as REINCARNATION and PANTHEISM seem primarily HINDU and BUDDHIST. It encourages human brotherhood and religious study." 6

McDowell gives the following information:

"...for Christ... is no man but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being...."

He quotes Mrs. Blavatsky, "...Christ is merely his title, meaning 'anointed one' or 'messiah,' designating the office Jesus held. There is no justification for making any distinction between Jesus and 'the christ.' Furthermore, making Christ a principle rather than a true man is a denial of the whole purpose of His coming...." 7

Heb. 13:8.

G. APOLLINARIANISM: Apollinarianism teaches that Christ was not completely human. The divine Logos replaced the human nature leaving only flesh and soul occupied by Logos. This teaching was started by Apollinarius of Laodicia. He was condemned at the First Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D.

MODERN DAY VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING: None I know of at the present. Lu. 4:1ff; Mk. 2:8; Lu. 23:46.

Now that we have looked at the false teachings of the past let's take a peek at what we will see in the coming pages as the true doctrine of Christ, as discovered from the Scriptures.

THE PROPER VIEW OF CHRIST

FOUNDER: GOD

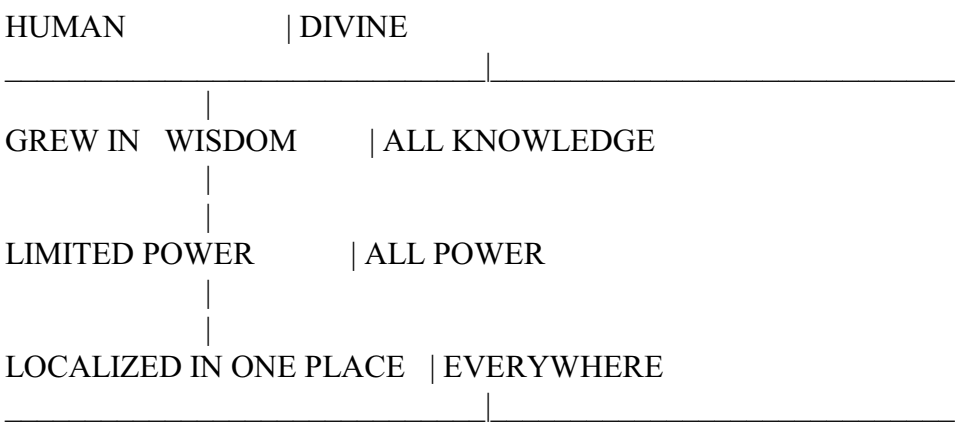
VIEW OF CHRIST: BOTH HUMAN AND DIVINE / SEPARATE NATURES YET ONE

CHRIST WAS AS MUCH MAN AS IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN GOD.

CHRIST WAS AS MUCH GOD AS IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN MAN.

TRUE HUMANITY ADDED TO UNDIMINISHED DEITY.

CHRIST: GOD/MAN



IV. APPLICATION OF THE DEBATE:

A. We have seen that Arius was banished, condemned and exiled and then died before he was seen as restored to the church. It might be good for just a moment to think of that process that he went through.

Put yourself in this position. You have had a belief that has been condemned by the majority of the church of your time, you have been kicked out of the country and you love the brethren, right!

Would we really love the brethren at that point in our lives? We have seen that Christ is our example and He loved even those that nailed Him to the cross, so must we love the brethren even when they feel we are in error.

We also should go to our knees in prayer and our desk in study to see if we really are correct. If we are in error and seek knowledge honestly before the Lord, we will see what God wants us to see.

B. We also saw that Eusebius presented a reconcilatory view of Christ at the Council of Nicaea. This is not a bad idea, if you do no damage to the doctrine!

There are times when one person or group will come up with a radical view, and those they teach come up with a reaction view of the radical view which is usually a complete pendulum swing away from the original view. This pendulum swing is often, also a radical view. It quite often is

true that the truth is somewhere in the middle.

Example: The liberal element of Christianity went into what was cuttingly termed, "the social Gospel," and the Social Gospel people were soundly rebuked for years for their radical view of the teachings of Jesus. Over the years the fundamental camp for the most part took their stance on the other end of the pendulum swing and did nothing socially except to preach the Gospel.

Now, in more recent years the fundamentalist camp has found that they have nothing to say to those in need unless they are willing to share in the physical realm as well. Fundamentalism has finally found a balance that we should live with, and that balance is in the middle. The liberal side normally represented by The National Council of Churches, recently was challenged by their head to consider that they might have specialized on the social end of the Gospel for too many years, and that they have really missed in giving the message of the Gospel over the years. (I don't know what they would consider the Gospel these days, but it is good that he realizes that their efforts in the social realm are unbalanced.)

As you are faced with what you perceive to be falsehood, don't react completely against it, but look to the Word of God and see what it says. The Word is our truth, not falsehood nor our reaction to falsehood.

C. Constantine saw the religious debate as dangerous to the empire. We may see such religious debate in our own country. We have a growing split in the early 1990's between Christianity and the world system within the United States. There is an outward attack on the Christian community by the media as well as political officials in some communities. We are seeing visitation and Bible studies in homes becoming illegal in some communities due to the fact that the unsaved are running our communities. Does that give you any insight into the Christian's responsibilities in coming days in politics?

The Roman Catholics have had priests in Congress for years yet when a preacher runs for office they cry separation of Church and State. It was of interest that Robertson was breaking the sacred separation of church and state, while in the same campaign Jackson, a Black preacher, was not held accountable to the same standard.

The Roman church has, via their parishioners, becoming involved in local school boards, seen nuns and priests hired with public funds to teach in public schools.

I believe that we need to be active within our own political system and do what we can. I do not believe a man should leave a calling to preach to become a statesman, however there may well be many "laymen" that should be statesmen!

D. We can have a confidence in the face of false doctrine! There have been new teachings that come along that boggle my mind at first. I often wonder how in the world Christianity is going to confront these new falsehoods. Usually after a little prayer and Bible study the false teaching

begins to crumble.

Even if you can't refute some new teaching, look for the answers, and talk to other believers. Quite often several minds can do much better than one. Don't fear and tremble, just go looking for the answers! WE HAVE THE TRUTH - THE WORD OF GOD! ANYTHING CONTRARY TO IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD AND MET AS ERROR! With this understanding there should be no problem.

END NOTES:

1. Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTURIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. P 50

2. Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTURIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 143-147

3. Augustus H. Strong, SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907 p 670

4. Donald T. Kauffman, "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS," Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967
p 421

5. Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, "HANDBOOK OF TODAY'S RELIGIONS," San Bernardino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1983, pp 134-135

6. Kauffman, p 411

7. McDowell and Stewart, p 87

8. Misc. sources of information:

a. Encycl. of Religion and Ethics.

b. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY; Augustus H. Strong; The Judson Press; Valley Forge, PA; 1907

9. For further information on the various views of the natures see:

a. Emery H. Bancroft/Ed. Ronald B. Mayers, "ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977, p 96

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Baker Book House, 1984

c. Charles C. Ryrie, "BASIC THEOLOGY," Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 250

d. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 283ff

THE NATURES OF CHRIST
HANDOUT

I. CHARACTERS OF THE DEBATE

A. Athanasius: Born 296 A.D./Died 373 A.D.

B. Arius: Born 256 A.D./Died 336 A.D.

Arius was a student of Lucian. Cairns mentions of Lucian, "Another rather satirical and, for that reason, valuable witness is Lucian, who wrote a satire upon Christians and their faith about 170. Lucian described Christ as the one 'who was crucified in Palestine' because he began 'this new cult.'" 1

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEBATE

There were three positions presented to the council of Nicaea.

a. Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia and a minority present held that: "Christ had not existed from all eternity but had a beginning by the creative act of God prior to time." "...Christ was of a different (heteros) essence or substance than the Father." Christ's life showed him to be divine but "...created out of nothing, subordinate to the Father and of a different essence from the Father. He was not coequal, coeternal of consubstantial [of same substance or essence I think] with the Father." He was divine but not deity.

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creed became the basis of the creed that was finally drawn at Nicaea, but that one differed from his in its insistence upon the unity of essence or substance of the Father and the Son." 2

FACTS:

1. Ignatius a bishop of Antioch, in 112 A.D.:
2. Jo. 1:1-18 shows Christ to be God. cf Rev. 19:13.
3. Dionysius Bishop of Rome (259-68)
4. Tertullian
5.
6. Col. 2:9
7. Heb. 9:11-14
8. Heb. 9:16-17
9. Rev. 22:13
10. Augustus Strong in his Systematic Theology mentions of Arius' view, "This view originated in a misinterpretation of the Scriptural accounts of Christ's state of humiliation, and in mistaking temporary subordination for original and permanent inequality." 3

III. ADDITIONS TO THE DEBATE

A. EBIONISM:

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

Christian Science Spiritualism
J.W. Modern Theology
Mormonism Hinduism
Islam Confucianism
Unitarianism Unity
Hare Krishna

Jn. 1:1; 14; Philip. 2:5-7; Jn. 8:58.

B. DOCETISM:

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

Gnostics Some liberal

Matt. 2:1; Lu. 2:52; Heb. 2:14.

C. ARIANISM:

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

Moon (Unification Church) Mormon

D. NESTORIANISM:

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

None I know of at the present.

Philip. 2:1-7; Matt. 1:20.

E. EUTYCHANISM:

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

Unity

"The movement stresses positive thought, prayer, and faith as guides to health, happiness, and prosperity." 4

"'The Bible says that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but the Bible does not here refer to Jesus o Nazareth, the outer man; it refers to the Christ, the spiritual identity of Jesus, whom he acknowledged in all his ways, and brought forth into his outer self, until even the flesh of his body was lifted up, purified, spiritualized, and redeemed, thus he became Jesus Christ, the word mad flesh.'"

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Lu. 22:41-44.

F. CERINTHIANISM:

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

Theosophy

Kauffman tells us:

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Heb. 13:8.

G. APOLLINARIANISM:

MODERN DAY VERSIONS OF THE TEACHING:

None I know of at the present.

Lu. 4:1ff; Mk. 2:8; Lu. 23:46.

THE PROPER VIEW OF CHRIST

FOUNDER:

VIEW OF CHRIST:

CHRIST WAS AS MUCH MAN AS IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN GOD.
CHRIST WAS AS MUCH GOD AS IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN MAN.

CHRIST: GOD/MAN

HUMAN	DIVINE
GREW IN WISDOM	ALL KNOWLEDGE
LIMITED POWER	ALL POWER
LOCALIZED IN ONE PLACE	EVERYWHERE

IV. APPLICATION OF THE DEBATE:

ENDNOTES:

1. Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTURIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. P 50

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Eerdmans, 1949, p 283ff

02250

THE HYPOSTATIC UNION

The doctrine stated: "In the incarnation of the Son of God, a human nature was inseparably united forever with the divine nature in the one person of Jesus Christ, yet with the two natures remaining distinct, whole, and unchanged, without mixture or confusion so that the one person, Jesus Christ, is truly God and truly man." 1

Ryrie states the problem that we now face thusly "This concept of the hypostatic or one-person union of the divine and human natures in one Person is probably one of the most difficult concepts to comprehend in theology. Not one of us has ever seen Deity except as the Scriptures reveal God, and not one of us has ever seen perfect humanity except as the Scriptures reveal pre-fallen Adam and our Lord. To try to relate these two concepts to the person of Christ adds complexities to ideas that are in themselves difficult to comprehend." 2

Scripture states the problem:

HE WAS FULLY GOD: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily." Col. 2:9

HE WAS FULLY MAN: "Then Joseph...took unto him his wife, And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name Jesus." Matt. 1:24-25

Shedd suggests the early church fathers illustration. (Chalcedon and later) They suggest that this union is similar to iron and heat. The heat can heat the iron but the two will remain heat and iron. Neither loses any of it's own properties.

Dr. Miller suggests that Christ's two natures were united, yet they each maintained a separate identity. 3 Others suggest that the two natures were united into one. That one nature was unique in all of eternity past and eternity future.

The union of God and man was complete. There was only one personality. Jesus Christ was the God man. He was not God. He was not man. He was totally God and totally man. This was the merger of two natures into one essence and indeed, one nature.

Some suggest that He had two natures with in the one being, yet if you understand the definition of nature, you will realize that a being cannot have two natures.

In short there was no communication between natures for they were one nature.

This union is also referred to by some as the Theanthropic union. The = God and anthro = man. The note should be made however, that this term applies only to the person of Christ and not to His natures. If His natures were theanthropic there would be a mixing of the natures and this is not possible.

Some statements that might clarify what we are talking about.

1. Two natures united without any loss of essential attributes.

2. Each nature maintains essential identity.

3. No loss or transfer of any attribute or property from one nature to another.

4. Christ had both human and divine consciousness.

5. Christ had two areas of desire but one determinative will - that of his divine nature.

We might just take a moment to consider just what his human nature was like. We know that He was completely human but was he "COMPLETELY" human as you and me? The answer is in the physical realm, yes, He was as human as you and me. On the other hand we must consider him on the spiritual level. He did not have a sin nature due to the virgin birth. (The fallen nature descends through Adam and the man. With no human father, there was no sin nature.)

The question comes then, was he totally like Adam was before the fall? The indications are yes. He had no earthly father to transfer the human, fallen nature, so He must be as Adam was before the fall.

Next question. Are there any other differences either spiritually or physically between Christ's humanity and Adam before the fall. I see none.

Pardington states, "The human nature and the divine nature - each in its completeness - are organically and indissolubly united in the one unique person of Jesus Christ."

"Neither the human nor the divine nature acts independently of the other; but in every thought, word, and act both natures are so inseparably united that the thought, word, or act is the product of one single personality." 4

Strong states, "Distinctly as the Scriptures represent Jesus Christ to have been possessed of a divine nature and of a human nature, each unaltered in essence and undivested of its normal attributes and powers, they with equal distinctness represent Jesus Christ as a single undivided personality in whom these two natures are vitally and inseparably united, so that he is properly, not God and man, but the God-man." 5

If you were a disciple walking with Him you would view Christ as one person, as a total - just like any other person. You would not see one day, a man side and the next a glorious side. He is not a Jekel and Hyde - His personality was His personality - no division or difference.

SOME TERMS TO PLAY WITH:

Hypostasis = "the mode of being by which any substantial existence is given an independent and distinct individuality." New Standard Dict. as quoted by Chafer 6

The Hypostatic union is a term unique to Christ and the union of two complete natures.

Nature = Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, "1 a: the inherent character or basic constitution of a person or thing: ESSENCE....." 7

Substance = Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, "1 a: essential nature: ESSENCE....." 8

Essence = Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, "1 a: the permanent as contrasted with the accidental element of being b: the individual, real, or ultimate nature of a thing esp. as opposed to its existence c: the properties or attributes by means of which something can be placed in its proper class or identified as being what it is....." 9

You note that the three are seemingly used as interchangeable.

If you apply this interchangeability to Christ and His natures you will find yourself into some of the misconceptions that we looked at last time.

We need to view nature as the composite of attributes. We need to view substance as the composite of material or immaterial. Jesus was man - material. Christ was God - immaterial.

We need to view essence as the composite of the nature and substance. This would allow us to look at all info and determine that Christ was unique in all of creation and time. He was the God-man.

The Chalcedon Creed of 451 seems to state it quite plainly. "Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; [underlining is the authors] the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the

characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us." 10

The Westminster Confession states it a bit differently.

"The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures - the Godhead and the manhood - were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man" (Chap. viii. sec. 2, cited by Cunningham, HISTORICAL THEOLOGY, 3rd ed., I, 311 as quoted in Chafer. 11

Lutheranism teaches that the attributes of deity could be transferred to the humanity, thus allowing the transference of Christ's omnipresence to the humanity. Christ is thusly seen as omnipresent in His humanity and thusly present in the "Real Presence" in the Lord's Table. 12

Theissen comes very close to this same thought in his Theology. "...Christ is in His people. He is there in His deity; and by the union of His humanity with His Deity, also in His humanity." 13

In His humanity? I'm not sure. I'd say in His divine presence. His body is at the right hand of the Father. I'm not sure I feel comfortable saying his humanity is omnipresent. He is a glorified person, not a person, and that is quite a difference. He is glorified at the Fathers side, not me, or you.

Bancroft also follows this line, "In other words, the attributes of the divine nature are imparted to the human without passing over into its essence - so that the human Christ even on earth had power to be, to know, and to do as God." 14 "without passing over into its essence." "How is that possible?

The mixing or transference of attributes is impossible for if the infinity of God were transferable to man then would not God be the less and man the more? The thought of transference comes from the idea that Christ did some things as man and some things as God and some things as God-man.

Hodge suggests the following categories. I list them as Ryrie lists them for your information:

"(a) actions predicated on the whole person, like redemption (both natures being involved);

(b) actions predicated on the divine nature (though the whole Person is the subject, like preexistence true only of the divine nature); and

(c) actions predicated on the human nature, like being thirsty." 15

Ryrie summarizes his thought by stating, "Whatever help such a classification may give, it seems more important to remember that the Person does whatever He does, revealing whatever attribute of whichever nature He reveals." 16

The question arises as to whether Christ had one will or two wills.

TWO WILL HOLDERS:

Ryrie

"...it seems to me that every single decision stemmed from either the "will" of His divine nature or the "will" of His human nature or a blending of both, making it proper to think of two "wills." 17

ONE WILL HOLDERS:

Ryrie mentions Walvoord's comment in his book on Christ when speaking of the decision to die on the cross, "here, as in all other cases, the ultimate sovereign will of Christ was to do the Father's will." 18 The conflict of DESIRES as Walvoord puts it was what went on in the garden and not a conflict between wills. He sees two desires and one will that chooses between those two desires. If the Human desire thirsts and the divine side doesn't thirst the will decides to drink.

Let's list the parts of the Lord in this discussion:

I might add that none of the theologians that I have checked did this, nor did they delve into the area of how many spirit's or souls were present.

1. One body.

2. Two natures. (sets of attributes.)

3. Two substances. (Material and immaterial.)

4. One essence. (Compilation of all that He was.)

5. One personality.

Theissen suggests via a comment by Hodge that there is one personality and that personality is divine. "Christ's personality resides in the divine nature, not the human. Hodge says: As in man the personality is in the soul and not in the body, so the personality of Christ is in the divine nature...It was a divine person, not merely a divine nature, that assumed humanity...." 19

God's personality in man. A personality is all of ones makeup. God plus man would develop into one personality. That personality would be divine and human. Personality comes from the make up of the parent and the environment of upbringing thus we might assume that Mary and Joseph may have had some input into the personality of Christ.

6. One soul would be my choice at this point in time and that soul being the human soul of Jesus. I am open to instruction on this one.

The above comment by Hodge would suggest only one soul and that, divine. The idea of a human child being born without a soul however is untenable, especially in that He is to be completely and wholly man. We saw in our study on Christ's humanity that Christ had all three parts of man, a body, soul and spirit.

To say that He had a divine soul and human body doesn't compute. Indeed, does a spirit being such as God have a soul? Does God have a soul? Might it be proper to view it as the divine personality coming to be the personality of this human soul that has no existence apart from this union?

This seems to be what Strong suggests, "This possession of two natures does not involve a double personality in the God-man, for the reason that the Logos takes into union with himself, not an individual man with already developed personality, but human nature which has had no separate existence before its union with the divine." 20

7. Two spirits? No, one only and that being the spirit of Jesus.

It may be suggested that there was one divine spirit and no human spirit.

I believe that a child born even in the manner of Jesus would have to be containing all attributes of the human being including not only body, but soul and spirit as well. If this be true then there would have to be two spirits.

No, God is spirit - He doesn't have one. The facts indicate that Christ had one spirit, with one body, and one soul, merged with God, a spirit being.

Might we suggest that rather than two spirits we have complete man, body, soul, and spirit of Jesus united with complete God, Christ?

The fact of souls or spirits is academic, if that. The two complete beings were united in some

manner. That is fact of Scripture.

Chafer states that Christ was simply "As other men are threefold in their beings - body, soul and spirit - this incomparable Person is fourfold, namely, Deity, human body, human soul, and human spirit." 21

This eliminates the discussion that we have just had and may well have as much substantiation.

This would be consistent with our definition of essence. That which makes up the being. All of God was merged with all of man. This to me would demand that there be two wills, and that there would be one that was determinative as some theologians suggest and that determinative will would be the divine. (Chafer has good coverage on this section of theology in the full set. Vol. I p 382ff. Strong p 683ff also has a lengthy section on this topic.)

CONCLUSIONS:

1. God has really left us up in the air on this one with very little information other than statement of fact. We might do well to leave it alone, yet there are so many errors that come up from an improper understanding of what was revealed. We need to know what we have covered to be forewarned of some of the false teachings that are around.

2. Our Savior is quite unique in all the world and in all the saviors that have graced our planet. He alone is God-man.

3. Do you have a feel for those that went astray in the early years of the church? They were struggling with these issues and questions and they had no church fathers to refer to, nor commentaries to jog their minds.

I believe what has been covered here is true and that it can help us understand the Scriptures easier. We should know our Savior a little better for having worked through this.

END NOTES:

1. Walter A. Elwell, Ed., "EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984, p 540

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10. Henry Bettenson, "DOCUMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH," New York: Oxford University Press, 1947, pp 72-73; used by permission of Oxford University Press

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13. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 306

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19. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B.

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21. Chafer, vol. V p 49

HANDOUT

THE HYPOSTATIC UNION

The doctrine stated: "In the incarnation of the Son of God, a human nature was inseparably united forever with the divine nature in the one person of Jesus Christ, yet with the two natures remaining distinct, whole, and unchanged, without mixture or confusion so that the one person, Jesus Christ, is truly God and truly man." 1

HE WAS FULLY GOD: Col. 2:9

HE WAS FULLY MAN: Matt. 1:24-25

1. Two natures united without any loss of essential attributes.

2. Each nature maintains essential identity.

3. No loss or transfer of any attribute or property from one nature to another.

4. Christ had both human and divine consciousness.

5. Christ had two areas of desire but one determinative will - that of his divine nature.

SOME TERMS TO PLAY WITH:

Hypostasis

Nature

Substance

Essence

TWO WILLS:

ONE WILL:

1. One body.

2. Two natures.

3. Two substances.

4. One essence.

5. One personality.

6. One soul

7. Two spirits?

CONCLUSIONS:
Study questions:

1. Does it matter if Christ had two wills, or one? Why?

2. Is Christ unlike you, except in His sinlessness? How?

END NOTES:

1. Walter A. Elwell, Ed., "EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984, p 540

02300

THE KENOSIS

KENOSIS, or as some call it, THE KENOTIC THEORY OF THE INCARNATION

Dr. Miller in his theology class notes calls the act of Christ in Philippians 2:7 as His self veiling. When Christ took upon Himself the form of man, He veiled or emptied Himself of His glory so that His true being could not be seen. 1

Let us take time to read the Philippians text (5-8): "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became

obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The idea of the Philippians text leaves five basic interpretations: (The titles of these theories come from A.B. Bruce. 2)

1. The "absolute metamorphic" view that Christ gave up attributes and that His divine consciousness was gone until in the temple at twelve when it began to come forth. Gess holds to this thought.

2. The "absolute dualistic" theory - That Christ surrendered some of His attributes when He became man. Thiessen describes this position as follows: "They tell us that Christ emptied Himself of His relative attributes, - his omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, - while retaining His immanent attributes ----His holiness, love, and truth." 3 He lists the following theologians in this tradition. Thomasius; Delitzsch; Forest; Crosby.

This, to most, would indicate that he was less than God if there were some attributes that were not there. Indeed, it seems unlikely that He would make Himself less than God and then assume His whole Godness at the ascension. To most it is inconceivable that He could become less than God for if He is less than God, then He is not God.

3. The "absolute semi-metamorphic" view - That Christ veiled His attributes. This would indicate that He hid them from other human beings. He used them but those around Him did not know He was using them. Walvoord mentions Ebrard's comment that states "that the divine properties were disguised and appeared as a mode of human existence. The mode of existence of Christ was changed from that of the form of God to the form of a Man, from the eternal manner of being to a temporal manner of being." 4

This seems to be a bit on the dishonest side, yet aside from this, it seems that He would not be a real example to us as a man that had a God side that was doing all those great things in secret.

4. That Christ laid aside some of His attributes. This seems to be very similar to number two above. If He indeed laid aside anything of His divine nature, He would seem to be less than divine. You cannot separate the divine attributes from the divine and have full divinity remaining.

5. That Christ voluntarily limited His use of His attributes. This position would submit to us that Christ remained completely divine and yet completely human. He, on His own, decided to limit the use of some of His divine attributes while here on earth so that He could become our example.

Theissen mentions that Strong held to this thought. "The humiliation consisted in the surrender of the independent exercise of the divine attributes...In the continuous surrender on the part of the God-man, so far as his human nature was concerned, of the exercise of those divine powers with

which it was endowed by virtue of its union with the divine, etc." 5

One major thought to prove this position is that the Lord would have had to call down the angels to save Him. If he had all attributes available to him this would not have been necessary. See Mt 4:6 cf. Ps 91:11-12.

Theissen holds to the idea of the surrender of the independent exercise of the attributes. "...the Scriptures teach, when taken as a whole, that Christ merely surrendered the independent exercise of some of His relative or transitive attributes." 6 Theissen has a good discussion on this topic.

Bancroft states, "The self-emptying (kenosis) of Christ, which was a voluntary act, consisted in the surrender of the independent exercise of the divine attributes." 7

Bancroft quotes E.Y. Mullins as he gives illustration of this self emptying. Mr. Mullins relates it to a teacher that knows all there is to know about mathematics yet to teach a pupil the teacher puts all his knowledge aside for a time to concentrate on the basics with the pupil. He also likens it to an owner of a chain of department stores that is beside the bed of his near dead son. The father has placed all things aside to concentrate on the son. In like manner Christ set all things aside except what He needed to finish the work of redemption.

Bancroft finishes by stating, "So it was with Christ, who freely and willingly surrendered the independent exercise of His attributes for the sake of and in the interest of His beloved." 8

I like his concluding statement but feel that the illustrations are poor. They speak of functions of the mind and have nothing to do with attributes.

This position of the voluntary setting aside of attributes, has some very nice characteristics.

a. You have a divine person in the fullest sense of the word and He remains fully divine throughout eternity past, the incarnation, and eternity future. This fits best with the phrase that He is the "same yesterday, today and forever."

b. You have a perfect example for man to follow in their spiritual life. He was a man of like nature that was tested and tempted in like manner as we. He was fully relying upon the Holy Spirit for His strength.

c. You have the perfect union of both divine and human. He was just as much God as if He had never been man and He was just as much man as if He had never been God.

In Ryrie's A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE he seems to tie the veiling and nonuse positions together. They are to me somewhat similar, yet different.

"The concept involves the VEILING [caps are my addition] of Christ's preincarnate glory (Jn.

17:5, the condescension of taking on Himself the likeness of sinful flesh (Ro. 8:3), and the voluntary nonuse of some of His attributes of deity during the time of His earthly life (Mt 24:36). His humanity was not a glorified humanity and was thus subject to temptation, weakness, pain and sorrow. Choosing not to use His divine attributes is quite different from saying that He gave them up. Nonuse does not mean subtraction." 9

There are other views that we might mention that might be slightly different from those given.

Anselm held that Christ acted as if he did not possess divine attributes. This would be similar to the veiled view I would think.

Walvoord seems to set forth a view that would be similar to the limiting of the attributes view however he maintains that Christ limited the use while still using them. The limitation would be in the idea that He used them at times and at times He limited them. Thiessen seems to follow this line of thinking as well. His view stated is, "...Christ surrendered no attribute of Deity, but that He did voluntarily restrict their independent use in keeping with His purpose of living among men and their limitations." 10 He maintains that Christ used the attributes at will; however never used those attributes in such a way as to make His life as man easier.

This would seem to say that Christ did some of the miracles in His own power and some of them in someone else's power. This is not the great example that the apostles were given, if He is doing the miracles on His own and not relying on the Holy Spirit.

The Synod of Antioch in 341 felt that this text meant that Christ emptied himself of "the being equal with God" yet held to the full deity of the Lord.

In the Philippians passage we read, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; And, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. 2:5-8

The form of God idea and the form of a servant idea must both carry the idea of complete God and complete servant. If there is "less than" in one then there would be "less than" in the other. Since He was fully a servant to become our example then He had to have been fully God.

The term translated "form" is the Greek word "morphe" which according to Lightfoot after a detailed study of the word in Philo and the New Testament is "that which is intrinsic and essential to the thing." Thus it shows that He was true and complete God while being true and complete servant. 11

The term emptied is something that is self imposed be it laying aside, veiling, or nonuse.

The same term is used in four other texts:

a. Rom. 4:14, "For if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of no effect"

The faith is made void or "no good" and of "no value".

b. I Cor. 1:17, "For Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of christ should be made of no effect."

Again the similar idea of "no good" is seen.

c. I Cor. 9:15 also seems to show "no good" is the idea.

d. II Cor. 9:3 seems also to show the idea of "no good."

Let us apply that thought to Phil. 2:7. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men;" It seems that this text may not give credence to any setting aside, veiling, or nonuse of anything.

This idea of "no good" or void would give idea that He was setting aside all that it meant to be God in the idea of status and position to take on the place, or position, or the status of a servant.

Berkof in his systematic theology mentions of this term and these texts: "The term kenosis is derived from the main verb in Philippians 2:7, ekenosen. This is rendered in the American Revised Version 'emptied Himself'. Dr. Warfield calls this a mistranslation. The verb is found in only four other New Testament passages. . . .In all these it is used figuratively and means 'to make void', 'of no effect', 'of no account', 'of no reputation'. If we so understand the word here, it simply means that Christ made Himself of no account, of no reputation, did not assert His divine prerogative, but took the form of a servant." 12

This might imply that the passage has nothing to do with giving up, veiling, or nonuse. It would only mean that the text meant that He did not hold his deity as something to be held onto and took on the form of a servant.

I don't know if this is the message that Dr. Berkof was trying to relay. It would imply that He did not set forth his divine nature but that the emphasis was on the servant.

Ryrie takes this line of thinking in his Theology. In speaking of this passage he mentions, "And that passage does not discuss at all the question of how or how much Christ's glory was veiled. Nor does it say anything about the use or restriction of divine attributes. It does say that the emptying concerned becoming a man to be able to die. Thus the kenosis means leaving His preincarnate position and taking on a servant-humanity. . . .In the kenosis Christ emptied Himself

of retaining and exploiting His status in the godhead and took on humanity in order to die." 13 (This by the way, seems to contradict what he held in SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINES pp 57-59)

The idea of the Philippians text certainly to me, is as we have just seen. This does not negate our entire discussion. It just gives us a different light and slant to the thoughts.

The Philippians text is the idea that Christ was not holding to his status, or position, and was willing to change that status and position. In the process of this change there seems to have been some change in the use of His attributes.

That change seems best to be defined as a self-imposed limitation of His attributes. The attributes in question would be omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence.

Those that say that Christ did miracles under His own power list many references to prove their point. There is nothing in any of these references that I have considered that show definitely that His own Omnipotence, or other attributes were suddenly in use as Walvoord suggests.

Indeed, for Him to use the powers of God would detract from the promises of the disciples to be able to do miraculous things via the power of the Holy Spirit. They are given Christ as an example yet He can do miracles without the Holy Spirit. This is not a good example of what the disciples could do.

Also, it seems to be a detraction from the ministry of the Holy Spirit if one is to attribute some of the miracles of the Lord to His own divine nature. The Spirit ministered in and through Him as He does in and through us.

There might be another position that would give some food for thought. The idea that God was limited by the fact of His humanity. He could only see as far as normal man could see so there was nothing he could do other than get close enough to see what He wanted to see. He was limited in brain power and storage capacity so was not omniscient as such. He was in a body that knew fatigue so could do only so much. He was in a human form that was limited in physical strength so could not do superhuman things. Etc.

It seems to me that He voluntarily set aside some of these attributes so that He could be wholly an example to the apostles and us that follow. This principle is derived from logic and thought, rather than the Philippians text.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. If you hold to the position of Walvoord, or to the self-imposed nonuse of attributes you are on very good ground scripturally. Any other position will find problems. The idea of nonuse seems to have many things going for it.

Walvoord concludes his discussion with the following from Strong: "Our doctrine of Christ's humiliation will be better understood if we put it midway between two pairs of erroneous views, making it the third of five. The list would be as follows: (1) Gess: The Logos gave up all divine attributes; (2) Thomasius: The Logos gave up relative attributes only; (3) True View: The Logos gave up the independent exercise of divine attributes; (4) Old Orthodoxy: Christ gave up the use of divine attributes; (5) Anselm: Christ acted as if he did not possess divine attributes." 14

Strong uses the terms "gave up the independent exercise of" which indicates that He did not use them while Walvoord mentions the idea of use them but "restrict" the use of them. I'm not sure he isn't miss-using Strong in this quote.

Indeed, Strong makes the statement, "In the continuous surrender, on the part of the God-man, so far as his human nature was concerned, of the exercise of those divine powers with which it was endowed by virtue of its union with the divine, and in the voluntary acceptance, which followed upon this, of temptation, suffering, and death." He also mentions, "In the submission of the Logos to the control of the Holy Spirit...." 15

Strong is not clear to me just what he means, but it seems that he saw Christ as limiting use, as in, nonuse of the attributes.

2. The Philippians text really does not discuss the nonuse, veiling etc. of Christ's attributes. It deals with status or position.

3. View Christ as perfectly divine and perfectly man and you have the thought that you need. We have shown this in our studies on His deity and His humanity.

4. Because the Lord was relying on the Holy Spirit for all of His knowledge and miracles, then we truly have an example to follow.

If you do not feel that His relying on His own divine attributes at times detracts from His being an example to you then that position is quite good. The question is this, When did He rely on His own powers and when did He rely on the Spirit? Did He rely on His own divinity during the wilderness testing? And, we might add who is to determine when He was functioning in the divine and when He was functioning in the servant?

5. The Kenotic theology is barely based on scripture any way you view it. It is not good to build theology on one verse that is highly disputed. The idea is to try to explain how God and man can be one so very completely without a conflict of interest lawsuit.

6. We have noted that some authors contradict themselves at times in their different writings.

Let us think of this for a few moments. I do not say that I know what is going on in their lives. I think that we may draw some possible answers to these contradictions, and see that they are not

necessarily sloppy writers or theologians.

a. They were trained by some very strong personalities. They may have soaked up their teacher's theology and bought everything that was handed them. They may in later life have taken time to study some of the recent church fathers and the Bible and realized that their teachers were not infallible. It is normal to do this, and I trust that you will realize that you may have done the same thing yourself in reading this material, or maybe at your home church.

We need to check all we hear with the Scripture and see if it really fits. I had a Dallas man in one of the colleges that I attended, for a president. His messages were fantastic. I took notes plus more notes and loved his messages. I went back through his message notes one time and tried to relate what he said to the scripture passage and it just was not there. I finally over time threw most of his notes away because they were not really scriptural. Nothing erroneous but not based on the texts he used.

b. Some writers have had serious struggles through their years of preparation, and may not have had time to seriously check out their own thinking on all that they believe.

c. It is normal to change and redefine your thinking as you age and mature in the Lord. I would encourage you to be very patient with people that are teaching what you would term "false doctrine" until you have fully understood their thinking, and you have completely studied the text, or teaching on your own.

Many times I have felt that a persons teaching was incorrect until I took time to understand what they were saying, and took time to study the topic on my own.

In conclusion to our study of the Kenosis, Ryrie agrees with me in his "SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINES" when he states, "What is included in a proper statement of the true doctrine of the kenosis? The concept involves the veiling of Christ's preincarnate glory (Jn 17:5), the condescension of taking on Himself the likeness of sinful flesh (Ro. 8:3), and the voluntary nonuse of some of His attributes of deity during the time of His earthly life (Mt 24:36). His humanity was not a glorified humanity and was thus subject to temptation, weakness, pain and sorrow. Choosing not to use His divine attributes is quite different from saying that He gave them up. Nonuse does not mean subtraction." 16

END NOTES:

1. Dr. Miller, Theology class notes, Western Baptist College

2. Walvoord, John F.; "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Copyright 1969; Moody Press; p 140 (Quoting A.B. Bruce in his "THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST")

3. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B.

Eerdmans, 1949, p 295

4. Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 141

5. Thiessen, p 298

6. Thiessen, p 296

7. Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 147

8. Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 148

9. Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 59

10. Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 144

11. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, 1986, p 261

12. Berkhof finish and add him to book list.

13. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 262

14. Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 145

15. Augustus H. Strong, SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907, p 703

16. Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 59

HANDOUT

THE KENOSIS

The idea of the Philippians text leaves five basic interpretations: (The titles of these theories come from A.B. Bruce. 2)

1. The "absolute metamorphic"

2. The "absolute dualistic"

3. The "absolute semi-metamorphic"

4. The view that Christ laid aside some of His attributes

5. The view that Christ voluntarily limited His use of His at tributes

This position of the voluntary setting aside of attributes, has some very nice characteristics.

a. You have a divine person in the fullest sense of the word and He remains fully divine throughout eternity past, the incarnation, and eternity future. This fits best with the phrase that He is the "same yesterday, today and forever."

b. You have a perfect example for man to follow in their spiritual life. He was a man of like nature that was tested and tempted in like manner as we. He was fully relying upon the Holy Spirit for His strength.

c. You have the perfect union of both divine and human. He was just as much God as if He had never been man and He was just as much man as if He had never been God.

The Term used in the Philippians text is used in four other texts:

a. Rom. 4:14
b. I Cor. 1:17
c. I Cor. 9:15
d. II Cor. 9:3

CONCLUSIONS:

02350

IMPECCABILITY

Impeccability = "1. Free from error, fault, or flaw. 2. Incapable of doing wrong; unerring." 1

From Latin "in" or not, and "peccare" which means, to sin.

This would mean that the word itself means only, not sinning. The thought of theologians, when using the term would follow the dictionary meaning of unable to sin.

Enns mentions that impeccability comes from the Latin phrase, "non potuit peccare" which means not able to sin, while peccability comes from "potuit non peccare" which means able not to sin. (Taken from: "THE MOODY HANDBOOK OF THEOLOGY"; Enns, Paul; Copyright 1989, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 236) Able not to sin, allows for the possibility of sin, yet He did not.

Another term that we need to deal with that is related to this discussion is the HYPOSTATIC UNION.

This is the union between the divine and human natures of Christ and the relationship between the two natures.

Hypostatic is "....of or relating to substance....." according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. 2

Hypo has the idea of under while static has the idea of standing or nonchanging, or in relation to Christ we speak of his nonchanging position as God coming DOWN to man. It is that union of God from above with man here on earth.

Concerning the hypostatic union we must remember: The two natures were integrated! He isn't God and man. He is the God-man. One nature cannot operate independently from the other.

The question of whether some of the Lord's attributes were limited or not is related to this thought. The question of whether only the man was tempted and not God, is also related to this thought. Before we go further let us consider why this is important for us to study.

If Christ could have sinned, some suggest, then He could have messed up the entire plan of the ages to provide salvation for man. If a sin could do that then the plan was defective in the beginning. The plan was laid by a perfect God thus it must have been a perfect plan - ungoofable, unblowable, not even problematic!

Let us look at some views:

LIBERAL VIEW: This view holds that Christ was able to sin. He was mere man and he did what we humans do best - sin. I suspect however that some liberal views that hold Christ as a highly moral man might well hold to the lack of sin, if not inability to sin.

ORTHODOX VIEW: Within the impeccability controversy there are two main views of thought within orthodoxy. We will look at these main two views and one radical view, which classes all but the impeccable side of the controversy as heretics.

The orthodox thought holds that Christ was totally God and totally man, He did not sin, and He could not have sinned and completed His work on the cross, yet within these parameters are three views.

I think that you will find some of all of these in Fundamental circles. The emphasis would definitely be on the "did not" and the "capable of not" side of things. All would see an impeccable Christ, but with different approaches to how He was impeccable.

Ryrie mentions "conservatives" in his discussion as holding to the peccability as well as the impeccability. All would hold to the ultimate fact and need of impeccability as the final result of Christ's life.

a. IMPECCABLE: That Christ was unable to sin in any situation or any form. This inability is based on the fact that Christ was God and God cannot sin - it is against His very nature.

His hypostatic union would not allow it. His two wills may have differed. His human may have been tempted to sin, but His divine definitive will would not allow it. Some of those that hold this position: Ryrie, Walvoord, Dr. Myron Houghton, Shedd, and Chafer.

I will include some comments by Enns in end note number 13, that details this position. I will also give some comments to consider with it.

b. PECCABLE: That Christ was able to sin but did not sin due to His divine nature. Houghton mentioned that DeHann held to peccability. Enns also on page 236 mentions that both M.R. and Richard DeHann teach the peccability of Christ.

Hodge seems to be in this slot. "The sinlessness of our Lord does not amount to absolute impeccability. As a true man, He must have been capable of sinning. That He did not sin under the greatest provocation, which when He was reviled He blessed, which when He suffered He threatened not, that He was dumb, as a sheep before its shearers, is held up to us as an example. Temptation implies the possibility of sin. If from the constitution of His person it had been impossible for Christ to sin, His temptation was unreal and without effect, and He cannot sympathize with His people." 3

c. _____: I'm open for titles for this one.

I considered several but don't like them. Pnemapecare, pnempeccable, pecpnema etc. This position teaches that Christ was capable of sin but did not sin due to His total and perfect reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

I don't know of anyone holding this position, other than some first year classmates of mine in Bible college. We thought that it sounded quite good.

I have not personally run across any writer that mentions this position much less holds it. But remember, just because there are no current authors that hold the position, which doesn't mean it is wrong!

This thinking stemmed from a further application of a statement by Chafer which tells that the Lord relied upon the Spirit in total.

"Though this specific theme will be introduced more fully under Pneumatology, it demands some consideration at this juncture. Again it should be stated that Christ's dependence upon the Holy Spirit was within the sphere of His humanity. As respects His Deity, there was no occasion for Him to cast in dependence upon either the Father or the Spirit; and though He could as God have ministered to His own human needs as fully as did the Spirit, that arrangement would have moved Him from the position occupied by all believers, to whom His life is a pattern. Christians cannot call upon any such resource within themselves; so they are, as He was, cast utterly upon the enabling power of the Spirit. The New Testament asserts throughout - even from His conception through the generating power of the Spirit to His death through the same eternal Spirit - that Christ lived and wrought on a principle of dependence upon Another. No attentive student can fail to observe this truth (cf. Matt. 12:28; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:14, 18; John 3:34). The truth that Christ - and to the end that He might demonstrate the effectiveness of life that is lived wholly in reliance upon the Spirit - was Himself dependent upon the Spirit, should not be allowed to engender any failure to recognize the absolute Deity of the Savior." 4

The implications of Christ relying upon the Holy Spirit in the area of temptation are not considered in Chafer's work that I have found thus far.

To apply what he has stated, it would be simple to suggest that the Lord was in total reliance upon the Spirit to say no to sin, just as we of this age.

Bancroft in his "CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY" p 107-108 mentions a similar thought, but based his ideas on the premise that the divine attributes were absorbed by the human side of Christ.

These divisions of thought are somewhat misleading for all of these feel that Christ DID NOT SIN & THAT HE COULD NOT HAVE SINNED AND AT THE SAME TIME COMPLETED THE WORK GOD HAD SENT HIM TO DO.

All of these positions teach the same ultimate end of impeccability.

Ryrie states the problem of these positions in this manner: "One says that he was able not to sin while the other states that He was not able to sin. In either case He did not sin, though one viewpoint involves the possibility that He could have. That idea is usually held because it is hard to understand how His temptations could have been real if He could not have sinned. That He did not sin and that He was tempted are facts agreed on." 6

I would like to adapt some information from Dr. David Miller's class notes for our study. He was an advocate of the "couldn't sin and impeccable" position.

a. Christ was tempted, yet did not sin: I Peter 2:22; I John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21. b. He was unable to sin - impeccabile. c. Because He of His divine, His human was unable to sin. d. His human side, if left alone was temptable and peccable. e. Due to the union, however He was only temptable. f. Christ's temptation was directed toward His human side, and was tempted in all points as we. James 1:13; Hebrews 4:15. 7

This position normally suggests that if Christ could have sinned, then He could sin today and be kicked out of heaven, thus we could have no eternal security.

Let's apply that logic to ourselves when we are glorified. We can sin now in this life so we can sin when we get to heaven and we can get kicked out of heaven thus having no eternal security. Not correct. UNACCEPTABLE.

The Glorification process relates to the fact that we are eternally secure. We will not sin before God in the eternal state, and there is no way that Christ could sin there either since His glorification. This does not hinder His being able to sin while on earth and is a false argument.

Walvoord mentions that peccability here means peccability there. This is the same situation worded differently. There is no basis for that thought. He also uses the fact that Christ is the same yesterday, today etc. but that also is false in that there are some aspects of Christ's earthly time that ARE NOT true of eternity past nor eternity future. Body for one, glory for two, etc.

Some facts:

1. Christ had no sin nature. Some suggest that this is proof that He could not sin.

2. The sin nature is not required for sin to occur. Example: Adam and Eve pre fall.

3. The sin nature is not required for temptation to occur. Example: Adam and Eve before the fall.

4. It is true that sin in the life of Jesus would have upset the plan of providing salvation.

Some might suggest that there may well have been another plan in the wings that would have

taken care of this failure. There is one problem with that. Christ the Lamb was ordained before the foundation of the world. The Lamb of God would have eternally been imperfect and unable to die for the sins of the world. Not acceptable.

5. This was God. How can God sin? He cannot.

6. The statement, "Peccability then means peccability now in heaven" is not a valid statement. It is not provable nor logical. There are a number of things that changed when Christ was glorified and this was one of them. Body, Glory, etc.

7. Peccability does not require less than deity. It holds to full humanity and full Deity as well.

SOME VERSES TO DEAL WITH:

1. Lu. 4:22, "And all bore him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" They were unable to tell that He was God from His outward appearance. Those around Christ viewed Him as man and not God.

2. Jn. 17:5, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

It would seem that there was a limitation of glory in the Lord Jesus while He was here on earth. Indeed, it would seem, since creation! It seems that Christ took a step out of the glories of heaven to work among men as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament.

3. Jn. 18:6 mentions that the people fell back when they were confronted with Christ stating He was Christ in the garden. Most feel that they were shocked or knocked back due to who He was. This is not provable.

4. James 1:13, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of god; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man;"

This verse has two sides to it for our discussion. a. God cannot be tempted. b. God does not tempt man. Now, let us think of that verse. Jesus was the God-man. He was God, the one James states can't be tempted, and He was man, that which God does not tempt.

Christ was tempted in the wilderness, by statement of the Scriptures, thus we must assume that it was the human side of Christ that was tempted. If we take that one step further, we must admit that if Christ was impeccable, His impeccability must be based on His deity and not His humanity.

If then He be totally man as we say, He was then peccability on the part of the man Jesus seems to be the logical conclusion.

This would seem to be why we have two lines of thinking on the subject.

Ryrie presents in his Survey of Bible Doctrine an alternative to the problem of the possible to, or impossible to question.

He translates Heb. 4:15 thusly, "...having been tested according to all, according to likeness, apart from sin." He then states, "The phrase 'according to likeness' apparently means that He could be tested because He took the likeness of sinful flesh. 'Apart from sin' means that, having no sin nature, He could not have been tested from that avenue, as we can and usually are."

He further suggests, "It [Heb. 4:15] does not say that Christ was tempted with a view to succumbing to sin. He was tested with a view to proving He was sinless. It does not say that He was tested in every particular specific test that man can be put to. It does say that His tests were in all the areas in which a man can be tested: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The particular tests within those areas were entirely different for Him from the ones for us." "His temptations were really not to see if He could sin, but to prove that He could not." 8

I am not sure he answers anything. He just calls for more answers to questions that he has raised.

Yes, Christ was tempted in the three areas in the wilderness however there is the thought in Luke 4:13 that the devil came again for further testing. "And when the devil had ended all the testing, he departed from him for a season." We don't know if we have an account of this or not. The garden before the cross may well have been further testing. There could have been other testing as well.

Cambron also presents his thoughts well. "That age-old question may now be raised: 'Could the Lord Jesus have sinned had He wanted to?' The question is thrown aside by stating, 'He could not have wanted to, being the Son of God.' But, someone may add, if He could not have sinned, then why the temptation? If He could not have sinned, then the temptation was a mockery! That is exactly the answer! For He was not tested to see if He would sin, but He was tested to show (to prove) that He could not sin." 9

Note should be taken to show that Cambron feels that He "would not sin," which indicates that there was a choice. "Could not" shows no choice while "would not" shows choice on His part?

Hodge makes the statement, "If from the constitution of His person it had been impossible for Christ to sin, His temptation was unreal and without effect, and He cannot sympathize with His people." 3

This raises the question, "Can there be temptation if there is no possibility of sin?"

Hodge brings up a good question. Most would say YES, while he states that it really isn't

temptation without the possibility of sin.

I would ask another question to seek out the answer to this one. "Is it possible that Adam and Eve could have been tempted and resisted temptation and remained as they were?" YES!

Bancroft in his Elemental Theology suggests the position that Christ had two natures - a human nature and a divine nature. Because the divine was true and complete holiness then the human could not go against that which is by nature holy.

The human apart from the divine we must assume could have sinned. This is the crux of the argument.

He, as man could sin and could be tempted as we, however He is inescapably tied to the divine and holy nature. The divine and holy nature could not sin, the human nature could not submit to sin. The divine was the determinative will, or nature and the human always submitted to that determinative divine will.

"His human nature could not have sinned without the consent of His unique Person." Thus Christ "would not" or "could not" sin. The question must be asked. Bancroft goes on to tell us that it was "could not."

"Since the personality of our Lord Jesus Christ is the personality of God, it was impossible for Him to consent to sin. Since His personality could not consent to sin, it was impossible for Him in His human nature (seeing that human nature was inseparably joined to His personality) to have sinned." 10

We must address the question, which Walvoord raises in his following statement: "...that in any case the temptation of Christ is different from that of sinful men." (Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 146) Do we dare say that, in light of His being our example and being tested in all points as we?

Why would this be the case? Jas. 1:13 tells us on the one hand that God cannot be tempted with evil. Christ had no sin nature. Thus we must assume that He was tempted HOW? They were tempted the same way Adam and Eve were tempted. They had no sin nature but were tempted. If we are to say that His temptation was different from that of sinful man's, then we may say yes because He had no sin nature. However His temptation was just as Adam and Eve's, pre-fall.

Was He tempted in all points as we? In the sense that we fell with Adam, and He did not fall in this particular situation, we must assume that He was. This of course ignores the divine nature and it's relationship to that temptation.

Since God cannot be tempted, we must assume that the human side of Christ was tempted and

not the divine.

Since the divine and the human are completely inseparable we must assume that any "not sinning" would have to have come from the divine side - OR - from a complete reliance upon the Holy Spirit to not sin.

And this is the boiled down view of the question. He did not sin. He could not sin, and complete the work of God. Was it through His own divine nature that he was able to say no to sin? Was it through His leaning on the Holy Spirit that he was able to say no to sin? Was it that He could not sin?

LET US CONSIDER THIS AND SEE IF WE CAN FIND AN ANSWER.

1. He did some miracles in the power of the Holy Spirit. Matt. 12:28; Lu. 4:14-18. He was relying on the Spirit's work at those points.

2. He seems to have voluntarily decided not to use some of His attributes.

3. His glory was not that of heaven.

We are left to hold that the man Jesus was capable of sin, but did not because of one of two reasons.

a. The man Jesus was totally submissive to the divine Christ in all that the God-man did while on earth and thus He never sinned.

b. The man Jesus was totally and perfectly reliant upon the Holy Spirit for help in refraining from sin. Christ's divine attributes having been in a state of voluntary nonuse did not assist the man Jesus to withstand the wiles of the Devil, but only that reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

Which you hold is up to you and how you feel about the fact that Christ was tempted in ALL POINTS AS WE. It also relates to His understanding our struggle with sin. If you feel that Christ can accomplish these as statement "a" suggests, then position "a" is adequate. If you feel that Jesus was so closely related to the Holy Spirit that He was able to say no to sin, then "b" is the better position.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. A word of warning on this doctrine as you read different authors. a. They assume all but themselves incorrect and argue from that basis. b. They assume that they know what others think. c. They assume that the laws of logic are required for everyone but themselves. d. This is a field that there is little Scripture to build on, so they make rash statements that really have no foundation as if they were fact. e. Look at what they say and think logically to see if what they

say be true.

2. Ryrie mentions some items that are of good thought.

"The Results of Christ's Testings

a. Sensitivity. He became sensitive to the pressure of testing. He experienced it with emotions and powers we cannot understand.

b. Example. He furnishes us an example of victory over the severest kinds of tests.

c. Understanding. He can offer sympathetic understanding to us when we are tested.

d. Grace and power. He can also provide the grace and power we need in times of testing." 11

3. This statement may rattle some cages but here goes anyway. I don't think that there is any way Biblically, to prove the discussion either way. I think there are good men on both sides of the fence. The main thought that must be held and usually is - The Lord did not sin. The Lord could not have sinned and fulfilled the work that He had been given to do. The Lord was totally God and totally man.

I think that those that hold to peccability would agree to all of these statements as well as all of those that hold to impeccability.

The verse in James one which tells us that God cannot be tempted leads me to believe that the Lord was tempted in His humanity as we are. This could have been accomplished in one of three manners. The fact that He was relying on the Holy Spirit perfectly can answer the how of His not sinning. The fact that He was in submission to the will of the divine will, can answer the how of His not sinning. The fact that He was incapable of sinning can answer the how of His not sinning.

I have been chewing on this one for many years and have had some very good discussions concerning it. I convinced a class of students that I was correct in the Holy Spirit theory a number of years ago, much to the dismay of the instructor that disagreed to the point of being beet red in the face and hollering about my false ideas.

I, however realize that the majority of recent and current church fathers do not discuss this possibility.

The incapable of sinning, would be the prominent view among conservatives today, I'm fairly sure. Indeed, I have not run across any current writers other than DeHann that hold to the other view.

I personally see only a semantic difference between capable of not sinning and unable to sin. Both are predicated on the divine nature and both see the end result as impeccable. Indeed all orthodox views see an end result of impeccable. They arrive there in different ways.

4. I would like to close with a comment from Ryrie's introduction to his discussion on the topic. THIS SHOWS OUR EXAMPLE!

"Sinlessness in our Lord means that He never did anything that displeased God or violated the Mosaic Law under which He lived on earth or in any way failed to show in His life at all times the glory of God."

He goes on to mention, "...at every stage of His life, infancy, boyhood, adolescence, manhood, He was holy and sinless." 12

ENDNOTES:

1. "FUNK AND WAGNALLS STANDARD DESK DICTIONARY" revised edition, New York: Funk and Wagnalls Pub., 1976

2. By permission. From Webster's THIRD NEW INTERNATIONAL Dictionary copyright by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.

3. Charles Hodge, "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Abridged Edition, Edward N. Gross, editor; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, p 364-365

4. Lewis Sperry Chafer, "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. V. p 80

5. W. E. Best, "CHRIST COULD NOT BE TEMPTED," Houston, TX: South Belt Grace Church, 1985, p 19

6. Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. P 59

7. Dr. David Miller, Theology notes, Western Baptist College, Salem, OR

8. Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 59-60

9. Mark G. Cambron, D.D., "BIBLE DOCTRINES," Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 86

10. Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 136

11. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 265

12. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 263

13. From Paul Enns, (Taken from: "THE MOODY HANDBOOK OF THEOLOGY"; Enns, Paul; Copyright 1989, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 237-238)

"Christ's peccabilty could relate only to His human nature; His divine nature was impeccable. Although Christ had two natures, He was nonetheless one person and could not divorce Himself of His deity. Wherever He went, the divine nature was present. If the two natures could be separated then it could be said that He could sin in His humanity, but because the human and divine natures cannot be separated from the Person of Christ, and since the divine nature cannot sin, it must be affirmed that Christ could not have sinned."

Mr. Enns lists the following arguments. I will list his topics and summarize his comments, and then comment on his comments.

"(1) The immutability of Christ (Heb. 13:8)."

Christ is unchangeable. If He could sin while on earth then He could sin now in heaven.

Christ is truely unchangeable in nature and essence, yet is quite changeable in other ways. For example he had no human body or humanness before the birth. If we apply the same logic then we have to assume that Christ never was incarnate for He could never have a body.

In relation to His deity, yes it is very true that GOD Cannot sin.

"(2) The omnipotence of Christ (Matt. 28:18)."

"Christ was omnipotent and therefore could not sin. Weakness is implied where sin is possible, yet there was no weakness of any kind in Christ."

Is sin related to all powerful? I think not. Weeping indicates weakness, being tired indicates weakness, yet they are not indicative of Christ's attribute of omnipotence. There are some that would argue with the fact that the omnipotence is an issue in relation to the incarnate Christ. They would view this as one of the attributes that He gave up the free use of.

"(3) The omniscience of Christ (John 2:25)."

"Christ was omniscient and therefore could not sin. Sin depends on ignorance in order that the

sinner may be deceived, but Christ could not be deceived because He knows all things...."

Again, the thought of omniscience is debatable in the incarnate Christ. The line of thinking presented seems a bit flawed however aside from that Mr. Enns says that we can't sin unless we are ignorant of things. So how come so many of us know all there is to know about a particular sin and we chose to walk right straight into it with our eyes wide open.

"(4) The deity of Christ."

He restates what is contained in the quoted paragraph above about the fact that the man Jesus could have sinned if He were separated from God.

"(5) The nature of temptation (James 1:14-15)."

"The temptation that came to Christ was from without. However, for sin to take place, there must be an inner response to the outward temptation. Since Jesus did not possess a sin nature, there was nothing within Him to respond to the temptation. People sin because there is an inner response to the outer temptation."

So, why did Adam sin if Mr. Enns is correct?

Not having a sin nature seems to be irrelevant to me. Man responds from within to outward temptation. The man Jesus would also have responded had He not also been God.

"(6) The will of Christ."

He holds to two wills and the human will was ALWAYS subservient to the divine will. He mentions something that might be of interest to consider.

"If Christ could have sinned then His human will would have been stronger than the divine will."

"(7) The authority of Christ (John 10:18)."

"In His deity, Christ had complete authority over His humanity. For example, no one could take the life of Christ except He would lay it down willingly (John 10:18). If Christ had authority over life and death, He certainly had authority over sin; if He could withhold death at will, He could also withhold sin at will."

Much of what Mr. Enns mentions is good if you agree with all of his other theology. For one that views some of Christ's attributes as nonfunctioning Mr. Enns is lacking.

I suspect from his final statement that he misunderstands the people that believe in the peccability.

Of course deity can withstand temptation and keep sin from happening!

HANDOUT

IMPECCABILITY

Impeccability

"non potuit peccare"
"potuit non peccare"

Hypostatic

LIBERAL VIEW

ORTHODOX VIEW

a. IMPECCABLE: That Christ was unable to sin in any situation or any form. This inability is based on the fact that Christ was God and God cannot sin - it is against His very nature.

b. PECCABLE: That Christ was able to sin but did not sin due to His divine nature.

c. _____: I'm open for titles for this one. That Christ was capable of sin but did not sin due to His total and perfect reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

RADICAL VIEW

Some facts:

SOME VERSES TO DEAL WITH:

1. Lu. 4:22

2. Jn. 17:5

3. Jn. 18:6

4. James 1:13

CONCLUSIONS:

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OLD TESTAMENT VIEW OF CHRIST

In this section we want to see that Christ is not just a person, or being of the Gospels and the church age, but that He was an active participant in the Old Testament economies as well.

Let it be said first of all that the Lord Jesus does not appear in the Old Testament by name - as Jesus, or Christ or Messiah - because He had not been born of Mary as yet.

This does not negate the fact that He could be in the Old Testament in his divine existence, nor does this negate the fact that He is mentioned in prophecy.

Christ's appearances in the Old Testament are called Christophanies. There is also the term theophany which relates to "God's" appearances in the Old Testament. The question of whether the Theophanies were always Christ is subject to research. The terms may well be synonymous.

I. CHRIST IN PROPHECY:

Gen. 3:15 was the first indication of one to come. In retrospect, we of the church age, can understand that He is mentioned many times throughout the Old Testament as the coming Messiah. The Jewish people were always looking for the Messiah that would one day come.

It is suggested by some that this may well be a part of God's thinking in his command to Noah and his family to multiply and fill the earth in Gen. 9:1. Had the occupants of the ark not multiplied in the physical realm, there could not have been a Messiah or savior for mankind.

We will not dwell on the point of Christ being the Messiah, and that He is in view often in the Old Testament for this is a well-known fact.

The Messiah in the Old Testament was prophesied and the Messiah in the New Testament is revealed.

II. CHRIST IN ACTION:

A. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD:

I will list this information in quick, outline order, because most of it is quite self explanatory.

1. The Angel of the Lord had physical attributes:

a. He could speak. Gen. 16:7,8
b. He could be seen. Gen. 16:13
c. He could eat. Gen. 18:1,8
d. He could see. Gen. 18:16
e. He could move. Gen. 18:16
f. He was limited or limited Himself. Gen. 32:24,25
g. He was limited in time. Gen. 32:26

2. The Angel of the Lord had Divine attributes:

a. He made great promises that only God could make and keep. Gen. 16:8 A promise to multiply the seed of Hagar.

b. He foretold the future. Gen. 16:12 We have our modern day prophets, but none that can foretell the future perfectly, each and every time an attempt is made!

c. He was compassionate. Gen. 18:23-32

d. He could deal in judgment. Gen. 18:1-33 We deal in judgment at times don't we. We can judge a person in this life, yet we have no power to judge in the next life and that is where judgment tells the REAL tale!

e. He had access to heaven. Gen. 22:11

f. He could prosper individuals. Gen. 24:7,40

g. He could appear in dreams. Gen. 31:11

h. He was omnipresent. Gen. 31:12

i. He kept men from evil. Gen. 48:16, "An angel who redeemed me from all evil...."

j. He could do the supernatural. Ex 3:1-4

k. He wasn't confined to the human form. Ex 3:1-4; Ex. 13:21 mentions the cloud of smoke was the Lord; Ex 14:19 mentions this is the Angel of the Lord.

l. He could keep believers. Gen. 28:20, Jacob; Ex 23:20

m. He could draw people to places. Ex. 23:20

n. He could kill enemies. II Kings 19:35

o. He could kill Israelites in Judgment. I Chron. 21:15-18

p. He was sent by God. I Chron. 21:15,26 This also shows the Angel of the Lord is not God the Father.

q. He could be concerned in the delay of judgment. Zech. 1:12-14

r. He was worshiped. Ex. 3:1-5. Angels of the normal kind, do not allow worship. Rev. 19:10; 22:8,9

3. The Angel of the Lord had eyewitness accounts:

a. Abraham Gen. 18:1-33; Gen. 22:11-18

b. Hagar Gen. 16:13, "she called the name of the Lord who spoke unto her"

c. Jacob Gen. 31:11-13; 48:16

d. Moses Ex. 3:1-5; 13:21 cf 14:19

e. Joshua Joshua 5:13-6:2

f. Others II Ki. 19:35; I Chron. 21:14-18; Dan. 3:15-28; Zech. 1:12-14

4. The Angel of the Lord gave personal testimony of His being God:

"And the angel of God spoke unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are striped, speckled, and spotted; for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred." Gen. 31:11-13 cf

"And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on." Gen. 28:19,20

5. The Angel of the Lord had to have been Christ pre-incarnate.

a. The Angel of the Lord must be God if he has the attributes of God.

b. The Father is not the Angel of the Lord. (The Angel of the Lord was sent by the Father.)

c. The Holy Spirit is never mentioned as appearing except at the coming of Christ and we have no indication that he has ever appeared other than that.

d. The Son has appeared, and this is consistent with the thought that no man has ever seen God. Jo. 1:18

Col 1:15, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation;"

Christ is the visible part of the trinity due to His becoming man. God in all of his glory has not been seen. Christ mentioned that anyone that had seen Him had seen the Father. (Jn 14:8-9)

e. The Angel of the Lord is not in the New Testament thus it can be assumed that it was Christ as well, for he was incarnate.

f. The Father sent both the Angel of the Lord, (I Chron. 21:15; and Christ, (Jn. 4:34).

g. Paul mentions in I Cor. 10:1-12 that the Lord Jesus was in the wilderness with the Israelites. This was the Lord pre-incarnate. He was there (Ex. 13:21 cf 14:19) thus there is no reason that the Angel of the Lord could not be Christ pre-incarnate.

Misc. texts of interest: Jud. 13:15-18 cf. Isa 9:6; 28:29 Mal. 3:1

You might find a study of the term "LORD" in the Old Testament interesting. It is the word for Jehovah and is related to the Angel of the Lord. Jehovah is the Angel of the Lord, is LORD, is Christ, is Messiah. Bancroft in ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY has a section on the Jehovah of the Old Testament revealed in the New Testament. (p 145ff)

Might we draw some application from our study thus far?

1. Everything we know of the Angel of the Lord is directly transferable to God.

His power, His compassion, His leading, His care, His keeping of the believer, and all these concerning Christ we know from the Bible and experience. All of the Old Testament texts further prove all these things about Him as well. Both testaments give witness of these attributes of our Lord.

2. We tend to see God the Father as the God of the Old Testament and Christ as God of the New Testament. NOT SO! Christ is ALWAYS, New and Old, the manifestation of God to mankind, be it before or after the incarnation.

3. Much of what we've seen of Christ pre-incarnate show him ACTIVELY involved in the lives of God's people. In this age we have that involvement via the Holy Spirit.

4. Some of the Old Testament saints had a personal meeting with God! What an awesome thought, to have a meeting with God. The pillar of fire and smoke - not just fire and smoke but God! All the time in the wilderness knowing that every time you walked out of the tent, you would know that God was watching over you!

B. THE ROCK:

I Cor. 10:1-12. When Paul was speaking of the Israelites in the wilderness, he mentions the food that they ate and the water that they drank. That water came from a rock we remember from the Old Testament. Paul says of this rock, "And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."

From this text we can draw the fact that not only was Christ the Angel of the Lord, and the Cloud of smoke and pillar of fire that led them in the wilderness, but that He was also the rock that provided water for them in the wilderness.

Indeed if you check into some of the following references, you will find that the Lord is mentioned many times as a rock: Ex 17:1-9, Nu 20:12, Nu 27:14, Deut. 32:3,4, Deut. 32:51, I Sam 2:2, II Sam 22:2,3, Ps 18:2,46, Ps 106:33, Isa 8:13-14, Isa 17:10, Isa 26:4.

And for some sermon material try the following: Dan. 2:34, Matt 21:42-44, Matt 7:24ff, Jo 4:13, Jo 6:35, I Cor. 10:4, Eph. 2:20, I Pet 2:1-10, II Pet 2:8.

III. CHRIST IN SONSHIP:

Some today suggest that Christ was not the Son of God until He became man. This thought suggests that there was no "Son" relationship until Mary bore Christ.

Logically then would there be no "Father" relationship? Prov. 30:4, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

MacArthur states that this reference is looking forward to when Christ would be the Son, but that the son ship did not begin until the incarnation. "As was noted, Son is an incarnaional title of Christ. Though His sonship was anticipated in the Old Testament (Prov. 30:4O), He did not become a Son until He was begotten into time. Prior to time and His incarnation He was eternal God with God. The term Son has only to do with Jesus Christ in His incarnation. It is only an analogy to say that God is Father and Jesus is Son - God's way of helping us understand the essential relationship between the first and second Persons of the Trinity." (Taken from: "NEW

TESTAMENT COMMENTARY: HEBREWS"; MacArthur, John; Copyright 1983, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 27)

Strong speaks of the eternal generation of the Son, "Not a commencement of existence, but an eternal relation to the Father, --there never having been a time when the Son began to be, or when the Son did not exist as God with the Father."

Rom. 8:3 Tells us, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh,"

Jn 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Begotten Son...."

I Jn 3:8 "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

This seems to indicate that He was the Son before He was manifested to man. Heb 13:8 also indicates this fact. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

The use of the term with the Father and Holy Spirit in the baptismal formula and elsewhere would be curious if the term Son is only for the incarnation as MacArthur mentions. One might decide that the term Father was also for the incarnation only. Indeed, the Holy Spirit's name might also be for the incarnation only.

Indeed, to follow MacArthur's logic we might suggest that the Holy Spirit is a name to allow us to understand the Holy Spirit. His name is actually not Holy Spirit, but God. That makes the Baptismal formula "The God and of The God and of the God."

Technically the eternal generation of the Son deals with His eternality. It was a doctrine that was formed as a result of some of the thinking of Arius and his idea that Christ was created.

The only, known to me, Old Testament reference to God as Father is in Isa. 9:6 which speaks of the "COMING" Messiah. However, it seems that it would be difficult to view three persons of the trinity running around not having names for one another and then in 33 AD deciding that one would be The Father, and one would be The Son and one would be The Holy Spirit. Especially when the Spirit is called the Spirit before the incarnation. Gen. 1 for example.

Since Christ was slain from the foundation of the world in God's mind it would be consistent to view Christ as the Son at least at that point. (Heb. 4:3; I Pet. 1:19-20; Eph. 1:4) A study of the decree's in relation to this might be of interest as well.

Walvoord mentions that the eternal Father Son relationship has been the thought of the Church Fathers since the Council of Nicaea. (Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.

p 39)

He lists several positions:

1. He mentions that Wardlaw placed the idea that Christ became the Son at the time of the incarnation into existence.

"...sonship is inseparably linked with the incarnation and, while Christ existed from eternity past, He was not a Son until the incarnation." (P 39 of Walvoord quoting Ralph Wardlaw, Systematic Theology, II, 32-60)

2. Some mention that the sonship came only after the Father declared Him his beloved Son at the baptism.

3. Some have suggested that Rom. 1:4, "And declared to be the Son of God with power...." shows that the relationship came at the resurrection.

4. Some suggest that the son relation came at the exaltation. Heb. 1:3 is given as evidence. The problem is that He is called a Son long before this in His incarnation.

5. The eternal sonship position presents the following references:

Gal. 4:4, "But, when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of woman, made under the law."

Jn 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Begotten Son ... For God sent not his Son into the world...."

Isa 9:6 mentions that a son will be given and it is clearly speaking of Christ.

Ps 2:7, "I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."

This seems to tie not only the sonship, but the idea of begotten, to the decree. This would place both in eternity past.

Walvoord states, "According to this passage, [Col 1:15-19] Christ is declared to be the Son of God and begotten in the day of the eternal decree. This is, in effect, a statement that Christ is eternally the Son of God as the decree itself is eternal." (Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)(See also, Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5)

HANDOUT

OLD TESTAMENT VIEW OF CHRIST

I. CHRIST IN PROPHECY:

II. CHRIST IN ACTION:

A. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD:

1. The Angel of the Lord had physical attributes:

a. Gen. 16:8
b. Gen. 16:13
c. Gen. 18:8
d. Gen. 18:16
e. Gen. 18:16
f. Gen. 32:24,25
g. Gen. 32:26

2. The Angel of the Lord had Divine attributes:

a. Gen. 16:8
b. Gen. 16:12
c. Gen. 18:23-32
d. Gen. 18:1-33
e. Gen. 22:11
f. Gen. 24:7,4g. Gen. 31:11
h. Gen. 31:12
i. Gen. 48:16
j. Ex. 3:1-4k. Ex. 3:1-4; Ex 13:21, cf Ex 14:19 l. Ex 23:20
k. Ex. 23:20
l. II Kings 19:35
m. I Chron. 21:15-18
n. I Chron. 21:15,26
o. Zech. 1:12-14
p. Ex. 3:1-5 cf Rev. 19:10; 22:8,9

3. The Angel of the Lord had eyewitness accounts:

Gen. 18:1-33; Gen. 22:11-18
Gen. 16:13
Gen. 31:11-13; 48:16
Ex. 3:1-5; 13:21 cf. 14:19
Joshua 5:13-6:2

Others II Ki 19:35; I Chron. 21:14-18; Dan. 3:15-28; Zech. 1:12-14

4. The Angel of the Lord gave personal testimony of His being God: Gen. 31:11-13 cf. Gen. 28:19,20

5. The Angel of the Lord had to have been Christ pre-incarnate.

a.
b.
c.
d.
e.
f.
g.

Misc. texts of interest:

Jud. 13:15-18 cf. Isa 9:6; 28:29
Mal. 3:1

B. THE ROCK:

I Cor. 10:1-12

Ex 17:1-9	Nu 20:12
Nu 27:14	Deut. 32:3,4
Deut. 32:51	I Sam 2:2
II Sam 22:2,3	Ps 18:2,46
Ps 106:33	Isa 8:13-14
Isa 17:10	Isa 26:4

And for some sermon material try the following: Dan. 2:34, Matt 21:42-44, Matt 7:24ff, Jo 4:13, Jo 6:35, I Cor. 10:4, Eph. 2:20, I Pet 2:1-10, II Pet 2:8.

III. CHRIST IN SONSHIP:

1.
2.
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4.
5.

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THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

I did not include this section in my prior teaching on the Doctrine of Christ due to the fact that few of the writers really concentrate on the topic. They mention the subject in passing, but not as a specific study.

There has in recent days come to my knowledge some error in the area of the conception and birth of the Lord, so I have decided to include a more specific look at the subject.

It should also be realized that there have been no writers that I have found that even speak to the thought of the conception of the Lord.

We have this situation today due to the fact that it has never been an issue before. In our day the "VIRGIN BIRTH" and the "VIRGIN CONCEPTION" may well become very important, as we are deluged with the modern scientific breakthroughs that were not in place when most of the Theologians were writing.

We have only begun to deal with the ramifications of surrogate motherhood which could well reflect upon the thinking of people as they view the virgin birth. (a surrogate mother is one where an egg of some woman is fertilized with the sperm of a man and placed into the body of a third party for gestation.) More on this later.

We need to look at a few items of interest before we begin. The Roman Catholic church follows our thinking to a certain point, but then their theology takes a drastic turn, and we find that it teaches a completely different idea concerning the conception and birth of the Lord than does Protestantism.

We want to look at this thought as we begin. Though the Catholics would agree with us that the Lord was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, the Roman church submits the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception to explain the part of Mary in the process. The immaculate part relates to Mary. God in His omnipotence made her pure so that she could be the mother of God.

Louis Matthews Sweet in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, takes exception to the immaculate conception: "'Immaculate conception' is of course manifestly a blunder due to the confusion of one idea with another." 2

Mary is over the United States due to the fact that Mary was made the patroness of the United States. The many statues of Mary are due to her worship in this country.

The Roman church believes that Christ was born of the virgin Mary and that He had a human

body and soul. They further hold that His human nature was derived from only His mother.

This will come into play in a few moments when we discuss the conception of the Lord. They will be found to be in line with most Protestants on the point that his humanity came from Mary.

Let me quote to show their position: "The Blessed Virgin was Christ's mother as man, but not as God." "Christ had no human father." They add a point that we would differ on, "The Blessed Virgin remained a virgin all her life." 4

Walvoord mentions of the birth of Christ, "In the Incarnation Jesus Christ was perfect God and became perfect man being all that God is in His deity and all that man is apart from sin." 5

This does not speak to the birth of the Lord, but sets for us the requirements of the outcome of that birth that was unique to Christianity. All other founders of religions write of their finding the divine, while Christ is the divine coming to find man!

Walvoord goes on with a paragraph that is a good summation of the person of Christ. "Christ was born into the human family and possessed His own identifiable body, soul, and spirit. He was not simply a man indwelt by God, but God who took on a human nature as a part of His person." 6

I would restate that last phrase a bit differently for effect. He was not simply a man indwelt by God, but God that dwelled with man as man.

Let us look at some information in outline form. It is self explanatory.

I. THE EVENT PROPHESIED

A. He was born of a virgin: Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:22-23; Lu. 1:35

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Is. 7:14

B. He was descended from David: Is. 11:1; Lk. 1:32

C. He was born in Bethlehem: Mic. 5:2; Mt 2:4-6

D. His birth was connected to the slaughter of children: Jer. 31:15; Mt 2:16-18

E. He was taken to Egypt and returned: Ho. 11:1; Mt. 2:15

II. THE EVENT DETAILED

Mt. 1:18 gives clear declaration that there was no human father involved. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."

Just what is meant by "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost?" This is what we want to think about in this section. Let's take a few moments to view the theories of the conception.

A. The WHOLE THING THEORY:

There are some that suggest God formed and placed the entire fetus within Mary's body. This would be the first reference in Scripture to Surrogate motherhood! This view would see a complete fertilized egg being prepared in heaven and being placed within Mary for the growth and birth process. This allows nothing of Mary to be imparted to Jesus, except the physical food and water nourishment that is normal in the pregnancy process.

PROBLEMS:

1. This does not make Christ a descendant of David. He has no descendency. He is totally of God, and even if He were human in form there would be a lacking of the reality of the son of Mary.

2. This requires God to go back into the creation business to create this totally new man. Does this allow for the Lord being man as we? Does this allow for the Lord being our brother? Etc. I don't think so.

3. This could just as well have been a total creation of Jesus as an adult and eliminated the growing and maturing years.

4. There is no indication that this is the case in the Word, on the contrary the Gospels seem quite specific that there was a union of the Holy Spirit and Mary in the process. What that union, or overshadowing was is a question that we will probably not explain, yet both parties seem to be a part of the God-man Jesus.

B. THE MIRACLE THEORY:

I ran into a self styled theologian that explained it this way. Mary and a man had relations. He did not get into the details of the father which was a bit of a problem to me! A Savior born of a fornicator. Not to appropriate! At any rate, he suggested to that conception, God added or changed something to keep the sin nature from being passed on to Jesus.

PROBLEMS:

1. So how does deity enter the picture? By ZAP, or by osmosis?

2. So how do you answer the fornication question?

3. So why was Jesus special enough to die for our sins?

4. So, is that a proper sacrifice according to the Scriptures? NO!

C. THE PARTIAL THEORY:

This would be where most of Protestantism is, I think. Mary was an integrated part of the conception, supplying to the unique person of Christ His manhood, while the Lord supplied, or moved in such a way as to supply the divine part of this person Jesus.

How did that happen? We will discuss the conception later.

PROBLEMS:

1. Most suggested problems arise from a rejection of the Scriptural account of the virgin birth and usually a rejection of the Word of God, both of which are based on a lack of belief and faith in the Word of God. To this unbelief and lack of faith we have no answer, short of the Holy Spirit working in the heart of that person that rejects God and His revealed Word.

2. The position has no scientific, moral, or historical proof. Moral proof is lacking however the position is more moral than the thought of God creating everything and implanting it, or as the other position suggests that Jesus is the offspring of fornication. Historical proof is abundant. The church fathers held to the virgin birth with no attempt to explain it away through theories of creation and/or illicit sex.

We should remember that the conception as well as the birth were involving a virgin. The virgin conception requires only the mother to be involved! Indeed, the virgin conception is the key to the discussion!

III. THE EVENT ANNOUNCED: We won't go into these passages, but both Matthew and Luke detail the account for us. They both deal with the genealogies and there is an abundance of writing on the genealogies so we won't tackle that question today.

IIII. THE EVENT PROCLAIMED: Again this is given much coverage in the gospels in that the Magi and the shepherds were told of the birth of the Lord.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Can you imagine a bit of the mental activity in Mary's brain after the announcement of the angel? Conceive without a husband? What will I tell people? How? Is this for real? An angel? Me? Is this what Isaiah 7:14 talks about? Am I the one that will give Israel her king? JUST TO

NAME A FEW POSSIBLE THOUGHTS. I suspect that she had a little food for thought for a few days.

2. Do not mistake my attempts to make Jesus as much man as I can, nor to make Him as much like us as I can for if He were truly man as we preach, He must be like us.

It is not an attempt to lower our view of Christ, rather to increase our view of Christ. He is totally God, and totally like us, except for sin, which He suffered for, on the cross.

We must know how human He was to appreciate all that He did for us. He was not some super man of deity that suffered and died on the cross! He was a man as you and I and He allowed Himself to be crucified for us! He suffered as we would suffer plus a little due to carrying the burden of sin.

He had the same mental anguish over the loss of His life as we do. He suffered more due to the fact that He knew many misunderstood Him, and His life. Many would, and were rejecting what He was doing on the cross. He hurt as we would hurt.

3. A few thoughts on the virgin birth and those that reject it.

a. Christ in Lu 2:49 was about His father's business. He was in the temple not in the carpenter shop.

b. Christ did not refer to Joseph as His father yet referred to God as His father many times.

c. The angel announced John The Baptist's coming birth to the father, yet announced Christ's birth to the mother. That should indicate something.

d. Peter viewed Christ as the Son of God which not only indicates deity, but indicates Fatherhood of God. Christ mentioned to Peter that God had revealed this to Peter. If Christ was the son of Joseph, why would God have to reveal anything to Peter?

e. Paul showed his belief in the virgin birth in Gal 4:4 when he stated, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law,"

f. The person that rejects the virgin birth is left with many problems. 1.) How did the union of God and man come about if both man and woman were involved. How was the sin nature eliminated from the offspring? 2.) How do you explain the Scriptural references to the virgin birth, or how do you explain the fact that Mary conceived before she and Joseph had come together as man and wife? 3.) How do you explain the problem of Joseph's family line being broken? To have the requirements of the Messiah fulfilled there was only one way with Mary and Joseph being involved and that is a virgin birth without the father Joseph. (If you go back into the Old Testament God cut off the direct line of Joseph). Scroogie mentions: "In Jer. xxii.

24-30, it is predicted that Coniah (Jehoiachin) would be childless, therefore he could not have been the father of Salathiel, but it is possible and probable that he adopted the seven sons of Neri, the twentieth from David in the line of Nathan." 7 This would make the Matthew genealogy a legal line of Christ, while the Luke genealogy a blood line of Christ. With a break in the direct line there is no blood connection, but by adoption there would be the legal connection. This is another reason for the virgin birth! 4.) Why has the Christian church, as well as the Roman church for that matter, held to this doctrine for so many generations if it has no validity?

For a good discussion of the Virgin birth see Machen's book "THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST."

4. The fact of the virgin birth should be only an introduction to the real person of Jesus Christ our Lord! He is not only the God-man, He is the unique man of all time. He came into being uniquely and is uniquely man!

THE CONCEPTION:

According to the Encyclopedia Americana "conception" is: "in biology the beginning of pregnancy." 8

That occasion upon which a new life is formed even if the abortion advocates deny the fact.

We might think of why the conception of Jesus is not discussed. For one, for a virgin to give birth in the day of the Bible, required a virgin conception. We today hear often of the artificial insemination, the surrogate mothers, the advances of technology that might well bring about a virgin giving birth without a miraculous intervention by God.

In recent years some have researched other cultures, religions and myths to suggest that there is a basis for the Christian "story" of a virgin birth in history. These accounts comment on the extraordinary conceptions of women via the gods. There are numerous accounts of the god's having relations with women that they loved or lusted after, yet the conception of Christ was completely different.

The basis of this conception is not sexual, lustful, or based on any human emotion, but rather the simple yet profound desire of God to become man for the purpose of saving mankind. The accounts of the god's picture them as acting as humans in their sexual activity and the offspring are never portrayed as being the offspring of a virgin conception and birth.

The purpose sets this conception apart from all accounts, stories and myths that might well be quoted.

MECHANICS OF THE CONCEPTION:

1. Strong mentions a professor Loeb and an interesting concept. "Professor Loeb has found that the unfertilized egg of the sea-urchin may be made by chemical treatment to produce thrifty young, and he thinks it probable that the same effect may be produced among the mammalia." 9

I am not holding to this position, but there are some possibilities to it. God could know the secret formula, chemically, for the fertilization of the egg. The one problem that I might suggest is the need for DNA from the father to pass on traits, etc. Doctors are just beginning to understand the fertilization process in the human being. Indeed they admit much ignorance.

2. God may have created the sperm that was needed, or is some manner created the life that was within Mary. (The sperm or fertilization is all that would be required.) This gives problems of "creation" after creation has ceased. We as fundamentalists tend to try to keep away from that possibility. (For example, in where the soul and spirit of the offspring comes from.)

Evans submits that God did create in this instance: "By a creative act God broke through the chain of human generation and brought into the world a supernatural bring." 10

Barnes suggests a similar position when he comments on Luke one: "this evidently means that the body of Jesus would be created by the direct power of God." 11

3. You suggest a good possibility. This one we are really in the dark about. A line of research might tune into the Old Testament ideas of the Lord knowing and separating different ones while they were still in the womb.

I would imagine that if, and when we find out the details of all this that we will find that it was some perfectly natural process. The details of the process were worked out, I assume, with the plan of redemption before the foundations of the world.

That to me is quite comforting, to know that even those little details of redemption were set before the need of redemption was in existence!

It might be well in your thinking to see that the virgin birth not only includes the birth, but also the conception. We often talk only of the birth, while the more important thought may well be the conception.

Most of the writers do not mention the conception in any manner, only state and prove the virgin birth.

Ryrie ventures into the area only slightly when he states, "...the Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (Luke 1:35). The statement emphasizes more the fact of divine generation of the Child, than the method." 12

Pulpit commentary follows this line of thought as well: "But by the singular, powerful, invisible,

immediate operation of the Holy Ghost, whereby a virgin was, beyond the law of nature, enabled to conceive...." 13

Word study:

Luke 1:35, "And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

WORD ONE: "come upon thee" is Strong's 1904 - "eperkomae"

The term is used in:

Luke 1:35 "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Luke 11:22 "But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." This seems to have the idea of attach, or attempt the taking of control at the very least, with the thought in the verse of controlling.

Luke 21:26 "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." This seems to be something that is coming and its coming is sure.

Luke 21:35 "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Seems to be the coming things that WILL come to pass.

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This views the coming of the Holy Spirit to the believers on the day of Pentecost. He overwhelmed or filled them completely.

Acts 8:24 "Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." Something that will come to be a part of his life.

Acts 13:40 "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;"

Acts 14:19 "And there came thither [certain] Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew [him] out of the city, supposing he had been dead." Again something that came from someplace to enter into the situation.

Ephesians 2:7 "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." The thought of something coming, again is seen.

James 5:1 "Go to now, [ye] rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon [you]." Something coming again.

It would seem that the thought of this word is simply something that is coming upon, toward etc., a simple statement of the fact that the Holy Spirit would come upon her in some manner for the purpose of causing the conception of Jesus.

WORD TWO: "overshadowing" is Strong's 1982 - "episkiazo"

The term is used in:

Matthew 17:5 "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The covering of a cloud - the blocking of direct sunlight from them.

Mark 9:7 "And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

Luke 1:35 "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Luke 9:34 "While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud."

Acts 5:15 "Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid [them] on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them." In this text it is not sunlight that is being blocked by a cloud, but rather by a person coming between the beds and the sun.

Vine suggests: "to throw a shadow upon." The Interlinear Greek New Testament translates the word, "will overshadow."

So what can we draw from the words themselves about the conception?

a. The Holy Spirit was to come, and to overshadow Mary.

b. Not much else can be known. It is assumed that the overshadowing had something to do with the conception, but little else can be drawn from the Scriptures on this subject. The action of the verbs indicate that the Holy Spirit is doing all of the action as opposed to a mutual participation.

This would be very true in the thought of the normal procedure of conception. The woman's body naturally provides an egg each month to be presented for fertilization. There is no need for action on the part of Mary.

The idea of the child being born is structured in a way so that the birth is an action that is placed upon Mary from without. This could be construed as only the birth process ending as nature would have it end, yet in the context of the verse the conception is in view and the idea could well extend to the fact that the conception and birth were actions from without.

The Holy Spirit accomplished whatever was needed to fulfill the conception of Jesus.

The term conception originally, way back meant "beginning," thus we might state that the Holy Spirit moved upon Mary in such a way as to guarantee the beginning of the fetus, Jesus.

Some final observations:

a. There is nothing in the birth of Isaac nor John the Baptist that relate, for these were barren women made fertile by an act of God. Mary was not barren as far as the record shows, so we should assume that she was a fertile young woman.

b. Luke 1:31 cf. 1:24 show the coming conception of Mary was of the same nature as the conception of Elizabeth. Indeed the same Greek word is used in both cases.

This is Strong's 4815 - "sullambano." The word is of interest in that it is either translated: conceive; some form of "to take" as in taking someone, (Mat 26:55; Acts 1:16); or "help" as in helping someone, (Phi 4:3 where Paul asks them to help women that had labored with him.); or to gather as in grapes (Mat 7:16).

I think in looking through the references it may be that the term means the "coming together of." Coming together of grapes and the gatherer, coming together of the captor and the captive etc. In the idea of conception it would have the idea of coming together of the egg and the sperm.

It is used of lust conceiving in Jas. 1:15 as well. Vine defines it as "to take together" which would be in line with our observations.

c. The term conceive demands more than a creative act. Mary was to conceive! She was involved in the process not just a warm oven to raise the fetus in.

d. In all that we have seen it should be evident that it was a normal, natural conception and birth with the exception of the presence of a human father for fertilization.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. So how do we apply this one folks? HE WAS MAN, VIA MARY AND GOD, VIA THE HOLY SPIRIT! This is proof of all that we have stated of his humanity and deity, to say the least.

2. There is nothing terribly mysterious about the virgin birth - just something to be understood as we can understand it and accept by faith.

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HANDOUT

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

The Roman church believes:

I. THE EVENT PROPHESIED

A. Born of a virgin: Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:22-23; Lu. 1:35

B. Descended from David: Is. 11:1; Lk. 1:32

C. Born in Bethlehem: Mic. 5:2; Mt. 2:4-6

D. Birth was connected to slaughter of children: Jer. 31:15; Mt. 2:16-18

E. Taken to Egypt and returned: Ho. 11:1; Mt. 2:15

II. THE EVENT DETAILED

A. THE WHOLE THING THEORY:
B. THE MIRACLE THEORY:
C. THE PARTIAL THEORY:

III. THE EVENT ANNOUNCED

IIII. THE EVENT PROCLAIMED

CONCLUSIONS:

THE CONCEPTION:

MECHANICS OF THE CONCEPTION:

02500

A NEW TESTAMENT AND HISTORICAL LOOK AT CHRIST:

The following material is adapted from William R. Bright, editor, "TEACHER'S MANUAL FOR THE TEN BASIC STEPS TOWARD CHRISTIAN MATURITY," San Bernardino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ, International, 1965. I have presented it in an outline form with comments for your continued study and reference. I did not expand extensively, due to the coverage that Mr. Bright had given to the subject.

"INTRODUCTION: THE INCOMPARABLE CHRIST

"More than nineteen hundred years ago there was a Man born contrary to the laws of life. This Man lived in poverty and was reared in obscurity. He did not travel extensively. Only once, did He cross the boundary of the country in which He lived; that was during His exile in childhood. He possessed neither wealth nor influence. His relatives were inconspicuous and had neither training nor formal education. In infancy He startled a king; in childhood He puzzled doctors; in manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon the billows as if pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep. He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His service. He never wrote a book, yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books that have been written about Him. He never wrote a song, and yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all the songwriters combined. He never founded a college, but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as many students. He never marshaled an army, nor drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun; and yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have, under His orders, made more rebels stack arms and surrender without a shot fired. He never practiced medicine, and yet He has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near. Every seventh day the wheels of commerce cease their turning and multitudes went their way to worshiping assemblies to pay homage and respect to Him. The names of the past proud statesmen of Greece and Rome have come and gone. The names of the past scientists, philosophers, and theologians have come and gone, but the name of this Man abounds more and more. Through time has spread nineteen hundred years between the people of this generation and the scene of His crucifixion, yet He still lives. Herod could not destroy Him and the grave could not hold Him. He stands forth upon the

highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed of God, acknowledged by angels, adored by saints, and feared by devils, as the living, personal Christ, our Lord and Savior." AUTHOR UNKNOWN

He is presented as coming in the Old Testament.
He is presented as coming in the flesh in the New Testament.
He is presented as the Lamb of God.
He is presented as the sin bearer.
He is presented as the Bread of Life.
He is presented as the Only Way to God.
He is presented as coming in the future for His people.

I. HE IS PRESENTED AS THE THEME OF SCRIPTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

A. He was the theme of the prophets: Acts 3:18-20, "And he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you,"; Acts 10:43, Rom. 1:1-3.

Some prophecies that were fulfilled:

EVENT	OT PREDICTION	NT FULFILLMENT
Town of birth	Mic. 5:2	Matt 2:1-6; Jn 7:42
Born of a virgin	Isa 7:14	Matt 1:23
Betrayal money	Zech. 11:12	Matt 27:9-10
Scourged and spit upon	Isa 50:6	Matt 26:67
Given gall and vinegar	Ps 69:21	Matt 27:34,48
Resurrection	Ps 16:8-10	Acts 2:22-28;13:34-35
Coming again to judge	Ps 50:3-5 Ezek. 21:27 Zech. 14:1-7 Lu. 1:31-33 Philip. 2:10-11	YET TO BE FULFILLED

B. He was the theme of the apostles: Acts 5:41,42 "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the

temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Acts 9:20, Rom. 1:1-3.

C. He was the theme preached to the Jew: We know that Paul always went to the Jews in the hope that he could lead some to Christ. Acts 17:1-4 mentions that Paul's ministry brought Jews to Christ. Acts 28:29-31, in the close of the book, Paul is still preaching Christ and working with all, including the Jews.

D. He was the theme of the message to the Samaritans: Acts 8:5, "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them."

E. He was the theme of the message to the Gentiles: Gal. 1:15,16, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:"

F. He was the theme of the Gospel to be preached today: Mk 16:15, "And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Rom. 1:1-3, I Cor. 15:1-4 speaks of the gospel as the death, burial and resurrection.

G. He is the only Gospel to be preached: Gal. 1:6-9 Paul tells the Galatians that if they are approached with any other Gospel then that person is to be accursed. I Cor. 16:22

II. HE WAS PRESENTED AS GOD BY THOSE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

A. Peter: Matt 16:16 "...Christ, the Son of the living God."

B. Thomas: Jn 20:28 "...My Lord and my God."

C. John the Baptist: Jn 1:29 "...Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

D. Nathaniel: Jn 1:49 "...Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

E. Martha: Jn 11:27 "...thou art the Christ, the Son of God...."

F. The Centurion: Matt 27:54 When speaking at the death of Christ, "...Truly this was the Son of God."

III. HISTORIANS SPEAK OF THE CHRIST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:

A. The Encyclopedia Britannica reportedly gives 20,000 words to Christ. No, I did not count them.

B. H.G. Wells in his two volume OUTLINE OF HISTORY devoted ten pages to Christ. He was

not a believer to my knowledge.

C. Tertullian AD 155-200 wrote the APOLOGY to the Roman government and mentioned a letter from Pilate to Caesar: "Tiberius accordingly, in whose days the Christian name made its entry into the world, having himself received intelligence from Palestine of events which had clearly shown the truth of Christ's divinity, brought the matter before the senate, with his own decision in favor of Christ. The senate, because it had not given the approval itself, rejected his proposal. Caesar held to his opinion, threatening wrath against all the accusers of the Christians."

D. Napoleon: While discussing Christ with a man that did not believe in the deity of Christ was quoted as saying, "I know men, and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and whatever other religions the distance of infinity...Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. Between Him and whoever else in the world, there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by Himself. His ideas and sentiments, the truth which He announces, His manner of convincing are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things...The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me - everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers. His religion is a revelation from an intelligence which certainly is not that of man...One can absolutely find nowhere, but in Him alone, the imitation or the example of His life...I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ or anything which can approach the gospel. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or to explain it. Here everything is extraordinary."

IIII. CHRIST MADE SOME CLAIMS ABOUT HIMSELF:

A. He claimed to be the light: "...I am the Light of the world...." Jn 8:12. It seems that He told us that we were the light of the world as well (Matt 5:14). Many speak of the fact that Christ is to live in and through us so others can see Him in us. This seems to be a good proof text.

B. He claimed to be the good Shepherd: "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Jn 10:11

C. He claimed to preexist Abraham: "Before Abraham was, I am." Jn 8:58

D. He claimed to the Master and Lord: "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am." Jn. 13:13

E. He claimed to be the Vine: "I AM the true vine...." Jn 15:1

F. He claimed to fulfill the law: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I

am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matt. 5:17

G. He claimed to forgive sins: Mk 2:1-12 in speaking of the paralytic man that was let down through the roof.

H. He claimed to fulfill prophecy: He read Isa 61, the prophecy of the Messiah and stated, "...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Lu 4: 21 cf. Isa 61:1-2.

I. He claimed to be the Resurrection: "...I am am the resurrection, and the life...." Jn 11:25

J. He claimed to be the way: "...I am the way, the truth, and the life...." Jn 14:6

V. CHRIST MADE SOME DEMANDS UPON HIS FOLLOWERS:

A. We are to receive Him. Matt 10:40, "...he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."

B. We are to witness. Matt 10:32, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father, who is in heaven."

C. We are to love Him more than others. Matt. 10:37, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me."

D. We are to follow Him. Matt 9:38, "And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Lu 9:23 also.

E. We are to learn of Him. Matt. 11:29, "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."

F. We are to forsake all and follow Him. Lu 14:33, "So likewise, whosoever he is of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple."

So, why are Bible college graduates turning down $20,000 a year because it is not enough money? So, why are Bible college graduates turning down churches because they might have to work in secular work to make a living? And then there are those that are willing to be home missionaries to open churches in small communities. They go with little support, they struggle to plant a church, and when things are going decently his home church informs him that they are going to pull his support if he remains in that town. They want him to come home to be a visitation pastor, or no more support. PRAISE GOD he was willing to work outside the church and told the home church he was called to where he was ministering, and not to their church to do visitation!

CONCLUSION:

"The Influence of One Life."

"Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His feet inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.

"While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth while He was dying, and that was His coat. When He was dead, He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

"Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today He is the centerpiece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

"I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together have not affected the life of man upon this earth as has that one solitary life."

Maybe you should add your own salvation testimony to this list of information. Christ just continues to change lives wherever He is preached!

HANDOUT

A NEW TESTAMENT AND HISTORICAL LOOK AT CHRIST:

I. HE IS PRESENTED AS THE THEME OF SCRIPTURES IN THE NT:

A. He was the theme of the prophets

B. He was the theme of the apostles

C. He was the theme preached to the Jew

D. He was the theme of the message to the Samaritans

E. He was the theme of the message to the Gentiles

F. He was the theme of the Gospel to be preached today

G. He is the only Gospel to be preached

II. HE WAS PRESENTED AS GOD BY THOSE IN THE NT:

A. Peter:
B. Thomas:
C. John the Baptist:
D. Nathaniel:
E. Martha:
F. The Centurion:

III. HISTORIANS SPEAK OF THE CHRIST OF THE NT:

A.

B.

C.

D.

IIII. HE MADE SOME CLAIMS ABOUT HIMSELF:

A. Jn. 8:12

B. Jn. 10:11

C. Jn. 8:58

D. Jn. 13:13

E. Jn. 15:1

F. Matt. 5:17

G. Mk. 2:1-12

H. Isa. 61 cf. Lu. 4: 21

I. Jn. 11:25

J. Jn. 14:6

V. HE MADE SOME DEMANDS UPON HIS FOLLOWERS:

A. Matt. 10:40

B. Matt. 10:32

C. Matt. 10:37

D. Matt. 9:38; Lu 9:23

E. Matt. 11:29

F. Lu. 14:33

02550

THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

THE DEATH OF CHRIST IS ONE OF THE MAIN THEMES IN SCRIPTURE:

1. It was prophesied: Indeed the truthfulness of God was on the line, due to the prophets message to Israel. Ps 22:1-31, Ps 69:1-21, Is 52:12-53:12, Dan 9:24-26.

2. The Old Testament sacrificial system was a picture of the death of Christ. The dieing of the Lamb of God. Heb. 9 & 10 The study of the passover lamb and The Lamb of God is of great interest if you need something to do sometime for a sermon series.

3. Reportedly there are around one hundred and seventy-five references in the New Testament to the death of Christ.

4. The Old Testament prophets were interested in the salvation that it would bring. I Pet 1:10-11, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them did signify, when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

How glad I am to be living in this age. You know how interested I was in the impeccability of Christ, so I think you can know how frustrated I would have been to be a prophet trying to figure out what I was saying and what it meant.

5. The angels also are interested in this salvation. I Pet 1:12, "...which things the angels desire to look into." They are interested in what God is doing with them. We in turn wonder at His dealings with them as well.

Are we ever satisfied with how God is dealing with us as an individual, or do we wonder why He blesses so and so, so much and me so little?

6. His death was the topic of discussion at the transfiguration. Lu 9:30-31, "...spoke of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." This verse relates to the fact that He laid down His life and they did not take it from Him. We will see this shortly. (Jn 10:17-18)

7. It is the topic of worship and a song in heaven. Rev 5:8-12, "...thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood...."

HIS DEATH WAS NEEDED:

1. It was according to the purpose of God. He planned that He would save mankind through the shed blood of His Son. He planned and He purposed the very death of His Son. Acts 2:23, I Pet 1:19-20, Rev. 13:8.

2. It was needed to fulfill prophecy. Not that the prophets said something, and He needed to follow through on their promises, but that He planned and purposed and then revealed this, before the fact, through the prophets. Matt 26:52-54, Lu 24:25-27.

3. It was needed to provide salvation to man. God had foreordained that the Lamb of God would die, before the foundation of the world. Christ's death was a prerequisite to God saving mankind. Indeed, there is no other plan, no other act that would have fit the purpose of God. Jn 3:14-16, Jn 12:24.

4. It was to obey the will of the Father. If the Son were to follow the will of the Father He must die. This was the struggle of the garden. He did not want to carry the burden of man in His death, but He was submitting to the will of the Father. Jn 10:18 in the context of His dieing stated, "...This commandment have I received of my Father." Philip 2:8

ABOUT HIS DEATH:

1. It was a separation from God. Matt 27:46, "...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The ramifications of this statement, and other questions that arise from it will have to be done in your own research, because we do not have time to cover it. Was this a separation of God from Christ's humanity or deity? Was this a separation as in a split in the trinity?

2. It was a separation of the spirit and the body. Matt 27:50, "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the spirit." When man dies the body goes to the earth for rot, and

the spirit and soul go to be with the Lord for eternal joy.

We know it, we believe it, we preach it, yet when it comes down to ME dieing, I become uncomfortable. Yes, I am ready to meet the Lord. Yes, I know to die is gain. Yes, I know there will be no more pain. Yes, I know there will be joy. No, I am not comfortable with that last moment of transition. Haven't you heard? I dislike change! It is an experience I look forward to, yet I am hesitant to desire its closeness.

3. It was voluntary. Jn 10:17-18, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He did not have to die. He could have walked through the crowds. He could have floated down off the cross. He could have done millions of things, yet He chose to lay His life down for you and me.

4. It was vicarious. I Pet 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit," Vicarious means = "...sympathetic participation in the experience of another" Webster. He suffered in our place. We benefit because of His death. We probably couldn't count all of the benefits that His death brought to us! Lu 9:30-31

5. It was sacrificial. I Cor. 5:7, "...For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us." Without sacrifice there can be no improvement for mankind in its sin. The slaying of the animals for Adam and Eve's sin, benefited their error. The killing of animals under the law was specifically linked to covering the sin of man.

6. It was substitutionary. I Pet 2:24, "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." Christ, in His sacrifice died in our place. We should have died spiritually, but He took upon Himself that punishment that we might have spiritual life.

7. It provided redemption. Eph. 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace," Matt 20:28

8. It was propitiatory. [Webster defines propitiatory as, to appease or satisfy.] Rom. 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" Note should be taken that it was propitiation through faith in His blood. There is no propitiation by the blood alone. Man must mark his claim to salvation on his faith in the work of Christ on the cross. I Jn. 4:10

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR BELIEVERS:

1. He saved us from the curse of the law. Gal. 3:13
2. He secured for us forgiveness. Rev. 1:5, I Jn 1:9
3. He justified us. Rom. 5:9
4. He saved us from wrath. Rom. 5:9
5. He provided new life to us. (Regeneration) II Cor. 5:17
6. By His death are we sanctified. Heb 10:10
7. He provided our adoption as children of God. Gal. 4:3-5
8. We are reconciled to God through His death. Rom. 5:10
9. We can be cleansed by His blood. I Jn 1:7
10. We can have eternal life. Jn 3:14-16

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR NON-BELIEVERS:

It provides salvation ready for the taking for all nonbelievers. Jn 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." I Tim 2:6, Heb 2:9

Every man woman and child that has ever been upon the earth has had this provision made for him or her. The problem is in the taking and receiving. Few benefit from His gracious provision.

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR SATAN AND THE DEMONS:

1. It defeated them. Jn 12:31, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Col 2:14-15

2. It condemned them forever. Jude 6, "And the angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Rev. 20:10 mentions the devil being cast into the lake of fire.

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR THE UNIVERSE:

There was a reconciliation of all things in the universe. Col 1:19-20, "For it pleased the Gather that in him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Rom. 8:20-22

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR HIMSELF:

1. There was a return of His glory. Jn 17:1, "These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up his eyes too heaven, and said, Gather, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy son also may glorify thee."

2. There was an exhaltation. Philip 2:8-9, "And, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled

himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exhalted him, and given him a name which is above every name,"

3. There was joy in it for Him. Heb. 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

THE RESULT OF CHRIST'S DEATH FOR THE FATHER:

1. There was a revealing of the love of God. Rom. 5:8, "But God cammendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

2. There was a revealing of the wrath of God concerning sin. Matt 27:46 speaks of the anguish of Christ on the cross just before His death.

3. There was final provision for Him to have a people for all of eternity.

THE RESULT OF CHRIST'S DEATH WAS FINAL:

There was a final sacrifice. Heb 9:25-27 mentions "...But now once, in the end of the ages, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." vs 26 Heb 10:11-12

UNSCRIPTURAL IDEAS CONCERNING HIS DEATH:

(Theissen has a detailed rebuttal of some of these theories if you are interested. P 315 ff.)

1. That it was the death of a Martyr. Theissen states of this view, "He was killed because He was faithful to His principles and to what He considered His duty, by a generation that did not agree with Him in these respects. We are to learn fidelity to truth and duty from Him. The only thing needed to save a man is to reform him. Christ's example is to teach man to repent of his sins and to reform." 1

There is no basis for this thought. The Scripture is quite plain that He laid down His own life. The death of a martyr can't save anyone. If it could we could go preaching the gospel of Stephen or of the modern martyrs such as the gospel of Elliot.

2. That it was accidental death. Theissen states of this theory, "This view sees no significance in the death of Christ. He was a man and as such subject to death. His principles and methods did not appeal to the people of His day, and so they killed Him. It may have been unfortunate that so good a man was killed, but nevertheless His death had no meaning for anyone else." 2 That he was crucified in error. He had the plan all worked out how He would be set free but the Jews called for Barabus instead.

Others might suggest that the mob just took over and got out of hand. The fact that He fortold His coming death several times before the fact would prove this thinking incorrect.

3. That His death was a good moral example. Again Theissen states, "It holds that Christ's death is the mere natural consequence of His taking human nature upon Himself, and that He merely suffered in and with the sins of His creatures. The sufferings and death of Christ are similar to those of the missionary who enters a leper colony for life, in order to save the lepers. The love of God manifested in the incarnation, the sufferings and death of Christ, are to soften human hearts and lead them to repentance." 3 Who would die to set a moral example? No one in their right mind. Those that suggest this, feel that the sinner has only to look upon the Lord's death, and he will change. If this be the case then why did not the Jews that crucified Him change their ways?

4. That His death was to show God's displeasure for sin. If this be so then why not crucify just any plain old sinner and not the perfect God-man? Theissen calls this the Governmental theory.

5. That His death was the execution of a criminal. So why did Pilate find no fault in Him if he were a criminal.

6. That it was a phoney. In the past, and in recent years there have been some thought given to the fact that there wasn't really a death. That he was only drugged and after He was taken from the cross that He revived and went away. A man by the name of Schonfield relates some of this thinking in his book THE PASSOVER PLOT.

CONCLUSIONS:

God gave His son and He will also give us many other blessings. Rom. 8:32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

There are some fairly lengthy studies on the results of His death in the area of redemption, propitiation etc. to be found in Ryrie's theology p 286-297 and in The Teachers manual for the TEN STEPS series by Campus Crusade.

Walvoord has a lengthy section on the death as well. PP. 153-190

Walvoord has a paragraph that I would like to share.

"In the study of Christ in His sufferings and death, one is in a holy of holies, a mercy seat sprinkled with blood, to which only the Spirit-taught mind has access. In His death Christ supremely revealed the holiness and righteousness of God as well as the love of God which prompted the sacrifice. In a similar way the infinite wisdom of god is revealed as no human mind would ever have devised such a way of salvation, and only an infinite God would be willing to sacrifice His Son." 4

I would like to close with some devotional thoughts from Spurgeon. In commenting on Matt. 27:14 where it states, "He answered him to never a word." he mentions:

"He had never been slow of speech when He could bless the sons of men, but He would not say a single word for Himself. 'Never man spake like this Man,' and never man was silent like Him. Was this singular silence the index of His perfect self-sacrifice? Did it show that He would not utter a word to stay the slaughter of His sacred person, which He had dedicated as an offering for us? Had He so entirely surrendered Himself that He would not interfere in His own behalf, even in the minutest degree, but be bound and slain an unstruggling, uncomplaining victim? Was this silence a type of the defencelessness of sin? Nothing can be said in palliation ["to cover by excuse or apologies" Webster] or excuse of human guilt; and, therefore, He who bore its whole weight stood speechless before His judge."

He goes on to say, "Evidently our Lord, by His silence, furnished a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy. A long defence of Himself would have been contrary to Isaiah's prediction. 'He is led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.' By His quiet He conclusively proved Himself to be the true Lamb of God." 5

END NOTES:

1. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 316

2. Thiessen, Lectures, p 315

3. Thiessen, Lectures, p 316

4. Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 153

5. Charles H. Spurgeon, "MORNING AND EVENING," Mclean, VA: Macdonald Publishing, p 186

HANDOUT

THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

THE DEATH OF CHRIST IS ONE OF THE MAIN THEMES IN SCRIPTURE:

1. Ps 22:1-31, Ps 69:1-21, Is. 52:12-53:12, Dan. 9:24-26

2. Heb. 9 & 10

3.

4. I Pet. 1:10-11

5. I Pet. 1:12

6. Lu. 9:30-31

7. Rev. 5:8-12

HIS DEATH WAS NEEDED:

1. Acts 2:23, I Pet. 1:19-20, Rev. 13:8

2. Matt 26:52-54, Lu. 24:25-27

3. Jn. 3:14-16, Jn. 12:24

4. Jn. 10:18; Philip. 2:8

ABOUT HIS DEATH:

1. Matt. 27:46

2. Matt. 27:50

3. Jn. 10:17-18

4. I Pet. 3:18, Lu. 9:30-31

5. I Cor. 5:7

6. I Pet. 2:24

7. Eph. 1:7, Matt. 20:28

8. Rom. 3:25, I Jn. 4:10

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR BELIEVERS:

1. Gal. 3:13

2. Rev. 1:5, I Jn. 1:9

3. Rom. 5:9

4. Rom. 5:9

5. II Cor. 5:17

6. Heb. 10:10

7. Gal. 4:3-5

8. Rom. 5:10

9. I Jn. 1:7

10. Jn. 3:14-16

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR NON-BELIEVERS:

Jn. 1:29, I Tim. 2:6, Heb. 2:9

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR SATAN AND THE DEMONS:

1. Jn. 12:31, Col. 2:14-15

2. Jude 6, Rev. 20:10

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR THE UNIVERSE:

Col. 1:19-20, Rom. 8:20-22

THE RESULT OF HIS DEATH FOR HIMSELF:

1. Jn. 17:1

2. Philip. 2:8-9

3. Heb. 12:2

THE RESULT OF CHRIST'S DEATH FOR THE FATHER:

1. Rom. 5:8

2. Matt. 27:46

THE RESULT OF CHRIST'S DEATH WAS FINAL:

Heb. 9:25-27
Heb. 10:11-12

UNSCRIPTURAL IDEAS CONCERNING HIS DEATH:

1. That it was the death of a Martyr.

2. That it was accidental death.

3. That His death was a good moral example.

4. That His death was to show God's displeasure for sin.

5. That His death was the execution of a criminal.

6. That it was a phoney.

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THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

It has always been of interest to me that the resurrection of Christ was never one of the things that I had doubted since becoming a Christian. I believed it long before I ever heard the Gospel. I must admit that I wondered about the why of Easter and all that goes with it, but I can't remember of ever doubting the fact that Christ rose from the dead.

It is one of those things that had been taught to me in Sunday School, which had just never been put into practical application in my life.

My concern today is that we are raising a generation of "Christians" just like myself and that one day we will have a Christian nation in name only.

The resurrection of Christ was of great importance to the apostles. It was one of the requirements for the replacement of Judas. Acts 1:21-22; "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

They wanted someone that had witnessed what they had witnessed, so that they all could go forth giving account of those things that they had seen and witnessed.

The resurrection is indeed fundamental to the Christian faith.

1. Without it the Bible is nothing but fables and wasted time. The apostles claimed that the Lord was raised. They are either witnesses of truth, or they are liars of the worst kind. They have, and are guilty of giving false hope to the millions that have followed Jesus over the centuries. They have duped millions into a false religion and a false security concerning their eternal souls.

2. If the Lord was not raised from the dead, then what hope have we of being raised from the dead to eternal life with God? None! Without that hope then we are left with the solemn realization that when we die, we have nothing else. We go to the grave and rot into oblivion.

Even the Pharaohs of Egypt did not believe that one!

Indeed, the resurrection is not only fundamental to the Christian faith, but it is unique to the Christian faith. There is no other religion that claims the resurrection of its founder. All religions can go to a grave where their leader remains.

It has always occurred to me that we have a unique situation in Christianity, yet we still have that grave as a part of the Holy Land itineraries. He isn't there, He hasn't been there for nearly two thousand years, indeed, it may not even be His grave, yet people spend thousands of dollars to see it!

There is one religion that is based on a resurrected leader and that is the old Babylonian religion that viewed Tammuz as resurrected. This is modern day Roman Catholicism.

Thomas Arnold, the author of the three volume HISTORY OF ROME and a man that was appointed to the chair of Modern History at Oxford mentions of his thoughts on the resurrection,

"The evidence for our Lord's life and death and resurrection may be and often has been, shown to be satisfactory; it is good according to the common rules for distinguishing good evidence from bad. Thousands and tens of thousands of persons have gone through it piece by piece, as carefully as every judge summing up a most important case. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others but to satisfy myself. I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead."

The Old Testament not only foretold the event, but also foreshadowed it through Jonah. It is hidden in the prophecies of the Messiah as well. Let's just glance at some references that will depict these truths.

1. Ps. 16:10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to

see corruption." This passage looks far further than the Psalmists thoughts to someone future.

2. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." Jonah 1:17

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matt 12:40

3. The dual aspect of the Messiah coming as a baby and as a king requires two comings which required a death and resurrection, though the prophets certainly did not understand this.

Isa 9:6,7 depict the child/king aspect very nicely as one thought and one coming. The prophets had no idea that there was a two thousand plus year time gap between the child and king aspects of Messiah.

I. TIME OF THE RESURRECTION:

There are some very good explanations to all of the theories of when Christ was crucified, and when He arose.

We won't go into the discussion for it is much to detailed. Let me encourage you however to consider well, the thought that it was three full twenty-four hour periods of time. There is much evidence that this was the case. There are some good arguments for the other views but I think that the evidence tends toward three twenty-four hour periods. This is most consistent with the easy literal interpretation of the scriptures as well.

Please do not stop fellowshipping with others over this controversy for there are very good men on the various sides of the discussion.

Why is it important what day He was crucified on?

1. He said that He would be in the grave three days and three nights. Was He speaking of only an hour or two on two days and twenty-four hours on one day, or was He talking about three days and three nights? The literal, easy understanding of it is three of each equaling three twenty-four hour periods, or very close to it.

2. Will you have, or participate in Good Friday Services when you get into the ministry. A Friday Triumphal entry requires less than three twenty-four hour periods.

3. I don't know, isn't a good answer for people that have gotten into discussions about the subject. They will expect their pastor and Sunday School teachers to know these things!

II. PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. The appearance of the risen Lord to a large number of people. This is covered in section III.

We in the 1990's are quite fond of the "EYE WITNESS" report, indeed, we are becoming quite accustomed to film, or video coverage of the events that we are interested in. We do not have video coverage of the resurrection; however, we have a number of eyewitnesses to the resurrected Lord. (Can you imagine the network fight over coverage of the resurrection if it were to happen today? Or would there be any interest in the occasion?)

B. The empty tomb requires a resurrection. First, the body couldn't have been stolen for there were guards posted, and the tomb was sealed. Secondly, the body of someone that had been drugged could not have rolled the stone away and overcome the guards without them knowing that it had happened.

It is not acceptable that the Lord would allow His disciples to perpetuate fraud by preaching the resurrection when He knew He hadn't died. In all of His life He had acted in the proper moral and legal manner, why would He end His life in a cloud of lies? NOT LOGICAL!

C. The message of the disciples was based on the resurrection. They would not have gone about preaching unless they believed that the Lord had truly been raised from the dead. They would not have gone to their graves for their beliefs as many martyrs did in the early days as well as through the centuries.

Their transformation is also linked to this line of thinking. Peter for example the denier, transformed into a preacher on the day of Pentecost.

Since they did not believe that he was going to be raised (The women went to embalm him.) They must have really believed it to be true to go about preaching it.

D. Paul's conversion necessitates a real experience and not just a dream. He was convinced that the Lord was risen.

E. The believers shifting their day of worship and gatherings to the first day would indicate their belief in the resurrection. If nothing definite had happened, they would have continued in their old ways.

F. There were precautions taken to keep the body in the tomb. Mk 15:46 mentions first that the body was wrapped in grave clothes. This would be hard to get out of if the Lord had really been alive. They rolled a stone into place in front of the tomb. Matt 27:62-66 mentions that the Jews sealed and set a watch, just in case something were going to happen.

G. The church is based on the resurrection. Had it not happened the church would never have begun.

Phillip Shaff in his HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Vol. I, p.172-73 has a discussion of this thought. I think that Paul deals quite adequately with it as well. I Cor. 15:17, "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

H. The transformation of the thousands of believers over the centuries proves that many have believed the evidence that has been presented in the Word and in the life of others.

We don't have time to go into the many testimonies that I could repeat of people that have been transformed by the Gospel. I will allow the few words of a friend of mine suffice as proof of my point. When I told him that I was going to college to be a preacher, he looked me straight in the eye and hollered, "Stan Derickson - a PREACHER?" End quote.

I. Many doubters and lost men have set out to disprove the claims of Christ over the years and many, if not most of these men find that the claims of Christ are to strong to deny and submit to them in receiving Him as their personal savior.

Years ago there was a little Readers Digest size magazine that was put out by a man that had set about to disprove the resurrection. He studied and studied until he found the Lord. He made an offer that stood for years and was printed in his magazine every month. The offer was that if anyone could prove in a legal sense of evidence that the resurrection did not occur, he would pay them $5,000. He had the money in an account set up for the purpose. To my knowledge there was not even one to take up the challenge.

III. NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. Supernatural: Not as in hocus pocus, but in the fact that the whole scenario was outside the very laws of nature and should not have happened as these laws are written.

The Lord was not drugged into a stupor whereby He appeared dead.

He was not acting as if He were dead. Can you imagine the actor that would have the ability to act dead when he has been there on the cross with nails in his feet and hands for several hours? Can you imagine the actor that would be needed to act dead as a spear is stuck into his side?

He died and was raised from the dead as the scriptures state, or the accounts are completely false and unworthy. If the accounts are unworthy in this one respect then they are unworthy in all respects.

B. Physical: Christ told the disciples that He was not spirit but flesh and bones. He told them to observe his hands and feet. Lu. 24:39 Not only did He tell them to, they did. They had time with Him to know that He was really the Jesus that they had known before the crucifixion. Jn. 20:27 He told Thomas to touch his side. Lu. 24:42,43 He ate fish and honeycomb.

There is a difference between His body before and after the resurrection. Rom. 6:9 mentions that death has no power over Him now. "Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."

IIII. PERSON OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. Christ appeared on the first day:

1. To Mary Magdalene. Mk. 16:9,11; Jn. 20:11,17; Matt. 28:1,8,9

2. To other women. Matt. 28:9,10

3. To Peter I Cor. 15:5; Lu. 24:33,35

4. To the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Mk. 16:12,13; Lu. 24:13,35 I have always been envious of those on the road that Christ appeared to. I would have loved to have been there with a recorder or note pad to hear that discussion of the Lord in the Old Testament. What a lesson that must have been.

5. To ten of the disciples. Mk. 16:14; Lu. 24:36,43; Jn. 20:19-25

B. Christ appeared to others before the ascension:

1. To the eleven disciples. Jn. 20:26,29; I Cor. 15:5?

2. To seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee. Jn. 21:1-23

3. To five hundred plus. I Cor. 15:6; Matt. 28:16-20

4. To the Disciples at the ascension. Lu. 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-11

C. Christ appeared after the ascension:

1. Paul. Acts 9:3-6 Paul has been reported to have mentioned the resurrection in each of his epistles.

2. John. Rev. 1:9-20

D. Misc. texts to relate:

I Cor 15:5 mentions the twelve. This may be a collective term for the disciples, or may be an appearance after the replacement was chosen for Judas. The collective idea seems the easiest to most, due to the fact that the ascension preceded the choosing of Matthias. You would have to

deal with a lack of chronology if you held that it was the twelve not collective.

Matt. 28:16,17 mentions the eleven seeing him at the mountain in Galilee. Some have suggested that this is the ascension, however the ascension seems to have been at Jerusalem (Acts 1:4). This would probably fit best after the sea of Galilee appearance.

V. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. It is the surety of our own salvation. I Pet 1:3-4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you," I Cor 15:

It was also sufficient. It cared for all that was needed to redeem mankind! Rom 4:25

B. It is the surety of the Abrahamic covenant. Acts 13:32,33, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Everything that God promised Abraham was set and made fact by Christ. All those things that Abraham took by faith were made guaranteed.

C. It is the surety of the deity of Christ. Rom. 1:4, "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead;" If He were able to raise Himself in his own power as man I think that I'm going to have to start now to psyche myself up enough to raise myself!

D. It is the surety of our faith and life. I Cor. 15:17, "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." Eph. 1:19,22, Rom. 6:1-13

E. It is the surety of a future world judgment. Acts 17:31, "Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; concerning which he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

F. It is the surety of our own resurrection. Indeed it is the surety of all mankind's resurrection, II Cor. 4:14. Jn. 5:28, 29 mentions that all mankind will be raised - some to life and some to damnation.

G. It is the surety of what Christ told the people of Himself. Matt. 28:6, "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said...."

H. It was the surety of His ascension into heaven. Without the blood for the heavenly tabernacle there would have been no entrance.

I. It is the surety that the Bible is true and valid. Ps. 16:10 looks forward to the resurrection. Matt. 16 21, mentions that He was to be raised, and He was.

VI. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. It helps us live moral lives. I Cor. 15:32-34 Paul mentions that if the dead don't rise then we might as well eat, drink for tomorrow we die.

B. We can be encouraged in the loss of loved ones that they will one day be raised from the dead. I Thes. 4:16-18

C. We can relish the thought of what our eternal life will be like. It is based on the resurrection of Christ and is a sure thing to come. I Pet. 1:3-5

"A NEW BEGINNING

"Death is not the end; it is only a new beginning. Death is not the master of the house he is only the porter at the King's lodge, appointed to open the gate and let the King's guests into the realm of eternal day. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

"The range of our threescore years and ten is not the limit of our life. Our life is not a landlocked lake enclosed within the shore lines of seventy years. It is an arm of the sea. And so we must build for those larger waters. We are immortal! How, then, shall we live today in prospect of eternal tomorrow?"

J. H. Jowett 1

We are immortal, we are moving toward the open sea that is immeasurable and full of complete joy. As Francis Shaffer puts it in his book title, "How then should we live?" In light of the fact that the whole world is immortal and moving toward the open sea that is immeasurable, yet not all are moving toward the same sea. The unsaved are immortal and moving toward a sea full of complete and utter agony and torment.

"HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE?"

Christ died and was raised that we might also be raised one day. The sobering fact is however, that all the lost will also be raised. Our responsibility is to show them the direction to the proper sea, the sea of eternal life and not the sea of eternal death!

"HOW THEN SHALL YOU LIVE?"

END NOTES:

1. Stanley I. Stuber and Thomas Curtis Clark, "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH," New York: Association Press, 1949, pp 588-589

HANDOUT

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

I. TIME OF THE RESURRECTION:

II. PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION:

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

F.

G.

H.

III. NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION:

A.

B.

IIII. PERSON OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. Christ appeared on the first day:

1. Mk 16:9,11; Jn 20:11,17; Matt 28:1,8,9

2. Matt 28:9,10

3. I Cor 15:5; Lu 24:33,35

4. Mk 16:12,13; Lu 24:13,35

5. Mk 16:14; Lu 24:36,43; Jn 20:19-25

B. Christ appeared before the ascension:

1. Jn 20:26,29; I Cor 15:5

2. Jn 21:1-23

3. I Cor 15:6; Matt 28:16-20

4. Lu 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-11

C. Christ appeared after the ascension:

1. Acts 9:3-6

2. Rev 1:9-20

D. Misc. texts to relate:

V. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE RESURRECTION:

A. It is the surety of our own salvation.

B. It is the surety of the Abrahamic covenant.

C. It is the surety of the deity of Christ.

D. It is the surety of our faith and life.

E. It is the surety of a future world judgment.

F. It is the surety of our own resurrection.

G. It is the surety of what Christ told the people of Himself.

H. It was the surety of His ascension into heaven.

I. It is the surety that the Bible is true and valid.

VI. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION:

02650

THE HOLY SPIRIT
INTRODUCTION

The actual definition of pneumatology is the study of spirit beings, however in our context our definition is a bit more specific. Our study will concentrate on the study of God the Holy Spirit.

We could, indeed, combine this study with the study of angels, Satan and demons under the heading of pneumatology. We won't do this, but will study the Holy Spirit separate from angelology, the study of angels.

PNEUMATOLOGY the study of the Holy Spirit. The term comes from the Greek word "pneuma" which means spirit, wind or breath.

There has been quite a phenomena concerning the Holy Spirit and His study. When I entered Bible college in the 60's, if you hadn't had at least two studies in your church on the subject, you weren't normal. Indeed, I believe I had studied the Holy spirit twice before having a class in pneumatology in college. Since, I have had three more courses.

The curious thing is that since college, I have heard nothing on the subject. I have not run across any church that had the subject in their Sunday School, nor have I run across a pastor preaching through the doctrine.

We seem to be avoiding the topic of the Holy Spirit. This is sad, due to the close relationship that we have with Him, or at least should have. I have given thought to the reasons why this avoidance might be true? I would like to list some possible reasons.

1. People really don't understand the Holy Spirit; they don't know how to approach teaching the subject.

2. People are afraid to teach about the Spirit in fear of being labeled a Charismatic. This may well be part of the problem. It, however is somewhat akin to not teaching about God the Father because the liberals overemphasize, and have damaged the doctrine of God's love.

3. They have not been taught concerning the Spirit so do not feel that it is an important doctrine.

4. The Devil is not comfortable with the believer knowing about one of the main defenses the believer has against him. Walking in the Spirit's control keeps us off of the Devil's turf and that ain't good.

This is a unique doctrine in some ways. There is only one source of information concerning the Holy Spirit and that is the Bible. We have historical information about Christ, and we have natural revelation about God, but the only information we have concerning the Holy Spirit is that which the Father has revealed to us through the Word.

No other religion has the Holy Spirit. Indeed, some might wonder if Christianity did, as much as we ignore Him. We have no classical source of information, and very little historical information.

Cambron makes a very stiff comment that may be good for us to consider. "The Holy Spirit cannot displace the Son of God. The Holy Spirit did not come to speak of (or from) Himself, but of Christ. One who speaks continually about the Spirit and omits the Son shows evidence that he really does not have the Spirit." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954,p 117)

There seems to be much confusion today concerning the Spirit, His manifestations, and His ministries. Many are teaching false things concerning the Spirit today and we need to be equipped to answer these false teachings. We also have need of preparing those we minister to, lest they become involved with the false teaching.

Those that are amiss in the area of the Spirit in their theology usually are quite divisive in nature. They often will enter into a good church and become a division to the assembly just to teach their falsehood. While pastoring in the Midwest, we had a man attending our church. He was a strong fundamentalist and a joy to have in the fellowship. His wife, however was a full blown charismatic.

She had attended our church a time or two and happened to show up one Sunday when I was speaking about the Devil's counterfeits, one of which was tongues. She left during the closing prayer. I told the man I was sorry if it offended her - He interrupted men and said, "Don't worry - she needed it!"

The following Wednesday the husband told me he had overheard a phone call his wife had made to a woman pastor. His wife described what I had said. She paused then said, "Yes, I think he's just the spirit of antichrist too!" Needless to say, they do believe they are right and everyone else is wrong.

A small fundamental church in Kansas many years ago was functioning well and a charismatic

couple became members. Within a year the church had split over the issue of tongues.

Missionaries have related several times that Charismatics have entered towns where good works were already established and rented buildings as close as possible to the churches and set up loud speakers outside to disrupt the services of the established churches and try to draw the believers to the excitement of the new group.

Bancroft mentions the need to hold the doctrine of the Spirit in the correct light and that we need to hold it in the right proportion. A balanced doctrine of the Spirit is needed.

Some term the 20th century as the century of the Spirit. Much of the emphasis early in the century came from the missionary zeal that was generated by the early missionaries. They realized that it was the empowerment of the Holy Spirit that would get the job done.

It would be an interesting study to relate the decline in missions interest to the incline of the charismatic movement, as well as the decline of teaching about the Holy Spirit in fundamental churches.

In recent years there was a real emphasis on the gifts and the Spirit's ministry through them. There has been some good, coming from this study of the Spirit.

In recent years we have had a fresh look at the gifts of the Spirit, not only in the negative with tongues and healing, but in the positive with the realization that believers are gifted to do different things within the local church. This emphasis on the Spiritual gifts has helped some to realize that all members of the body are important and can be beneficial to the Lord's work.

The thought we want to gain is that we should study the scriptures and determine what they say about the Holy Spirit. We should then determine in our minds to go no further than Scripture states, as some have.

I would like to look for a moment at a promise, a purpose, a power and a program, in which the Holy Spirit is involved in. These items are the current main function of the Holy Spirit.

I. THE PROMISE

When the Lord was speaking to the disciples He promised to send the Holy Spirit to minister. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Jo. 14:16-17

Some things to notice briefly from this text:

A. "another Comforter" would indicate a very close resemblance of characteristics to the Lord Himself. He was speaking in the context of leaving the disciples.

B. He will "abide" with them "forever." This is a promise of the Spirit's presence throughout all of eternity. He is for our benefit and not the world's; the world won't receive Him.

C. The Spirit was not yet indwelling them. This was a future occurrence for the disciples.

D. The coming of the Comforter was to be directly related to Christ's ascension to be with the Father. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Jo. 16:7 Just why the Lord had to leave before the comforter could come is not clearly stated in the Word, however we can do some logical assuming for a possible answer.

There is a matter of sin that had not been taken care of for the Old Testament saints and the living apostles. The Holy Spirit could not indwell until the sin nature was cared for. This could not occur until the work of the cross and the atonement for sin in the heavenly tabernacle. Thus, we can assume that the Holy Spirit's delay was due to the incomplete work of the cross. Upon the resurrection, the Spirit was free to come to indwell all believers.

II. PURPOSE

There was to be an indwelling of believers: "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Jo. 14:17

There was to be a testimony of Christ: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me;" Jo. 15:26 Not only by the Spirit, but the following verse mentions that the apostles also would be witnesses.

There was to be a revealing of things to the apostles. Jo. 16:12-15. This revealing resulted in the apostles setting down the books of the New Testament.

This text mentions again as some of the other verses "truth". The Spirit is truth and nothing false can come from Him.

There was to be an empowerment. "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you...." Acts 1:8a We will dwell on this empowerment in the final section of our study of the Spirit.

III. POWER

Acts 1:8 mentions that the apostles were to receive power to do the job set before them. "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you...." Acts 1:8a As you read through the book of Acts this empowerment is quite evident in the lives of the apostles.

IIII. PROGRAM

The program was to be the propagation of the Gospel after the power was received. "...And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8 b

There are some symbols and names that are used of the Spirit that we need to look at in brief.

SYMBOLS OR TYPES:

1. CLOTHED WITH POWER: Lu. 24:49 We have this being in residence. We can call upon Him for His help and aid at any moment of the day.

2. THE DOVE: Matt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10; Lu. 3:22; Jo. 1:32. Walvoord suggests that there are four aspects to the dove that make it a fitting type of the Spirit, beauty, gentleness, peace, heavenly nature and origin. The choice of a dove to symbolize the Holy Spirit was a calculated decision on the part of God. The dove must symbolize nicely the Spirit.

3. THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT: II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14 "Of what is the Spirit the Earnest? The Scriptures make it clear. All the future blessings of God are assured by the presence of the Holy Spirit. His presence is our guarantee. Our inheritance, our salvation, our glory, our fellowship with God, our likeness unto Him, our freedom from sin and its evils, all are represented in the token payment of the Person of the Spirit." (Walvoord, John F., A.M., Th.D.; "THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Grand Rapids: Dunham Publishing Co.; 1958, p 20)

4. FIRE: Acts 2:3 Again, the symbol of fire was chosen to symbolize a specific aspect of the Spirit's ministry. This was the time when the church was being started. It was time when the message of the Gospel would go forth into the world to change lives. The symbol of fire is also used in the Gospels to symbolize judgment.

5. OIL: A number of Old Testament references seem to use oil as a type of the Spirit. Ex. 27:20-21, Lev. 2:1-16, Lev. 14:10-29, Ex. 40:9-16, Lev. 8, I Sam. 10:1, 16:13, I Ki. 1:39, Ps. 23:5.

In thinking of the Holy Spirit as being pictured by oil let me share a comment. The Pastor's Manual put out by Baptist Publications/Spring 1976/p 38/Denver mentions a man wanting to drive an iron bar into a timber. He drilled a hole the correct size, but the iron was rusty. He feared splitting the timber so poured oil into the hole. The iron was driven in without harm to the wood. So, with church change, we must allow the Holy Spirit to be our oil.

How true in our witnessing - take a little oil with you!

Oil shows the holiness, consecration and sanctification of the Spirit. He is pure, He is set apart, and He is an integrated part of every believer.

6. SEAL: II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30. The term indicates a number of things to the believer, ownership, safety, authority, a completed agreement, security, mark of recognition, and an obligation. The Holy Spirit is all of these things to us.

Ownership: We are the Lord's whether we act like it or not. He has bought and paid for us - we are His.

Safety: There is nothing that can harm us. We are His and He cares for His own.

Authority: The Lord has authority over us. Indeed, like ownership, we often do not live like it, but He does own us and He does have authority over us. That authority may be set aside by the believer, but God will one day exercise His authority.

A completed agreement: The deal of the Gospel is done. We accepted Christ as payment for our sin, and He has done the rest. There is nothing more to do, the deal is set, the deal is finished, the deal is complete.

Security: There is a guarantee of security. We are sealed by the Spirit and this is God's sure mark that we are His.

Mark of recognition: Because we are His, we are marked as His so that the principalities and powers of the air can know where we stand.

Obligation: It is God that is obligated to do as He has said. It is His legal obligation to live up to His commitment. It is however, our moral obligation to live up to our end of the bargain. He will not force us to do so, but He certainly desires that we commit ourselves to Him.

7. SERVANT: Walvoord presents the servant of Abraham going for a wife for Isaac as the picture of the Spirit going after the bride for Christ. The Spirit's work in salvation being the picture.

You must admit as we continue in our study that the Holy Spirit is in the background of the ministry of God to the believer. He is very important, yet He is always in the back room serving the believer. We have the pure, perfect Servant as an integrated part of our lives, and yet we so often treat that Servant as the cruel slave owners of years past treated their slaves. Someone to do the dirty work - someone that is totally insignificant. How the Lord must grieve when we treat Him so.

8. WATER: Jo. 4:14; Jo. 7:37-39. The characteristics of water can be seen in the ministry of the Spirit. He can be calm and waiting to work, or He can be powerful as the sea in a storm. He can carry the believer along as the sea transports the ships of commerce. He is the need of life, as is water. Without water our bodies thirst, without Him our souls thirst.

9. WIND: Jo. 3:8; Acts 2:1-2; II Pet. 1:21. As the sea moves the ships, so the wind can move ships from port to port. The wind is powerful to change the landscape. In the life of the believer the wind of the Spirit can do monumental landscaping. I was given a postcard from Mt. Rushmore, by my son after he had visited the monument. The card showed the before and after of the mountain. As we look at the lives of believers, we can see even more drastic changes than even the sculptor of Rushmore.

NAMES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Spirit: I Cor. 2:10; Jo. 3:6-8. This title depicts his nature. He is a spiritual being and has no body. It also seems to me that this may be a name that gives us a little familiarity with Him. The terms Holy Spirit and Eternal Spirit seem to be a little stiff, yet the Spirit seems to give evidence that one that knows Him might have a familiarity that comes from knowledge and maybe even friendship. After all if we can call The Father, Abba Father, which means Daddy, according to most commentators, and we call The Son a friend, why shouldn't we have a friendship with the Spirit as well. The thought of a teacher that is not somewhat of a friend is foreign to my thinking as a teacher.

2. Eternal Spirit: Heb. 9:14. This depicts his state of existence. He is eternal in nature - He has always existed and always will exist. Some seem to think that this person is for their ultimate high, for their personal benefit. He is there for the believer, to minister, to teach, to lead, but He is not there to give them a high in the worship service, he is not there to serve the believer, He is not there to bring about miraculous things of desire for the believer. He is not the spirit version of Santa Claus which gives riches and fortune to those that ask Him. He is the Eternal Spirit, the almighty God that we should desire to serve.

3. Comforter: Jo. 15:26, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me;"

This name should bring us to the realization that He wants to be a comfort to us in times of trouble - at all times for that matter, not just when we are in trouble. We can receive comfort in good times as well as bad.

The last thought of the verse is one of great importance as well. The Spirit is to give witness or testimony of the Son. He is not here to be lifted up, He is not here to lift up Himself, so why is He the center of attention in so many worship services? It seem that any group that concentrates on the Spirit is doing damage to His image and ministry.

4. Holy Spirit: Lu. 11:13

His holiness should be a challenge to us as we realize that He is a permanent resident! We ought to live as if we really believed that!

He is holy, He is our Holy guide, He is our Holy Leader, He is our Holy teacher, He is our Holy Comforter. He is holy at all times. Any ministry He has with us is a holy ministry, one that is free from sin, free from error, and free from all possibility of error. A ministry and minister to trust.

5. Holy Ghost: Rom. 5:5, "And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given unto us."

His presence should result in the love of God flowing out through us. This will automatically result as we walk with Him and allow the Spirit to work in and through us. This love of God is not something that we must struggle to produce, it is not something that we should concentrate on doing, it is something that will automatically become a part of our daily life, if we are in a proper relationship to Him.

Loving the unlovely, befriending the friendless and ministering to the miserable, is not something that we as humans automatically do, but it is something that we as believing humans will automatically do - if we are correctly related to God.

6. Spirit of truth: Jo. 15:26; I Jo. 5:6

There is nothing but truth that is revealed by the Spirit. We can trust the Word that he inspired and we can trust the leading that He can give to us on a daily basis. There is no falsehood in Him, because He is truth. His character will not allow for falsehood, nor can falsehood exist within Him, for if there be anything false in Him, then He is not God. God is truth.

7. Spirit of grace: Heb. 10:29 As we allow Him to show through, we will become gracious acting people - we will have grace toward others. I have met some believers that are so very caustic in their dealing with other people. I often wonder how they are related to their God. If God is full of grace, and He indwells us, then how can we not be gracious, if we are in a proper relationship with Him?

8. Spirit of wisdom: "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord," Isa. 11:2

This is clearly not a promise of these things to us in this age, it is a prophecy of the coming Messiah. However, this text speaks of the same Spirit that indwells the believer today so it gives us some insight into the ministry of the Spirit to all of mankind that has been redeemed.

Imagine, the wisdom of the universe is a part of a being that is an integrated part of us. We have available to us the wisdom that the Holy Spirit has. We have all wisdom, if we ask. James mentions, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all [men] liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5

9. Spirit of understanding: Isa. 11:2 He has all the understanding that He needs when we are in serious trouble or problems. He can minister to us perfectly, because He understands perfectly what we are up against. He knows what we need and can give it to us when we are down. He is our understanding minister.

10. Spirit of counsel: Isa. 11:2 When we need His leading, He is our perfect, and truthful counsel. When He leads us into a decision, we can kick back and know that it was the correct one. We can trust in those decisions, even later when things seem to be so wrong. We can look back and know that the decision was from our Perfect counsel and God.

11. Spirit of might: Isa. 11:2 In Acts 1:8 it is mentioned that the Lord would give power in witness. This power is available to us today. As we go out to witness, we have the power that the apostle Paul had, for the Spirit has not changed.

12. Spirit of knowledge: Isa. 11:2 He knows God for He is God, and He can share His knowledge with us. We can know God as we go into the Word seeking that knowledge. The Holy Spirit will lead us into the knowledge that He desires us to have each day.

Imagine the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, Counsel, might and knowledge IN RESIDENCE!

As I was working through these names I was impressed with the thought that if we had a pastor or friend living next door, which had perfect wisdom, understanding, counsel, might and knowledge and the many other items depicted by these names, that the person would be constantly answering our questions. RIGHT? So why aren't our prayer closets filled the same way seeking all of these things from the Holy Spirit that dwells within us?

13. Spirit of promise: Eph. 1:13, "In whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," We have God's promise that our salvation is sure, living within!

I will list some of the other names with a reference to get you started on your own study. This would make a good devotional study. Take one name each day to study and consider.

14. Spirit of glory: I Pet. 4:14
15. Spirit of God: I Cor. 3:16
16. Spirit of Jehovah: Isa. 11:2
17. Spirit of the Lord Jehovah: Isa. 61:1
18. Spirit of the Living God: II Cor. 3:3

19. Spirit of Christ: Rom. 8:9
20. Spirit of His Son: Gal. 4:6
21. Spirit of Jesus: Acts 16:6,7
22. Spirit of Jesus Christ: Phil. 1:19 cf. Gal. 4:6, Rom. 8:9
23. Spirit of life: Rom. 8:2
24. Spirit of the Lord: II Cor. 3:17,18

CONCLUSIONS:

1. We will be looking at the Spirit in an academic manner, yet there is no reason that you shouldn't apply those academic thoughts to your own personal life, and get to know the One that has indwelled you since your spiritual birth.

2. We, the believers of the church age, are of all believers of all time thus far, most special, for we have the Holy Spirit in residence. We have the Spirit indwelling us. We have the Spirit available to minister to us. We seldom, however call upon Him to minister unto our needs.

3. A short story will close our introduction.

A pastor friend and I took a trip to Colorado Springs yesterday to see some friends of mine. About ten miles outside of Denver my car had a flat tire. As I started to get out to fix the flat the pastor said, "Sit still, Joe, I'll take care of it." This he did with much dispatch, and dirt as well I might add. After brushing his suit off he returned to the car and we continued on toward our destination.

As we entered town, I noticed a bar alongside the road. Knowing the pastor would not approve of going inside I told him to stay in the car while I went in for a drink.

As we continued into town I became convicted of my drinking. Not knowing how to pray, I asked the pastor to pray for me which he did without hesitation.

We arrived at my friends' house safely and after introductions, sat down to coffee. Knowing my friends did not like religion I asked the pastor to go into the living room while we talked in the kitchen.

Before leaving town I asked the pastor to help me pick out a good camera so we found a department store. Upon much looking and discussing the pastor told me the model 301 was by far the best buy for me. I wanted a model 1440. It was more expensive, but much nicer looking, so I bought it.

On the return trip to Denver late that night we had an accident. The car turned over in the ditch. I was pinned in and couldn't move. The pastor walked ten miles to get help. Upon his return with help I was too busy thinking about myself to thank the pastor.

The next day laying in the hospital bed, I thought back over the previous day's events. I had gone all day without thanking the pastor for his help, friendship and advice. I had also set him aside twice while I indulged myself in sin and fellowship with ungodly people. I hadn't even followed his advice about the camera, advice that I had asked for.

By the way, is this the way you treat the Holy Spirit? Do you set Him aside when you're with ungodly people? Do you reject his advice? Do you thank Him for the many things He does for you?

Consider this story and its ideas in relation to your life with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a person; He is a friend; He is a comforter -- treat Him accordingly.

02700

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the next few minutes you will receive a bird's eye view of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

As a lost person you were in the depth of sin and unable to do anything about your situation. You were lost and on your way to eternal torment in the lake of fire. At some point in your life you were confronted with God. You may have faced Him when looking at the stars on a summer evening when you realized that there had to be some power that put those stars in place. At some point in time you were confronted with God.

If you are a believer now, you were at some point in your life confronted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You accepted that message of salvation and became a child of God.

At the point that you accepted Christ as your savior you were introduced into the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the family that makes up all living believers on the earth. We have local assemblies of believers that we call churches.

At the point of salvation you received a heavenly guest who took up residence within you. His name is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Almighty God in residence!

We have all the magnificence of the Godhead resident inside of ourselves. This is why Paul told the Corinthian Christians that they were the temple of the living God. We are the temple, or dwelling place of God!

The Holy Spirit is just as much a person as you and me. He has the attributes of a person such as will, volition, and intelligence. He is a personable being that is desirous of fellowshipping with

you and me!

He is highly intelligent, for He knows all things. He is highly compassionate, for He is God Himself. He is very strong, for He is all-powerful. He is all loving, for He is Love. THAT is the person that you have living within you!

How do you live your life? Do you do your own thing when no one is looking, thinking that you are getting away with it? WRONGO! God knows all that you do.

When you believe, you are saved. It is called regeneration.

1. THE REGENERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: At the moment that you accepted the Lord you were saved. At that point a whole bunch of things happened to you in one instant. The important one that happened was that you were born again, or regenerated. It was the placing within you of a new nature as well as the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit all came to live with you. Jo. 3:3 "...ye must be born again...." Titus 3:5

2. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: One of the other things that happened to you is that you were baptized into the body of Christ. It was the placing of you into the family of God. This is not Water baptism, but is a baptism in the spiritual realm that we have nothing to do with. It is automatic and we don't have to seek it or desire it. I Cor. 12:13, "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body...."

3. THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit comes to live within you at the moment of your salvation. This coming to live with you is called INDWELLING and is a study in and of itself. He is within us for many purposes that we will be looking at in this study. Rom. 8:9, I Cor. 3:16, II Cor. 6:16, Ro. 5:5, Gal. 4:6.

4. THE GIFTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Again at the point of salvation you were given one or more spiritual gifts that you are to develop and use for the building up of your local church. Eph. 4:11 tells us that the gifts are for the building up of the church, or the training of others to do the work of the Lord.

The gifts are as follows: Teaching, Pastor - teacher, Helps, Administrations, Ministry, Exhortation, Giving, Ruling, and Evangelists. There are other gifts mentioned, however these have passed away. They were used by the early church to show that Christ was the Messiah of the Old Testament. They are what we call sign gifts. The listings are found in Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:28-30; Eph. 4:11. We will look at the gifts further in a later study. There is also information concerning the gifts in the ecclesiology section.

5. THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: As we walk with the Lord He will ask us to do certain things for Him. He does not leave us to find ways and means of doing these things, but has empowered us to do them. When He asks us to witness to a friend we don't have to go

out and muster up a basket full of courage and boldness. We have the Holy Spirit living within us who will give us the courage and boldness! There is nothing too big or too hard for you as long as you have the Holy Spirit empowering you. (I Cor. 2:3-5 shows the power of God in contrast to the power that we have. See also Lu. 24:49; Acts 1:8.)

May the message we give be God's message with POWER. As you go out to witness for your Lord, you will find, often times, that you are amazed at how effective you are in countering objections and questions. This is the power of the Spirit. Once years ago my wife and I witnessed to a man. As he would object, we would have references from the Word to disprove him. As he would question, we would answer. Finally after an hour or two, he buried his head in his hands on his knees and said, "Wait a minute, you have me confused!" It was not we that confused him; it was the Word and power of God.

6. THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: The filling of the Holy Spirit is used in contrast with being drunk with wine in the book of Ephesians. We are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit as fully as the person is controlled by the wine when he is drunk. We are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit at all times. This is the case anytime we have confessed all of our sin, according to I Jo. 1:9, and have turned control over to Him. If we are controlling our life then He is not, and we are not filled. Eph. 5:18, "And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit"

The idea is not to be out of control, but to allow the Holy Spirit to lead, to teach and to show forth His fruit as Galatians tells us. Being filled is being controlled by Him.

7. THE CONVICTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: When we as believers have sin in our lives we are not in fellowship with God. We will be convicted by the Holy Spirit of that sin so that we will confess it and remove it from our life.

The term used is a legal term that has the idea of convicted in a court of law. We will know when something is hindering our life and walk with God. The Holy Spirit will point out any sin to us as we pray and we will seek to be filled with the Spirit.

I Jo. 1:9 is God's answer to sin. Confess it and He will forgive it. Confess has the idea of agreeing with God on what you have done, as well as a decision not to do it again.

8. THE LEADING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: As we go out into life, He will lead us into the profession, the marriage, the place of residence, etc. that He desires for us, if we will allow Him to do so. Rom. 8:14 mentions, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." We can be led by the Spirit if we allow it. Leading comes from the Word, prayer, and His peace. Some add one further source of leading, and that is the advise of other believers.

A chapel speaker years ago mentioned of the advice of Christians, "Be sure they are Spiritual!"

You cannot trust the advice of a believer that is not walking with God. You probably should not rely heavily on the advice of a spiritual believer either. God is able to lead. Rely on the big three above for most of your leading. It is not wrong to seek advice to check out your thinking, but allow God to have the final part in your walk. (Gal. 5:18; Acts 16:6-10; Acts 13:4; Acts 8:29.)

9. THE TEACHING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit teaches the believer. I John. 2:27 mentions, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." You receive the teaching of the Holy Spirit primarily in two ways:

a. By reading and studying the Word of God and reacting to what you read and learn.

b. By listening to teachers and preachers. A teacher or preacher normally puts in many hours of preparation and prayer when getting ready for a lesson or sermon. That preparation can be a good basis for you to learn from. Don't assume all that you hear is gospel truth, for man can err, but listen, consider and learn from those that teach you.

You learn anytime that you are open to the Word of God. (I Cor. 2:9-10 also.)

10. THE PRAYING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit intercedes for us in our prayers. Rom.8:26 says that He groans. At times we pray asking for something. "OH, LORD, I HAVE TO HAVE A CORVETTE TO IMPRESS THAT NEAT CHICK I JUST MET!" The Holy Spirit will groan! NO! That is not what it is talking about! We need to pray according to the Word. We need to pray for our needs.
We need to pray for the lost world. We need to pray for the furtherance of God's work and glory.

There are times when things are so bad and mixed up in our lives that we don't know how to pray. He does, and He prays for us in accordance with God's will for us. (Rom. 8:27)

He also at times leads us to pray for certain things at certain times. He directs our prayer life to those things that are needed at the time. Many years ago I was working on a lesson at my computer. I stopped for a moment and was thinking of some of the people at our church. A couple that we did not know, except by face and name came to my mind. I felt that I should pray for them. I prayed for quite awhile for them in general ways. I remember asking God to care for them in whatever situation they were in that day. A few days later I was talking to a friend and he informed me that the husband had died and the wife was being informed of his passing at the time I was praying. The Holy Spirit leads His people! Be open to His leading.

Rom. 8:26 states, "Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Two things: He leads in what to pray for and He intercedes and/or sharpens the focus of our prayers.

CONCLUSION:

To tie all this up into a package that you can put into practice in your life, you need to first of all be a Christian. That is, one that has trusted Christ as their Savior. Secondly, you need to have given your life to Him for His service and control. That is dedication! Look at Rom. 12:1,2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Present it and leave it there. One of our pastors years ago mentioned of this verse, "The problem with living sacrifices is that we keep getting down off the alter." Commit yourself to Him. Thirdly, you need to allow the Holy Spirit to control your life.

Every part of your life will be better if the Spirit is able to control your life. You may find trials and problems, yet you will know that God is in control and doing what He wants to in your life.

He wants to be your TEACHER!
He wants to be your COMFORTER!
He wants to be your COMPANION!
He wants to be your POWER!
He wants to be your LEADER!
He wants to be your PRAYER WARRIOR!
He wants to be your CONVICTOR!

He wants to be the very center of everything that you do, be it leading to the college of His choice, leading to the mate of your life, leading to the church of His choice for you, helping you in times of troubles, empowering you to witness to your friends, helping you to submit to authorities, or learning from the pastor in the messages.

EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO - HE WANTS TO BE INVOLVED IN!

02750

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DEITY

"The great trinitarian strife is usually called the Arian controversy, because it was occasioned by the anti-trinitarian views of Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, a rather skilful disputant, though not a profound spirit. His dominant idea was the monotheistic principle of the Monarchians, that there is only one unbegotten God, one unoriginated Being, without any beginning of existence. He distinguished between the Logos that is immanent in God, which is simply a divine energy,

and the Son or Logos that finally became incarnate. The latter had a beginning: He was generated by the Father, which is the parlance of Arius was simply equivalent to saying that He was created. he was created out of nothing before the world was called into being, and for that very reason was not eternal nor of the divine essence. The greatest and first of all created beings, He was brought into being that through Him the world might be created. He is therefore also mutable, but is chosen of God on account of his foreseen merits, and is called the Son of God in view of His future glory. And in virtue of His adoption as Son He is entitled to the veneration of men." (Berkhof, Louis; "THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1937, p 84, 90-91, p 84)

Arius held that the Holy Spirit was the first created being produced by the Son, an opinion very much in harmony with that of Origen." (Berkhof, p 90)

". . .in AD 381 the general Council of Constantinople met, it declared its approval of the Nicene Creed and under the guidance of Gregory of Nazianzus accepted the following formula respecting the Holy Spirit: 'And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-giving, who proceeds from the Father, who is to be glorified with the Father and the Son, and who speaks through the prophets.'" (Berkhof, p 90-91)

I would refer you to Pache's book on the Spirit for a very good study of the deity of the Spirit.

Some disputed the deity of the Spirit in the early days of the church. We will see this more in another study, let it suffice to mention Arius. He taught that God created Christ and that Christ created the Spirit. This was refuted by the Nicene Creed in A.D. 325.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DEITY

1. HIS DEITY IS SEEN IN HIS ATTRIBUTES:

He is eternal, Heb. 9:14 "...eternal Spirit....". Since, only God is eternal, we might safely assume that the Holy Spirit is Deity.

He is omniscient, I Cor. 2:10-12, we won't read the whole text but vs 10 mentions, "...for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." and vs 11 tells us, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in Him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Also Lu. 2:25-32; Jo 14:26; 16:12,13. Again, only God has the attribute of omniscience, thus the Spirit must be God.

He is Omnipresent, Ps. 139:7-10. Vs 7 mentions, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" He indwells all believers at once. Jo. 14:17 shows this when Christ promises the Spirits coming to the disciples. He, being omnipresent, must be God.

He is omnipotent, Zech. 4:6, "...Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of

hosts." The context speaks of a mountain becoming a plain. This is the Spirit of God, the one that was the instrument of creation. The Father declared the creation, the Son spoke, and the Spirit made it so.

Luke 1:35 mentions the conception of Jesus. This would certainly take a tremendous power of deity. Also in Job 33:4, Elihu declared that the Spirit had made him.

He is truth, I Jo. 5:6, "...And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." Only God "is truth," thus the Spirit must be God.

He demonstrates sovereign acts. We are told that He gives spiritual gifts as He wills in I Cor. 12:11.

He is involved in our salvation. I Cor. 6:11, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Only God can be involved in our salvation.

Some misc. texts that show other ideas along this line. Isa. 40:13; Rom 3:2; II Tim. 1:7; II Tim. 1:7; Rom. 16:27.

2. HIS DEITY IS SEEN IN HIS NAMES:

He is called the Spirit of God: Gen. 1:2, "...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (I Cor. 2:11 also.) This would indicate that the Spirit is an integrated part of God, thus we must assume that He is deity.

He is called eternal Spirit: Heb. 9:14, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God...." Only God is eternal.

There are several names that I will just list with a reference for you further study.

He is called the Spirit of Jehovah, Is. 11:2
He is called the Spirit of the Living God, II Cor. 3:3
He is called the Spirit of the Lord Jehovah, Is. 61:1
He is called the Spirit of Christ, Rom. 8:9
He is called the Spirit of Jesus, Acts 16:6,7

3. HIS DEITY IS SEEN IN HIS ACTIVITIES:

His deity is seen in His work in creation. Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30; Job. 26:13, "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." The Spirit's part in creation demands omnipotence, which in turn demands deity.

His deity is seen in revelation. Acts 28:25, "...Well spoke the Holy Spirit by Isaiah, the prophet, unto our fathers," Only God has revealed His message to mankind. The New Testament declares the Spirit to be the instrument of revelation. (II Pet. 1:21 mentions also that the prophets spoke as they were moved by the Spirit. II Sam. 23:2,3 mentions, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and his word was in my tongue.")

His deity is seen in Christ's birth. Lu. 1:35, "And the angel answered, and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee...." Another indication of power, or omnipotence.

His deity is seen in His work of conviction. Jo. 16:7-11, The text speaks of the Spirit convicting the world. Only God could undertake such a task. The conviction of one person would require God, much less conviction of the entire human race as it has walked the earth through the ages.

His deity is seen in His work of regeneration. Jo. 3:3-6. These verses tell us that rebirth comes only by being born of the Spirit. Christ was speaking to Nicodemus.

His deity is seen in His work of resurrection. Rom. 8:11, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also give life to your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Only deity has power over death.

His deity is seen in his activity with the church. He is involved with the church. I Cor. 12:4-6; Rev. 3:22.

4. HIS DEITY IS SEEN IN HIS ASSOCIATIONS WITH GOD:

Acts 28:25 mentions that the Holy Spirit spoke through Isaiah, and in Isaiah we find it is mentioned that God was communicating with Isaiah (Is. 6). Another set of verses which indicate the same idea are Jer. 31:31-34 and Heb. 10:15-17

The lie of Ananias and Sapphira was linked to the Holy Spirit in Acts 5:3, and to God in vs 4.

The Baptismal formula of Matt. 28:19 and the benediction of II Cor. 13:14 both show the Spirit with the Son and The Father. II Cor. 13:14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."

He is identified as the temple of the believer, while we are also called the temple of God (I Cor. 6:19 cf. I Cor. 3:16, indeed, 3:16 mentions both God and the Spirit. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?." Col. 1:27 mentions that Christ is in us as well).

The phrase "another comforter" indicates that the Spirit is of an identical nature with Christ. Christ Himself identifies the Spirit as of the same status, or nature as Himself.

He is also linked to God in the administration of the church. I Cor. 12:4-6

The above proofs should give only one conclusion, and that conclusion would be that The Holy Spirit is God. He is person three within the trinity from eternity past.

APPLICATION:

1. We know His leading is sure and guaranteed as correct. He is truth, and He would not lead us counter to His nature, or the Word.

2. He sealed us - we know we are eternally secure. He is our guarantee! He can not all of a sudden not guarantee! Our surety is based in The Eternal Almighty God.

3. His deity should show us His love, grace and longsuffering in the fact that He is within us and we step willfully into sin. He could strike us dead, yet He awaits our repentance and correct living.

4. It should curb our wrong doing. HE IS WITHIN. He is witness of all that we do.

Surely, realizing these things should correct some of our wrong living, and wrong thinking.

02800

THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE SPIRIT HAS THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONALITY

He has life: Rom. 8:2, "...the Spirit of life...." II Cor. 3:3, "...Spirit of the living God...." Dare I suggest we need Him in our worship services. We are often very dead. He isn't some doctrine we study. He is real, He is alive, He is active. This should add to the friendship aspect of our relationship to Him. He is living and alive, and can react to all that we share with Him.

He has intelligence, knowledge & thought: I Cor. 2:10, 11 mentions that He can know. Rom. 8:27, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit...." He has a mind. He can think and know, thus He can be interactive in leading and guiding us. He is not just a power within us, He is a person - someone that we can communicate with - someone that has perfect compassion that understands our hurt and many other things.

He has purpose: Is. 11:2 is a prophecy that the Spirit will be upon the Messiah to minister. I Cor. 12:11 tells that He gives the gifts as He wills indicating that there is specific purpose in His

work. Not only can He purpose to do things, but He purposes that we do things! We are not placed upon this earth to take up space and resources; we are here to bring glory to God and to serve Him. Part of the Spirit's purpose is to aid us in these accomplishments.

It is a neat concept to consider that God has given us a purpose and job to do, then He has given us all that we need to do that job. He has done it all. He saved us so that we can respond to Him, He gave us the purpose and He gave us the Spirit to help us do the work.

He has activity: He was active in creation (Gen. 1:2). He was active in getting the church off the ground (Acts 2:1-4). He is active within the church through individual believers. Each believer is indwelt by the Spirit, thus He is able to lead not only the individual, but also the church through their collective leading.

He is active in the lost segment of mankind as well. The Scripture is clear that He is in the business of convicting the lost, but more importantly he is active in drawing the lost to the Lord. Without His drawing and activity on our part, we would still be lost.

He has freedom: "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." II Cor. 3:17 We are told that He gives the gifts as He wills (I Cor. 12:11). He acts as He wills, and has freedom to do so. We might add one qualifier to that statement. He acts freely within the prescribed plan that was set by the Trinity in eternity past. He, nor any member of the Trinity, will ever act independent of the decree and consent of the other members of the Trinity.

He not only IS free, but he creates freedom. Within our Christian life, we have a great freedom. We often find ourselves worried about what we can't do, but seldom think of all that we can do. We have great freedoms within our Christian life. We are also free to limit those freedoms for the sake of our fellow believers or our testimony.

He has self-consciousness: (WILL/ VOLITION) I Cor. 12:11 "as He will". He knows Himself - is conscious that He has life and that He exists. This is an eternal consciousness as God the Father has, as God the Son has. Since He is truly God, He naturally will have the eternal consciousness of God.

He knows what He is all about. He does not need us to tell Him what to do, nor how to do for us. He knows the Father's will for our lives; we need not tell Him what to do.

He has emotions: Eph. 4:30 mentions that we can grieve Him. This would require emotions.

Is there any sense in which His emotions become our emotions after salvation? Either His emotions become linked with ours, or we are made more sensitive to things that He is concerned with. Example: Today when driving, if I hit a bird, I have a sick feeling in my stomach, as well as a sorrow. Before I was saved, I was trying to hit birds. Some change! In my pre-salvation days - I went hunting and fishing all the time. In the post salvation days - I really am taken with

those creatures of God that I have removed life from. Indeed, I cleaned some fish My son caught in 1990 and one wasn't dead yet. I had to kill it. Not a good feeling.

I have seen many hard people that come to know the Lord who become easily moved by spiritual or sad things. I don't know that our emotions are linked with those of the Spirit, yet we seem to become more sensitive to those things that He knows and loves.

He has love: Rom. 15:30, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." As God, He is Love, according to the Word. Since God loves the lost, it would be logical to assume that the Spirit would encourage us to pray for the lost!

How do we see His love? Do we really understand how much He loves us? He seeks us before salvation. He convicts us before salvation. He transforms us, baptizes us, and does many other things at salvation. He convicts, guides, empowers and indwells us after salvation. His indwelling allows for His fruit to come forth through us to make us better people.

He has goodness: Neh. 9:20, "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst." It follows that His goodness would proceed to us, as well as through us to others. As you study the Spirit and the fact that His characteristics come through us to others, should bring us to consider whether we are really allowing Him to do what He wants through us. Are we really like the Spirit when we are with other people?

He has will: He gives the gifts as He wills (I Cor. 12:11). If He gives gifts as He wills, and He does, It follows that the gift that each of us has is the exact gift that He wants us to have. Thus we might realize that if He has made us a teacher, that we should not be upset that we aren't a giver or pastor-teacher. We should be satisfied with what He has willed for us.

By implication the fruit of the Spirit, (Gal 5:22,23) indicate His will. His life produces the fruit through the believer. There must be a will to do so, for the purpose that He wills.

THE SPIRIT HAS RECOGNITION AS A PERSON BY CHRIST

Christ called the Spirit the Comforter, or Helper: Jo. 14:16 The terms comforter and helper depict a person that can assist. Christ would have chosen other terms had the Spirit been a force or power that was to come. He is a person that can comfort and help in time of trouble, not just a force or power to move us along through life.

Christ used personal pronouns in reference to the Spirit: John 16 mentions several: Him (7), He (8), He, himself (13), He (15). Indeed, the Spirit is referred to with personal pronouns by the authors of Scripture. It should be pointed out that the pronouns are masculine rather than neuter according to Pache. (Pache, Rene; "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT";

Chicago: Moody Press, 1954, p 13)

It would be illogical to deny the personality of the Spirit, when others use personal pronouns to speak of Him.

THE SPIRIT HAS ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE FATHER AND SON

He is mentioned in the baptismal formula: Matt. 18:19 The Father and the Son have personality - so must He!

He is mentioned in the benediction of II Cor. 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."

It seems foolish to deny personality for the Spirit and yet allow it for the Father and the Son.

THE SPIRIT HAS THE ACTIONS OF A PERSON

He speaks: He clearly communicates with believers. If there is communication, then many other things are indicated. Will, ability, intelligence, etc. II Sam. 23:2, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me...." Acts 8:29, "Then the Spirit said...." Rev. 2:7, "...the Spirit saith...."

He prays: Paul tells us that when we don't know how to pray that the Spirit is making "intercession" on our behalf (Rom. 8:26). This indicates that He knows our minds, and has the ability to communicate with The Father. Neither of these are abilities a power or force might have.

He guides: One of the ministries that He has with the Christian is guidance, be it guidance in study of the Word, or guidance in finding the Lord's will. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. 8:14

He calls and commissions: This requires many of the attributes which we have already seen. Only a being with personality can accomplish these things in another beings life. He calls and commissions men and women to ministries around the world. Acts 13:2, Acts 20:28.

He commands: He commanded Phillip to go to the Eunuch Acts 8:29. This requires planning and authority. Phillip was submitting to the plan of the Spirit for his life.

He dwells in believers: Only a being with personality can dwell with another being. Jo. 14:17 mentions, in relationship to the Spirit, "...and shall be in you."

He teaches: The teacher with no personality is the teacher that is not a teacher. Personality is required of any teacher. The Holy Spirit has the ability to teach which indicates many of the things that we have mentioned. Will, intelligence, and ability to communicate - are all qualities

of personality. John 14:26

I will just list some other aspects of this point with a reference for your further study:

He reproves: Jo. 16:8
He sends: Acts 13:4
He forbids some actions: Acts 16:6,7
He empowers: Acts 1:8, II Pet 1:21
He testifies: Jn 15:26,27

THE SPIRIT CAN BE TREATED AS A PERSON

The Spirit can be vexed: Is. 63:10, "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." Vexed means to annoy or disturb. In relation to this item, we need to understand that we have a responsibility to Him - to treat Him as a person.

The Spirit can be grieved: You cannot grieve a force or power, but it is possible to grieve a person. Grieving the Spirit should be the last thing that the believer would want to do, yet it so often occurs. Eph. 4:30

The Spirit can be lied to: Ananias and Sapphira tried to lie to the Spirit, but failed. To know a lie requires intelligence. On the other hand no normal person would attempt to lie to a power or force. Acts 5:3

The Spirit can be resisted: In Stephen's sermon he encouraged the listener to be open to the Spirit. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye." Acts 7:51

Notice that the result of resisting the Spirit is being stiff-necked. This should be a warning against resisting the Spirit, even the first time. There is a real danger of becoming hardened when we begin to put off the moving of the Lord.

The Spirit can be called upon: Ezek. 37:9 is the beginning of the vision of the dry bones arising and being assembled. The Spirit is called to breath life into the dead. If called upon, there is an expected possibility of response. The response is that action of personality that we ought to look forward to when we pray.

The Spirit is to be obeyed: It is inconceivable to think that we would obey anything less than a person. Acts 10:19-21 tells us that Peter was told to go meet some men and he followed the instructions. Acts 16:6ff Paul is guided and commanded by the Spirit.

Others items of interest: The Spirit can be quenched, I Thess. 5:19; The Spirit can be

blasphemed, Matt 12:31; The Spirit can be revered, Ps 51:11; The Spirit can be tempted, Acts 5:9

THE SPIRIT HAS NAMES INDICATING PERSONALITY

As you look at the names of the Spirit it will become obvious that there is personality indicated. We will not go into these names, but I might mention that Pache on pages 12-13 has a listing of these for your study.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. He is a person and is indwelling us, thus He should be our PERSONAL FRIEND! If He is less, then you need to be with Him more.

2. He is very active and most of His activity is for our benefit. Are we ever thankful for what He does? Do we ever thank the Lord for the Spirit's ministry to us?

3. "THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S SPIRIT"

"It is said that while Dr. J. H. Jowett was ministering in England he once decided to preach on the text 'The wind bloweth where it listeth.' Upon studying the text he realized that he knew nothing about the wind. He decided to consult a sailor about the actions of the wind. When he went to the harbor he approached a sailor and asked the question, 'Can you tell me something about the wind?' The sailor looked as if he thought the man demented and said, 'No.' He pressed the question and said, 'But you have been sailing the seas all of your life, you must know something about the wind.' 'I repeat, sir, that I do not know anything about the wind. All I know is that when I feel the wind blowing I raise my sails and I am wafted on to my port.' Dr. Jowett hurried back to his study - he had his sermon." F. Crossley Morgan (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 366)

May we become immediately active when we feel the spirit blowing our way!

4. Personal opinion:

We long to know God.
We long to know Christ.
Do we long to know the Spirit?

We desire a deeper walk with God the Father.
We desire a closer walk with God the Son.
Do we desire a more holy walk with God the Holy Spirit?

God is God. If we want to know Him better why do we always aim our desire toward 2/3's of

Him? I'm not talking about fuzzy feelings, tingling tongues and hipped healings. I'm just talking about getting to know God - all 3/3's of Him.

As we learn of the Holy Spirit, I believe it will bring us to a more holy walk and a more holy work!

"BELIEF IN THE HOLY GHOST"

"Years ago George Bernard Shaw wrote his whimsical way: 'I am no more a Christian than Pilate was, or you, gentle reader; and yet, like Pilate, I greatly prefer Jesus to Annas or Caiaphas; and I am ready to admit that, after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will, if he had undertaken the work of a modern practical statesman.'

"'Do we obey the unveiling of God's conscience in Christ? So we believe in the Holy Ghost - in God present and active within us, supplementing our weakness, enlightening our ignorance, molding our wills, keeping us in unity with lovers of Christ everywhere, and equipping us with every grace and gift we need to make our world Christian if we let him? Are we merely God-seekers, or are we God-possessed, God-led, God-empowered?

"To believe in the Trinity is to live with Father, Son, and Spirit and to know what God is to those who trust him." Henry Sloane Coffin (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 369-370)

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THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

"There are great mysteries in connection with the Trinity that the human mind cannot explore. They are beyond the realm of our comprehension. Take for example the location of each member of the Trinity in the universe. The Bible speaks of the Father being in heaven. That is His special residence. The Lord Jesus is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for His people. The Word of God tells us that the Holy Spirit is here on earth dwelling in the Church, the Body of Christ, and in believers. Yet, these Three are so closely knit together that what thought comes to the mind of One is also on the minds of the Others. They are inseparable and work together in perfect harmony and unity." (Epp, Theodore H.; "THE OTHER COMFORTER"; Lincoln: Back to the Bible Broadcast, 1966, p 24)

This indicates correctly the location of the Spirit in this age, however this was not so prior to Pentecost. Just because we have the Spirit indwelling us personally, it does not mean that He has had the same relationship with all believers of all times. Indeed, we have mentioned that we are unique to all ages in the past in that we DO have the Spirit living within us.

Let us look at the differences between the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

The Spirit of God is closely related to the Spirit of man in both testaments.

The Spirit in the Old Testament was an integrated part of God's plan of creation from the beginning. He didn't just happen onto the scene in the book of Acts. Gen. 1:2, "...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water." Pache has some further information on the Holy Spirit and His part in creation. (Pache, Rene; "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Chicago: Moody Press, 1954, 29)

The Spirit is mentioned in many other places in the Old Testament. A word study would be of benefit in this area for further study.

In the New Testament we see the Spirit on the day of Pentecost and His part in the founding of the Church (Acts 2:4). He is spoken of many other times in the New Testament. We have already mentioned some of His ministries which are declared in the New Testament.

The Spirit is an integrated part of both Testaments, yet there are some distinct differences in His ministry. We will see this as we move along.

It is of interest that in both of the Testaments, the same word is used of both the spirit of man and The Spirit of God. Indeed, all but two references in the New Testament translated spirit are the same Greek word.

Let us look into the two Testaments and see what we can find concerning the Spirit.

THE SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

The Spirit was limited in the Old Testament period. He did not indwell the believer. Isa. 59:21 does promise a different and better ministry in the future for the Jew. This will be fulfilled in the end time. Joel 2:28-29 looks forward to this time as well. Peter mentioned that this was what happened on the day of Pentecost, yet the entire text looks to the end times for a complete fulfillment. This is one of the cases where we see a partial fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy, and a yet future COMPLETE fulfillment at a later date in time.

The Spirit in the Old Testament had a general ministry to the nation of Israel. The Spirit was given to the Israelites for the purpose of instruction (Neh. 9:20). There was an aspect of teaching via the Holy Spirit even in the Old Testament. We, however, see this much clearer in the New Testament times when every believer has that teaching in residence.

We also see a protective aspect to the Spirit's ministry in the Old Testament (Hag. 2:4,5). I must wonder just how strongly some of the Old Testament saints might have clung to this particular

text and promise in their hard times. "Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I [am] with you, saith the LORD of hosts: [According to] the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not."

It needs to be understood that in the Old Testament the Spirit did not indwell all believers as He does now. This is seen in the following facts.

a. David knew that the Spirit could be taken from him. (Ps. 51:11. I Sam. 16:13 mentions the occurrence of the Spirit coming upon David. It was at his anointing by Samuel.) This to me seems to have been a situation that might well have been very frustrating to the Old Testament believer. To know the ministry of the Spirit and to know that He might not be there the next day would have been a worrisome thing. Imagine the sinking feeling that Samson must have had when he knew that the Spirit's power was removed from him.

There is a sense in which we should see this concept within the church. We know that the Holy Spirit cannot be taken from us, but we should also remember that when we walk in our own power the Spirit has little, if any, input into our lives and ministries. We know that all have the Spirit in full measure, however if the Spirit is not in control, He might as well not be present. The key in this age is to allow the Spirit free movement in our hearts and minds.

b. The Spirit departed from king Saul. I Sam. 16:14, "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." Again we see that the Spirit was not resident in the believers. He did come upon individuals at times, but there is no indication that there was an indwelling of the Spirit as there is in the New Testament.

Indeed, indwelling was an impossibility in the Old Testament. He is the seal of our salvation, and salvation had not been provided as yet in the Old Testament. The Old Testament saint was awaiting his completed salvation. Their sin was only covered until the Lord Jesus could care for their sins.

c. The craftsmen of the Old Testament were especially helped with the Spirit for their work (Ex. 28:3; 31:3). It must have been very special to these men to see their skills enhanced by the work of the Spirit. These were craftsmen and yet the Spirit was upon them in a special way for this ministry unto the Lord.

In like manner, as we see the Holy Spirit working through us, we also ought to be amazed and astounded by what He can do through us if we make ourselves a channel for Him to work through.

d. The Spirit came upon Othniel the judge. Jud. 3:10, "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel...."

As we go out into the ministry, let us rely on His wisdom in our working with God's people and see to it that we do not rely on our own wisdom!

e. The Spirit came upon Gideon. Jud. 6:34, "But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon...." The fact that the Spirit came indicates that He was not already there, thus proving that there was no full time indwelling. For God's leadership over His people, He seems to like men that are sensitive to Him so that He may lead His people through His leaders.

f. The Spirit came upon others as well. Jephthah, Jud. 11:29; Samson, Jud. 14:6.

g. The Spirit was in some. Joseph, Gen. 41:37,38. Just what is meant by the Spirit being in someone in the Old Testament we don't know. We do know that the New testament speaks to the fact that the Spirit had not been given to the believer as yet. Jo. 14:17 tells us that the Spirit did not indwell, in the Old Testament economy as He was to do in the Church age. "...and shall be in you." Jo. 7:37-39 also shows the Spirit was yet to be given.

It might be suggested that it appeared that the Spirit was indwelling because of the work and effect in the Old Testament believers life. This would not require that it be fact, only that it appeared to be so. If a man was allowing the Lord to have His way in his life, then it would surely appear that the Lord was with, or in them.

h. Ezekiel records that the Spirit came twice to him in the first three chapters of his book. If the Spirit came a second time He had to have left. This again proves that there was no indwelling, as we know it, in the Old Testament. Ezek. 2:2, Ezek. 3:24.

i. Miscellaneous references where the Spirit came upon people in the Old Testament. Num. 11:17, 25, Num. 27:18, I Sam. 19:20, I Chron. 12:18, II Chron. 20:14, Dan. 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3.

Walvoord divides the ministry of the Holy Spirit into several sections such as in creation, as in inspiration and as in revelation then discusses the ministry to, and through man. Cambron has a good outline of the Old Testament and the Holy Spirit.

NEW TESTAMENT:

We won't go into great detail in the New Testament for we have covered a lot of the subjects in previous sections.

He gifts: I Cor. 12:27:28
He indwells: I Cor. 6:19
He convicts: Jo 16:7
He intercedes: Rom. 8:26:27
He testifies: Jo. 16:13,14
He teaches: Jo. 14:26; I Jo. 2:27

He guides: Jo. 16:13

There is a difference in the need of the Holy Spirit between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

In the Old Testament the believer had the law to show him sin (Rom. 7:7), while Ro. 3:19,20 relates that the New Testament believer has the Holy Spirit to show him the sin that is in his life. We also have the Word that shows us the sin of our beings.

It seems that in the different dispensations, the Lord is trying to prove to the principalities and powers of the air, that man will always fail, no matter what the circumstance that God places him in. The fact that man will fail even when Christ Himself will reign on earth will be that final proof. We have God in residence as believers and we still fail at times.

We are left with one question. Why is there a difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament ministry of the Holy Spirit. This has been mentioned previously, but now let us take a closer look.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. We shouldn't be surprised, for the Father and the Son have a different relationship to the believer as well, between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

2. We don't know why, might be a suggested answer, however I don't personally think this is the case.

3. The Sovereignty of God. He wanted it that way. That is enough, in and of itself.

4. The final possibility is the one that fits all the facts of Scripture. I believe that there is a difference in the dealing with the sin of the believer between the two testaments. The Old Testament sacrifice COVERED the sin of the believer until the cross. The New Testament sacrifice of Christ REMOVES the sin of the believer.

There seems to be a definite link between this previous fact, and the cross and ascension. The Old Testament saints benefited greatly from the work of the cross and ascension, in that not only was their sin dealt with, but they were taken to be with the Lord. Previously they were in the Bosom of Abraham (Luke 16). They were taken out of the Bosom of Abraham (Luke 16 and Eph. 4). The Bosom of Abraham was a place where the Old Testament saint could be placed, after death, to enjoy peace rather than torment. They could not be in the Lord's presence after death because their sin was only covered, not removed.
This place had no purpose after the work of Christ, so we assume that it no longer exists, or is empty. The torment side of that place does, however, still exist. There the Old Testament lost still exist in torment.

There is also one further difference which might relate. God's dwelling place in the Old Testament was in the Holy of Holies. We, the believers, are now the temple of the Holy Spirit, or His dwelling place. This difference is probably due to the fact that the sin of the Old Testament saint had not been fully dealt with. God dwelled among His people as closely as He could in the Old Testament, but could indwell after the sin was dealt with via the cross.

APPLICATION:

1. Since the Spirit's presence in the Old Testament upon a believer was for a special call, special work or special ministry, might we apply this to the church age and wonder if we aren't, everyone, called to a special ministry before the Lord. The thought seems to me to be a valid one! Indeed, we are all gifted specially. If we are all called, why are so few ministering?

2. Psalm 51 would indicate that this presence of the Holy Spirit is not dependant on our spiritual life. Indeed, one is left to wonder why the Spirit indwells us, the sin prone creatures that we are.

3. We should remind ourselves just how fortunate we are as New Testament believers to have the Holy Spirit indwelling us, and having His presence to help, teach, comfort etc.

4. One last item of business that we have not really dealt with. We saw that in the Church age He gifted as He willed. This shows that He is a Free Sovereign agent doing what He wills to do. The fact that He willed to come and go in the Old Testament and take up residence in the New Testament should not be a problem to us in that He is all those things that we know God to be. He can do anything that He wants to. He is all powerful, all knowing and all those other things that make our Holy Spirit, God.

I would like to close this section with this final thought.

In speaking of His book on the Holy Spirit, one author states: "As I was writing this chapter, my wife and I sat on the porch in the hot spring sun, and we talked about the refreshment of the wind as evening came. We especially discussed the power and the mystery of the wind.

"It is interesting that in Scripture, in both the original Hebrew and Greek languages, the word used in speaking of the Spirit is the word that can also mean wind.' In like manner, the Holy Spirit works in different ways in our lives, and in different times in history.

"I have seen tornadoes in Texas and Oklahoma, and even in my home state of North Caroline when I was a boy. Yes, I have seen the power of the wind. I have seen the air-brakes that use the wind, or the air, to stop the giant truck going down the highway. That same force can lift a giant airplane.

"'The manager of a granite quarry in North Carolina said: 'We supplied the granite for the municipal building in New York City. We can lift an acre of solid granite ten feet thick to almost

any height we desire for the purpose of moving it. We do it with air. We can do it as easily as I can lift a piece of paper.'

"'Air! Air - this invisible envelope in which we live and move, this substance so immaterial that we can move our hands through it as though it had no reality at all. but the power it possesses! How great, how terrible!'" (THE HOLY SPIRIT, Billy Graham, 1978, Word, Inc., Dallas, Texas, Used with permission. p 24)

May we be willing to move when we feel the wind of the Spirit blowing our way.

02900

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PART IN GRACE AND CONVICTION

There are two types of grace that we want to think about. We will look at common grace first and then efficacious grace.

Common grace is that grace which God extends to all of mankind throughout all ages and conditions. This is the grace which brings the seasons, the rains, the sunshine and the revelation of God within nature. This is seen in Ps. 145:9, "The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works" There are other verses as well, Matt. 5:45, Luke 6:35, Acts 14:17, and Rom. 1:19-20.

Common grace is extended in different areas.

1. Common grace is the general provision of items of nature for our use and benefit. These are for the lost's benefit as well. Think of that - they are on their way to hell - they thumb their nose at God - yet He extends this to them! He could withdraw His grace from them at any moment, yet He is longsuffering and desires them to turn to Him.

2. Common grace is also seen in the restraining of sin by the Holy Spirit. It isn't that He is in the business of stopping sin as we can plainly see around us, but that He is slowing down the process of sin and sin as a whole. If He wasn't on the job the state of the world would be much worse (II Thess. 2:6,7). This restraint is at times lifted to allow some to go off into the areas that they desire to go into (Rom. 1:24-28).

There is a point that we might cover here. The Holy Spirit does some of His restraining through the Church and its walk before the world. There is a real sense in which the Church is failing their God in this present day. We as a Church have not kept the purity and testimony before the world that we should have. We have accepted the world's standard, and life styles. In years past the Church has been a real conscience for the world.

The church once stood against divorce, yet today many churches accept it as common everyday living. The world cannot see a difference between the Christian and themselves, so why should they seek to be Christians or their God?

It has been of interest in recent days that the tone of language and stories told in the presence of Christians is becoming more and more perverse. In days past when people knew they were around believers they would curb their perverseness. Today they seem to feel no restraint. Is this because the church as a whole has failed to present the proper image to the world? It may well be.

3. The work of reproving for sin, righteousness and judgment in Jo. 16:7-11 seems to be for the world, however it was a promise to the believer also. The believer should not get discouraged when they see the sin of the world. They can know that the Holy Spirit is on the job confronting the lost with their sin. There is also a promise, in that they can know that the Devil has been cared for and we need not worry about his gaining the upper hand. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

4. There is also one final area of common grace. God is postponing the judgment of the lost, desiring that they might come to Him for salvation.

I would like to cover some information from Mr. Thiessen before we move on to efficacious grace.

Mr. Thiessen mentions a "prevenient grace" which we need to inspect for a few moments. (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 155-156)

"The upshot of the matter is that God must take the initiative if man is to be saved. God cannot relax His law simply because man is no longer able to obey it. Now all Calvinists believe in common grace. They teach that, since the race fell in Adam and lost all claims to consideration before God, along with the ability in its own strength to return to God, we have in the blessings of life, health, friends, fruitful seasons, prosperity, the delay of punishment, the manifestations of the common grace of God. Common grace is not sufficient for salvation but it yet reveals the goodness of God to all sinful creatures. This is true, but why stop there? We believe that the common grace of God also restores to the sinner the ability to make a favorable response to God. In other words, we hold that God, in His grace, makes it possible for all men to be saved."

He continues on to say, "It does not mean that prevenient grace enables a man to change the permanent bent of his will in the direction of God; nor that he can quit all sin and make himself

acceptable to God. It does mean that he can make an initial response to God, as a result of which God can give him repentance and faith."

As I read and understand Thiessen, he would extend common grace to include just a bit more and call it pervenient grace. To the sun, rain, and health, of the common grace advocate, he would include a bit of a zap, or the ability to desire more knowledge of God even though he is still totally depraved.

In a sense, if Romans one is true, in that God revealed Himself to man in the creation and man is held accountable for that revelation, then there must be some possibility of the man responding to that creation, else wise God is holding him responsible for something which he cannot act upon.

Thiessen goes on to say that through foreknowledge, God was able to know which of mankind would respond favorably and which would not respond favorably. He views efficacious grace as the desire being acted upon by the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit in drawing the lost person to God.

I see no difference between what Mr. Thiessen suggests and the thought that if a lost person responds to the revelation mentioned in Romans one. In both cases God responds by drawing the person to Himself through the Holy Spirit.

It seems that Thiessen has coined a term, and rightly so, to draw a distinction between common grace and what he teaches.

EFFICACIOUS GRACE

Efficacious grace is that product that we fail to realize many times in our witnessing. It is the grace that extends from God to allow the person to believe and accept the Lord.

Efficacious grace might also show up in some books as effective grace. It is grace that is effective in bringing the lost to God. Efficacious means: ".....having the power to produce a desired effect....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) While teaching, the students found out that I enjoyed M & M's. One of them tried to bribe me with a bag of M & M's. The bribe did not work. The bribe had no efficacy.

Efficacious grace then, is grace that is able to produce the desired effect, that effect being, the drawing of the lost soul to God.

We will dive into the ramifications of this doctrine when we get to the doctrine of election in the salvation section of our study. The grace is not something that acts against the will of man, but it is a grace that effects the will of man, and since it comes into play because the person is responsive to God, works in conjunction to man's will.

This is contrary to the staunch Calvinist that would state that Efficacious grace is something which overcomes the person and his will to bring the person to God. The person cannot resist this grace - it is final and sure. God can and does drag the lost kicking and screaming person into the kingdom.

This to me is an overstatement of what we can see in the Word of God. Man still chooses to believe in God by his own will, however efficacious grace will bring things into his life that will bring his will to the point that he will believe.

Efficacious grace will not come into play in a persons life unless they have first responded to common grace, thus efficacious grace is something that the person will welcome - no reason to resist. Whether efficacious grace is resistable or irresistable is a mute question. The person is desiring to respond to God, so the next step is a welcome step. When I say common grace I retain the term "common" while holding to Thiessen's prevenient grace thought.

If the person responds to common grace, then efficacious grace will take precedent over all things. The person's will responds in accord to that grace that has been extended.

The efficacious grace is a process, in that it brings many occurrences into the life of the person preceding belief. Some suggest that it is an act. On God's part, yes, from man's view a process. God views all things in one moment and as such the whole process of salvation is an act of His will. He willed in eternity past that some would be saved. He sees this as a completed item on His agenda.

Man however is in time, and salvation is a process which takes place in time. Man isn't one moment lost and then the next moment saved. He must go through mental processes before he can be brought into a place of belief and repentance.

Common grace can be ignored or rejected (by the person giving credit for these things to laws of nature and fate.) while efficacious grace is not rejected or ignored.

Efficacious grace is based on the idea of calling in the Scripture. Some feel that the two are actually one. If a person is called, then they have received efficacious grace.

I am not sure that the two are the same. It seems better to see the calling as separate from efficacious grace. The reason for this is Matt. 22:14. It states, "For many are called, but few are chosen." The context of this verse is the call to the marriage feast. There seems to be a calling that can be rejected. Efficacious grace cannot be rejected, indeed, if the person desires to respond to God would not reject it.

This may indicate that there are two calls, one call to all of mankind to come unto the God of creation and a second call to the elect that brings them to God. You might say there is a common call and an efficacious call, to help in your understanding.

If we are to believe in the total depravity of man and the total inability of man to reach God on his own then the doctrine of efficacious grace is a requirement. There must be a drawing of the lost to the Lord by some means and that means is the Holy Spirit.

Part of the confusion in this area may come from the fact that some believers have a totally different salvation experience than others. Some are saved out of a life of total debasement and sin, while others are saved as a growing process through their relatively righteous life.

The person that is saved out of a totally sinful life would quite possibly see God as reaching down in His Calvinistic grace and snatching His elected one out of the debased world in which he lived. The person that has been raised in a Christian home and was saved through the learning process in church, might well see the response to what is revealed, and the following drawing of the Lord to salvation as simple choice of the individual to respond to what he knows.

Whatever your experience, the Word seems to indicate that the common grace is that grace which is extended to all. This may include the call to salvation as well as the ability to respond to that call. At the point where the person has responded positively to common grace and natural revelation, God extends His efficacious grace to finally draw the person into the Kingdom.

CONVICTION

Buswell mentions, "Jesus promised, 'When He [the Spirit of Truth] is come, He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment' (John 16:8). This was Jesus' promise as He told of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The world of our day is strangely unconvicted, unconvinced, and unconcerned; yet where Spirit-filled men faithfully present the Spirit-inspired Word of God, conviction of sin comes. The great need of the world today is for consecrated channels for the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Only so can there be a genuine turning to the Lord and acceptance of the Gospel." (Buswell, James Oliver; "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, p 262)

The fact that the Spirit is to convict the world of sin is mentioned in Jo. 16: 8,9. Some receive the ministry and believe while others reject that ministry of the Spirit.

Buswell submits that the Romans one revelation of God is that which is accepted or rejected. The revelation being the common grace and the acceptance of it the first step in what he calls "effectual calling". His effectual calling would be what we have established as efficacious grace. (Buswell has an extended discussion of this with much detail that is of interest. p 157ff.)

The term "sin" in John 16:8,9 is in the singular showing that the Spirit is working on the sin nature of man and not the individual types of sin. This may relate to the fact that all societies have had a knowledge of an afterlife. If the Spirit in some manner has convicted them to the point that they feel they are guilty in some respect to a higher power then all would fit well.

Conviction is a legal term. During my first year of teaching I was treated to an office Toilet Papering. I was sure of the culprits, but lacked the evidence to convict them. I waited for a couple of months and the perpetrators could not hold back any longer. They convicted themselves with their own tongue.

Lost man not only is guilty, but the Holy Spirit will convict him of his error.

Conviction means: ".....the act or process of convicting of a crime esp. in a court of law 2 a: the act of convincing a person of error or of compelling the admission of a truth....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

These definitions are somewhat inadequate when related to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The convicting of the Holy Spirit is of a nature that presents the facts and the person so convicted is free to respond to or reject that information.

They are convicted - simple and pure. They cannot argue about it. They have the choice - turn against the God that convicted them, or throw themselves on the mercy of the court.

The term is used in Matt 18:15, "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." The term tell is the term translated convicted in Jo. 8:9.

In the area of common grace then we have the conviction of the lost, by the God of nature. In the case of some, the confrontation may be with the gospel itself in evangelized areas. When that conviction brings the person toward the Lord then we have moved into the area of efficacious grace. In the unevangelized areas of the world this comes from the response or lack of response to the revelation of God in creation.

You might say there are common conviction and efficacious conviction. Common conviction would be the confrontation of a lost soul with some information about God which they are free to respond to or ignore. Efficacious conviction would be that information that the Spirit brings to confront the lost soul who is going to respond.

The term "elenko" is translated convict as well as: tell, Mat. 18:15; being reproved, Lu. 3:19; should be reproved, Jo. 3:20, convinceth, Jo. 8:46; will reprove, Jo. 16:8; convinced, I Co. 14:24, Jas. 2:9; reprove, Eph. 5:11, II Tim. 4:2; that are reproved, Eph. 5:13; rebuke, I Tim. 5:20, Rev. 3:19; to convince, Titus 1:9; rebuke, Titus 1:13, 2:15; art rebuked, Heb. 12:5

It seems that the thought of convict, is the showing of evidence with the desire of changed action.

The person that rejects this conviction places himself in the position of lessening his opportunities with God. The Scripture mentions the hardening of the heart, the stiffening of the

neck, and the parables were used so that the hard hearted could not understand. God gives all mankind a chance, but as the lost person continues to reject, their ability to respond weakens. Let me illustrate:

"SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST"

"Dr. John William Baily, of the Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, told his class in New Testament of reading about a certain sea animal in a scientific periodical. This animal lives at several levels. At fifty feet it has eyes upon long tentacles, and these may move about and see in any direction. At a lower depth the same animal has the same eyes, in the same tentacles, but the tentacles are rigid, and the eyes may look only in one direction. Far below, the same animal has the same general form, with the hardened tentacles, and the markings of eyes, but there is no sight. Living at a depth where there is no light, the animal has lost the use of its eyes. Similarly, those individuals who close their eyes to the light that they have, incapacitate themselves to receive light. The sin against the Holy Ghost is not unforgivable because of some arbitrary decision of God. Rather, the very nature of sin, namely, shutting one's eyes to known truth and refusing to see, does something to the person himself, and he makes himself incapable of receiving truth at all. Not even God can forgive that sin. Minter Uzzell (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 659-660)

Here we introduce the idea of rejection of common grace leading to total inability to respond positively to the Gospel.

The Holy Spirit brings God's grace to us through natural laws in the case of common grace, as well as to us through the Revelation, and His messengers in efficacious grace. Within the thought of grace there is a point in time when the Spirit convicts us of the sin nature, and makes us realize our condition before God.

We understand that in God's mind this is an action, while in our lives it is a process. We move in a process from common grace, to conviction, to efficacious grace. This movement may be in a very short period of time, or it may take a long time.

The important thing is that we understand that we did not come to God because of our superior understanding of things as they are, but rather, we came to God through the specific ministry of the Holy Spirit.

02950

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN REGENERATION

There is a science fiction series on the Public Broadcast System that runs for a long long time. It

is the program about Dr. Who. The Dr. moves in and out of time and space in a telephone booth if I remember it correctly. He is always in a jam with someone, or some race that is out to get him. He does a lot of good along the way.

You might suggest, that kind of show would get boring. Well in a way it does, so every once in a while Dr. Who dies. This gives some excitement to the program. Although he dies, he has the ability to regenerate himself and he comes back the next program. He is a different actor with some differences centered around the good old Dr. Who that you know and love.

If you know of the Star Trek series you know that someone built a Genesis machine that would take an old burned out planet and regenerate it into a thriving world that would be habitable by man.

Even in the lost world of entertainment there is a fascination with coming back to life, with making old things new, and in general playing God. The fallacy however in all of this is the fact that only God can really make old things new. Man just hasn't realized this yet.

This thought of regeneration is somewhat foreign to the regeneration that we want to talk about today, yet may indicate that the lost world wants to play god.

INTRODUCTION TO REGENERATION

One of my friends that received his Masters Degree from the Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary mentioned that one of his questions on his oral examination before the faculty was this. "What is your ordo salutis?" He asked me what mine was. I plead ignorance. He said, "So did I." Might I ask you what your "ordo salutis" is? It is the order of salvation.

There is faith and there is regeneration. Which came first? Some suggest that to have faith you must be regenerated. They hold that the lost man is so depraved that he cannot possibly have faith. He must be pulled out of that position by regeneration before he can know what faith is. Some suggest that if you are regenerated then you don't need faith. In other words, regeneration is the complete work and faith is too late. The work of salvation is done. The Bible would refute this, in that it states that salvation is by faith!

This is a basic Calvinist Question. The Calvinist would see regeneration as that which gives the person enough "umph" to accept the Gospel.

The answer to all this is somewhere in the fact that all of it takes place instantaneously. Most I think would feel that faith comes before the regeneration takes place. If you don't agree then try a research paper on it. By the way I have just read recently that to steal from one person is called plagiarism, but to steal from many is called research.

Calvin believed that repentance and regeneration were one in the same. "In one word I

apprehend repentance to be regeneration, the end of which is the restoration of the divine image within us;" (Buswell, James Oliver; "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, vol.II, p 171) I would probably take exception to the idea that repentance and regereration are one.

Augustine felt that you could have regeneration without election, but that you could not have election without regeneration. He felt that some were regenerated by the waters of baptism, but these perished later. These would be the non-elect. (Buswell, Vol. II, p 172)

Dr. Bob Jones Sr. stated once in a booklet, "THE HOLY SPIRIT", "The Holy spirit is a diagnostician. He feels the sinner's pulse, looks at the sinner's tongue, takes the sinner's blood pressure, listens to the sinner's heartbeat, and says to the sinner, 'You are a poor lost sinner.' The Holy spirit, after doing this, recommends a physician; and the only physician He ever recommends to a sinner is the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died on a cross for lost men of all generations." (p 4-5)

I don't mean to detract from the eloquence of Dr. Jones, but I'm not sure that there is that much need of examination to determine if a person is a sinner, or if you can look at the physical evidence and determine spiritual condition or not, but the Great Physician is certainly the only one that can cure our ills! Regeneration is one in a process of remedies that we must go through in salvation. This gets us on the road to a very quick recovery.

The Holy Spirit is the instrument by which man can be regenerated. Dr. Jones goes on to say, "...the Holy Spirit becomes a trained nurse and applies the regenerating grace to the sinner's heart and makes him whole." (Jones, Dr. Bob Sr.; "THE HOLY SPIRIT"; p 5)

The term used in the Scriptures is, "palingenesia" - Strong's number 3824. This word appears only twice in the New Testament. Matt. 19:28. This verse seems to be related to the redoing of things in the future and not the spiritual rebirth that Paul speaks of in Titus. Titus 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit,"

The term is a combination of "palin" meaning "again" and "genesis" meaning "birth." Palin is a term that is used many times in the New Testament. It is always translated, "again." It simply means, "again birth," or born again.

Richard DeHann mentions of the term, "'Regeneration' may therefore be defined as 'the act of God the Spirit by which He instantaneously implants spiritual life in the one who receives Christ.'" (DeHann; "THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE"; pp 2-3, used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

Is regeneration an implantation of a new something as DeHann mentions? I suspect he is aiming at an implantation of a new nature, however the term itself, "birth again" has no hint of an

implantation. It in very clear, terms is a new birth! I suspect that the thought of implantation comes from the belief system that states that we have an old nature and a new nature, coexisting within.

I think that I disagree with the thought of something being implanted within the lost person to make him a believer. Christ stated "...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) Born is "gennao" (Strong's 1080) also translated begat, conceived, should be born, brought forth, etc. The term has to do with birth. The bringing forth of something. "again" (Strong's 509) is "anothen" which is translated, top, from the very first, again, from above, and from the beginning. "TAKE IT FROM THE TOP" to put it lightly. Born from above might well be a good translation. Indeed, the interlinear lists it that way. This does not allow for an implantation idea.

DeHann goes on to say that the new birth is defined in II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (DeHann; "THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE," Used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)Again, this seems to be, not an implantation as DeHann suggests, or a restoration as Calvin suggests, but a change - a new birth as the terminology suggests and demands.

I believe that DeHann shoots himself in the foot. He also suggests that it is a spiritual resurrection. A spiritual resurrection does not sound like an implantation to me. There is a picture of spiritual resurrection in the Scripture however. (Eph. 2:1, "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins;"; Rom. 6:13.)

Pardington quotes Dr. A.J. Gordon and states it is the best available definition. "Regeneration is the communication of the divine nature to man by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 319) Again we see the idea that something passes from God to man in the idea of communication, which is not acceptable.

Pache summarizes, "From the spiritual point of view the soul of sinful man is dead and estranged from God, for the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). By the miracle of regeneration the soul is revived, newly begotten and granted eternal life. Jesus described this experience as being born anew (John 3:3,7). It goes without saying that without this it is impossible for any man to be saved." (Taken from: "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Pache, Rene; Copyright 1954, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 68-69)

I think that Pache has covered the topic well in his statement.

DeHann continues: "THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION" "Sin has left the old man, so vile, so corrupt, so evil so devoid of all good, that it could never be redeemed. The old nature is

so depraved that God himself has given up all hope of ever improving it, patching it up, or making it good. Now, if these statements seem somewhat extreme, listen to these words in Psalm 14. 'The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one' (Psalm 14:2,3)." (DeHann; "THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE," used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

He goes on to say, "Man by nature is dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1); blind and deceived (1 Corinthians 2:14); an alien from God and His enemy (Colossians 1:21); and absolutely unclean (Isaiah 64:6). Even God doesn't try to change the old human nature. Rather, the Spirit enables the sinner to believe on Christ. He then creates within him a brand-new nature, and imparts to him spiritual and everlasting life." (DeHann, pp 5-6, used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.) I'm not sure implant is the word he should have used in the first quote though he seems to suggest that regeneration is the addition in some manner of a new item of business.

A rebirth is what the Bible says, thus we need to understand regeneration as the rebirth of something, rather than the addition of something. This relates to the one nature/two nature question. If a believer has two natures (the old and the new) resident, then DeHann's approach might fit. If, on the other hand we have one nature - the one that was reborn - then addition or implantation seems foreign to the thought.

Personally, I feel that the terminology of regeneration - rebirth - etc. require that our nature is regenerated and that all we have as a believer is one nature that is responsive to God. We will deal with this in more detail in later sections.

Indeed, if the old nature was as dead as the Calvinist believes, how can it possibly be struggling with the new nature in the life of the believer? Consider it as you spend time in coming weeks reading through the New Testament and see if the one - new - nature doesn't fit well with the Word.

THE MEANS OF REGENERATION

Ryrie calls it, "...God's act of begetting eternal life in the one who believes in Christ." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 76)

He goes on to say that faith is man's part and that regeneration is "God's supernatural act of imparting eternal life."

Regeneration brings a new nature to the person's makeup according to Ryrie. The old is not eradicated according to Ryrie. "Regeneration does not make a man perfect, but it places him in the family of God and gives him the new ability to please his Father by growing into the image of

Christ." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 77)

Might I suggest II Cor. 5:17? "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." How can you interpret that to mean that the old nature is still here and active? Indeed, as I have suggested, how can something that is dead be active?

How does "again born" relate to being given a new nature or new ability? It seems most consistent to see the old nature being replaced by the new nature, or being "reborn" - becoming a new nature. The thought of an old nature and new nature coexisting in one person is not consistent with what the Scriptures show.

We need to move on to the thought of the Holy Spirit's part in the process. All three members of the Trinity are involved in regeneration, in that they are all together in the bringing about of salvation. (Jo. 1:12,13) Yet, the Holy Spirit seems to be the instrument of regeneration. In Jo. 3:3-7, the account of Nicodemus, it mentions being born of the Spirit. Titus is also clear on this point. Titus 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit," (The following show the salvation of man is in part due to the work of the Father and the Son. James 1:17,18; II Cor. 5:17)

The Word also is involved in the regeneration process, however the Spirit is the actual instrument. Two texts mention that the Word is definitely a part of it. James 1:18, "Of his own will begot he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." (see also I Pet. 1:23)

Woodbridge in his "HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH" mentions, "The impartation of life takes place thus: The Holy Spirit of God, utilizing the Holy Word of God, exalts the Holy Son of God as Saviour. Then the Spirit woos, convicts and converts the sinner, regenerating him and causing him, through saving faith in Christ, to enter the family of God."

In short God the Father is the author, Christ is the medium, the Holy spirit is the agent, and the word is the method.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DOCTRINE

The main reason you need to be straight on this doctrine is that you will, in your ministries, run into people from the Church of Christ, the Christian Church (Campbellites) and the Disciples of Christ. Many of these people believe in many of the things that we hold to, but they add Baptism as a means of attaining regeneration, to their belief system.

The Roman Catholic and some Lutherans will hold to the same doctrine. They will see this

regeneration as taking place when an infant is baptized while the others listed usually reject infant baptism, but see regeneration as the result of water baptism. When I was interim pastor in a small town, one of the church members had told me of a couple that had called and wanted to be baptized "right away." I called the couple knowing that they probably believed that they had to be baptized to be saved. They were ultimately baptized, but they knew that it was only an outward proclamation of what had been done within.

Tertullian was the first of the church fathers to hold to this doctrine. (Prayer and Baptism; translated by Alex. Souter; New York; Macmillan; 1919; pp 46-54)

The doctrine of Baptismal regeneration is the idea that to be saved you must believe AND be baptized before you can be saved. The doctrine is built upon the book of Acts where acceptance and baptism are so closely related in several places.

Some references that will be problematic to the people holding to baptismal regeneration are:

Mark 16:16 This text mentions, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." The damnation is linked quite plainly only to the belief!

I Cor. 1:14-17 mentions that Paul had baptized few of them yet he had begotten the Corinthians with the Gospel. If baptism were part of regeneration, then Paul would have been involved in Baptizing all that He led to Christ.

Lu. 19:9 mentions Zacchaeus was saved before he was baptized.

Lu. 23:42,43 mentions the thief would see the Lord in the kingdom that day --- without baptism.

Acts 10:47 tells that Cornelius was saved before being baptized. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?"

When in a class on Contemporary Theology in Salem, OR we had a Christian church pastor (NON-INSTRUMENTAL) that come to class to present the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In his opening prayer he prayed for our salvation. He was totally committed to our lostness. He was there to explain to us lost Baptists that we needed to be properly baptized so that we could enter the kingdom. I'm not sure how he planned on saving us, because he did not bring a baptistry with him.

We sent him a series of questions so that he could return and answer them. One of the questions was concerning Acts 10:47. That was one of the questions that he did not attempt to answer. We also asked him about the Luke 23 text with the thief on the cross. His simple statement was that this was just a special case.

The important thing to us in fundamental circles is that we do not practice the doctrine nor hold

to it.

Dr. Bryce Augsburger, President of Denver Baptist Bible College and Seminary, mentioned in a chapel message that independent Baptists do not believe in Baptismal regeneration, but many of them are near to practicing it. We save em and run em through the tank. He questioned if the people really understood the rite of baptism.

The opposite of this is true in fundamental Bible churches at times. We do not stress Baptism and as a result we have many people that put baptism off for many years. We need to strike a balance between the two extremes. I was teaching through this section in college once and after the class one of the students came to me asked if she could talk to me. She had been raised in a church which had no baptistry and so she had never been baptized. She felt that it was important, so was baptized soon after.

When we have a new believer on our hands, we should begin teaching them some of the basics. One of those basics is baptism. Another is the local church. If you go into the book of Acts they are going to be confronted with baptism very quickly.

We need to be sure that we take time with new converts to show them what baptism is and assure them that a service will be planned when they are ready to other believers in this public statement of their faith.

Find a balance!

Regeneration is the specific work of the Holy Spirit, though the Father, The Son, and the Word are also involved. The regeneration is that act by which the Holy Spirit transforms, through birthing again, the old nature. This transformation is complete in an instant and is not reversible. It is that action which prepares us for entrance into the family of God. Without this transformation nothing else can proceed in the process of salvation.

We might mention at this point that there is a process involved in salvation. It is realized that the salvation process occurs in an instant, yet there are things which must precede others. For example, without faith, God cannot transform. Without transformation, there can be no entrance into the family of God. We will see this process in detail in the Salvation section.

03000

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN INDWELLING

The Scriptures will show us that the Spirit indwells each and every believer in this current age. It will show that His residence may not necessarily be His throne. It will show that His residence should be His throne.

The Holy Spirit's residence is automatic for the believer; His enthronement is optional in many people's minds. It is not mandatory, but it is an act of the will. We must consciously decide to allow Him control of our lives.

As Dr. Bob Jones Sr. mentions, "It is one thing for us to have the Holy Spirit; it is another thing for the Holy Spirit to have us." (Jones, Dr. Bob Sr.; "THE HOLY SPIRIT" (small pamphlet), p 9)

Just what does we mean by indwelling of the Holy Spirit? The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is that existence of the Spirit whereby He exists within the individual believer. This existence is automatic at the point of salvation, and it is for the duration of the believers physical life.

THE DOCTRINE DOCUMENTED

INDWELLING WAS PROMISED: Jo. 14:16, 17, "...shall be in you." vs 17 When the Lord Jesus was preparing His disciples for His death, he mentioned that the Spirit would be sent to assist them in their life and ministry. This assistance was to come from within them - from the Holy Spirit within.

INDWELLING IS STATED AS FACT:

1. Paul mentions that if there is no indwelling, then there is no relationship between God and the person. Rom. 8:9, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

2. Not only is there a relationship, but there is a responsibility. The Spirit is within the believer. We are His place of residence. I Cor. 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Most of us take pride in our place of residence. We try to keep it in proper repair and we attempt to keep it clean. So why do we treat our Spirit's residence, our bodies, so shabbily?

3. Paul depicts a beautiful picture of this relationship of indwelling in II Cor. 6:16, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

4. Jo. 7:37-39 talks of the rivers of living water and that this was speaking of the Spirit which was yet future. It is clear that all believers would be indwelt.

Also see Ro. 5:5, Gal. 4:6.

SOURCE OF THE INDWELLING

The Spirit is sent by both the Father and the Son. (The Father, Jo. 14:26, The Son, Jo. 15:26) I suspect that the Father is the instigator, and the Son is the instrument. The Son provided the possibility of the indwelling through the work of the cross.

RESULTS OF INDWELLING

It is a proof of salvation: Paul states this in Rom. 8:16, "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;" If we know that the Spirit is working in and through us, then we know that we are saved. He will reveal this to us.

It is a protection in salvation: The thought of a seal in the New Testament as well as in our own time, is that the item sealed, is guaranteed correct and safe. This concept of sealing is used of the Spirit's indwelling of the believer. II Cor. 1:22, "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (Eph. 1:13 also)

Eph. 4:30 also mentions the sealing of the Spirit and this sealing is why we are not to grieve the Spirit. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The seal is for a long long time, until the day that the Lord completes our redemption.

THE DOCTRINE MISAPPLIED

Pache has a section on some of the errors of receiving the Spirit that may be of interest to you. (Pache, Rene; "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Chicago: Moody Press, 1954, p 80 ff)

One problem that exists today in this area is the fact that some view some of the interdispensational to old dispensation texts as usable today and this causes confusion.

One error is that some believe that the believer may have to wait to receive the Spirit until some point in the future. This is based on the Scripture which shows the disciples awaiting the Spirit in the upper room. This was a transition period between the day of the law and the beginning of the Church. Later in the book of Acts it is clear that the Spirit came at the point of salvation.

Another problem is that there needs to be a laying on of hands for a believer to receive the Spirit. Again this is based on the book of Acts where this was the procedure for a time. There is no indication that laying on of hands is required. Indeed, what can the physical touching of two people do to bring a spirit being into the physical person? The two are not related. In the book of Acts, it would seem that the people were just recognizing the new belief of the person. There was a laying on of hands in the commissioning of Barnabas and Paul in Acts 13 as well. It was not the impartation of something special, but rather a recognition.

Another false teaching is the reception of tongues as the proof of receiving the Spirit. The first

error is that tongues are for this age. The second error is that the Spirit cannot indwell a person that has not spoken in tongues. The Spirit comes to the believer at the point of salvation, and not at some time future when the person works themselves up emotionally.

Others suggest that obedience is a prerequisite to receiving the Spirit. Again, there is no Scripture which shows this concept. Salvation is not based on obedience, security is not based on obedience, nor is the indwelling of the Spirit based on obedience.

The Charismatic movement has had for one of its basic tenants that you do not have the Holy Spirit within you just because you are saved. This has changed in recent years to the belief that the Spirit indwells but you have to get the baptism of the Spirit to really be spiritual. The Baptism of the Spirit has recently become separate from His indwelling in their thinking.

In very recent times the movement has realized it is countering scripture with some of their teaching and have sharpened their pencils a bit. They now believe that the Spirit indwells all, and most of the intellectual folk would probably feel that the baptism of the Spirit would be very close to our view of it, being the baptism of the person into the body of Christ.

They now camp on some of the teaching of the 1800's from men that mentioned a time when they were really overflowed with the Spirit. The people holding this will be their seminarians and recent grads plus the faculties of their better schools. It is not based on Scripture, but upon experience.

I sat at a pot luck with two charismatics in a community church in the northwest. One was a talker, and the other appeared to be a disciple. As we talked the disciple kept looking confused when I quoted Scripture and would stare at the other man for an answer. The "disciple" never spoke. The man opened the conversation with something border line charismatic and I jumped right in with a few sweeping statements. He would tell me his belief on a subject. I would give Scripture against what he was saying. He would counter with an experience of some friend. Each Scripture I used was countered by the experience of others. Never mind truth - I have this experience.

THE DOCTRINE APPLIED

1. Since the Lord Jesus bought us with a price, and since the Spirit is living within us, then it seems that we are really not our own for our own benefit. It would seem that Rom. 12:1 would some how possibly relate to some of us today. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." REASONABLE SERVICE!

2. I Cor. 6:19, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?" The term used here for temple is a term that indicates the most sacred part of a temple, indeed the very area of the idol. The term is "naos" (Strong's number 3485) It is translated temple all of the

time. It appears around forty-five times in the New Testament.

One of the interesting times is Lu. 23:45 when it mentions, the veil between the holy place and the holy of holies was rent at the death of Christ on the cross.

Verse 20 of I Cor. 6 fits quite well with 19, "For ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

3. It should be noted that when Paul mentions the indwelling in the Corinthian epistles, that he did not make stipulations of which of the believers were indwelt and which were not. They all were indwelt. This was a church of CARNAL believers. Many were not living obedient proper lives. The spiritual condition of the believer has nothing to do with the indwelling Spirits presence.

4. Several of the verses we have covered show that the Father GAVE us the Spirit, and indeed He is mentioned as a gift from God to us. A gift of such importance, and we for all practical purposes ignore the Spirit.

I told a class once that if I were to gain an inheritance and come in the next morning and pass out keys to fifteen new Corvettes as gifts to them, I really couldn't imagine any one of them ignoring that gift for any great length of time. The Spirit should become more precious to us than even a Corvette.

5. Chafer likens the indwelling of the Spirit to the anointing of the Old Testament in His "MAJOR BIBLE THEMES" pp 104-106. He mentions the sanctification of the oil of the Old Testament and this is a good picture, probably, of our needed view of the Spirit living within us. We should be set apart for His use at all times in our lives.

Walvoord's abridged Chafer mentions, "The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the same as the anointing of the Holy Spirit." (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F.; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988, p 265)

If this is true, all are anointed - set apart. Let's live like it. (Anointing being equal to the indwelling of the Spirit is indicated in I Jo. 2:27)

6. If you went to live with your pastor for three months to work in camp or vacation Bible school, would you not live on your best behavior. If you had any bad habits, I'm sure that you would refrain from doing them for the time that you were with the pastor. We live in the same house with God and we don't refrain anywhere near as often as we should. That is not right!

7. Since Christ has bought us, the Spirit has indwelt us, we have no right whatsoever to do anything with, or for ourselves without His okay. Something to contemplate for a year or two!

"WHERE THE SPIRIT DWELLS"

"The believing man hath the Holy Ghost; and where the Holy Ghost dwelleth, He will not suffer a man to be idle, but stirreth him up to all exercises of piety and godliness, and of true religion, to the love of God, to the patient suffering of afflictions, to prayer, to thanksgiving, and the exercise of charity toward all men." Martin Luther

03050

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

There has been a lot of confusion concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit over the years. Much of the confusion stems from people building their doctrine on experience and poor interpretation, rather than proper interpretation of the Scriptures.

Buswell defines the baptism of the Spirit as "...the work of grace whereby God's elect are marked out as members of the true church, the body of Christ." (Buswell, James Oliver; "A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, p 208) This definition may not give the whole picture. There seems to be an aspect of the baptism that indicates that the believer is baptized into the church body. This is not clear in Buswell's comment.

SPIRIT BAPTISM PROMISED

John The Baptist mentions this baptism in Matt. 3:11, [John The Baptist is speaking] "I, indeed, baptize you with water unto repentance, but he who cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire." The Spirit baptism is promised by John the Baptist and the indications are that this baptism would come from Christ in some manner. (See also Mk. 1:8, Lu. 3:16, Jo. 1:33. It should be significant if all four gospels record the information.)

Luke makes mention of a baptizing that was to take place yet future. This baptism was the first occurrence of the work of the
Spirit in bringing people into the Church. Acts 1:5, [Christ speaking] "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

The initial Baptism of the Spirit was on the day of Pentecost in Acts two when the Spirit descended and began the church age. There were also special times in the book of Acts when the Spirit came upon new believers. From the end of the book of Acts we have no occurrence of this even taking place again. The baptism is something that is automatic at the point of salvation.

SPIRIT BAPTISM RECEIVED

On the day of Pentecost the disciples were in the upper room and the Spirit descended upon them. Peter in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost explains what had occurred in the upper room. Acts 2:32,33, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of god exalted, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." This depicts the outward manifestation that occurred when the Church was established. (There are subsequent events as well: Acts 8:5-25, the Samaritans receive the baptism of the Spirit; Acts 11:15,16, tells us of the conversion of Cornelius' house. Vs. 17 mentions that belief was the basis of this baptism; Acts 19:1-7, the Ephesian disciples that had been followers of John The Baptist, but did not receive the baptism of the Spirit, where baptized.)

The "when" of reception is of dispute at times. The above texts show quite well that it was at the moment of induction into the Church.

Since we can't be in Christ before salvation it must of necessity be post salvation. The above texts would show that it is was upon induction into the church, while all other believers receive it at the moment of salvation. The Pentecost and Ephesian believers were believers of the Old Testament age and were a special, beginning group of people.

In answer to those that teach we must seek the baptism you may reply, "Give me a verse!" There are no verses which command, nor indicate a need to seek, the baptism of the Spirit. Indeed, the texts that we have considered show that it was automatic, and that the people did nothing to receive it.

SPIRIT BAPTISM COMMENTED ON BY PAUL

I Cor. 12:13, "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." This gives the thought mentioned earlier of being baptized INTO the church. Pache mentions that this is, "...the act whereby God makes us members of Christ's Body." (Taken from: "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Pache, Rene; Copyright 1954, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 71)

The fact that this statement in I Cor. 12:13 is directed to the Corinthian church that was made up of all shades of spiritual giants and midgets would show that the baptism of the Spirit has nothing to do with spiritual life or walk, but of position. (The apostle called some of the membership carnal and babes in 3:1-3)

The Baptism of the Spirit is one of those free things that comes with the territory. We don't have to ask to be heirs with Christ, we don't have to ask to be sanctified, we don't have to ask to be regenerated, we are just - all of those things automatically. The Baptism of the Spirit is a part of

all those free items of salvation.

For an interesting study sometime look up the phrase "in Christ" and find how many times it is used in the New Testament, and then search out all of the ramifications of that phrase.

I Cor. 12:13 mentions only one baptism. If it is at the moment of salvation, then there is nothing else that the believer is to seek after.

Paul calls the body he mentions the church in Eph. 1:22,23. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

We are given a place in that body, the church, at the very point of salvation. Along with this new place we are given a number of things which we need to mention, but we won't take time to study in great detail.

1. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW CONDITION: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:6 Again, we see that the old is crucified, which indicates destruction rather than moved aside to compete with as some suggest.

2. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW RESIDENCE: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Jo. 17:16 We may need to pass through this life for a time, yet our permanent residence is set and sure in eternity.

3. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS: "For he hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor. 5:21 We had little righteousness in our former life, if any. There may have been some good works, however this verse speaks of the complete righteousness given to us by God. This is in contrast to the complete depravity and unrighteousness of our nature before Christ.

4. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW CITIZENSHIP: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ," Phil. 3:20, Eph. 2:19 also. We may act like the world, we may smell like the world, we may look like the world if we are walking with the world, but even then we have a citizenship that is sure, and that citizenship is in heaven.

5. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW FREEDOM: Rom. 6:3-7 (from sin.) We no longer are compelled to serve sin. We can if we want, but the purpose and will of God is for us to use our freedom to NOT sin.

6. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW VICTORY: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Eph. 6:11 In all of life's battles, the Lord has given us the victory over the Devil.

7. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW INHERITANCE: We become the children of God and will enjoy the riches of our Father. Those riches may not be evident in this life as material items, yet we are rich in emotion, love and care. In the next life we will share with all that He has. Some, in this life are given the richest blessing materially as well. This is not promised to all, as some preachers suggest, but is given as He wills.

8. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW DEATH: "Buried with him in baptism, in which also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. 2:12 We are buried with Him. Our old nature, or sin nature was buried - indicating death occurred prior to the burial. Again, the thought that our makeup as believers is that of a new nature, not controlled by sin.

9. WE ARE GIVEN A NEW UNITY: "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free...." I Cor 12:3 Gal. 3:27,28 also. That should relate somehow to church business meetings, wouldn't you think?

SPIRIT BAPTISM, FACTS THAT RELATE

1. The baptism of the Spirit is different than the filling of the Spirit. Filling has the idea of control by the Spirit. The baptizing is the act which causes the new believer to enter into the body of Christ. You can be saved and baptized into the body with out being filled with the Spirit. Filling is something that is subsequent to our salvation and is related to our walk. Baptism is related to our position in Christ.

2. It is for all believers, no mater their spiritual condition. The Corinthians were carnal and babes and they are classed as being baptized, and are seen as the temples of the Holy Spirit.

It once crossed my mind as to why God did not make the Baptism of the Spirit optional as He did the filling. I guess He wanted to be sure that He had a church. If He had made it optional few would have come seeking baptism, as few today seek the filling of the Spirit.

3. It is not optional.

4. It is not avoidable. You can't accept the Lord and duck, missing the Baptism of the Spirit. It is automatic, compulsory, and mandatory.

5. Of all the things that are mentioned in the activity of the Spirit in relationship to Christ it is of interest that Christ was never Baptized with the Spirit. The baptism of the Jordon was with water, the spirit came upon Him but not as a baptism of the Spirit. (Lu. 3:22;4:1,14,18)

This is only logical, because He was not a part of the church age. Indeed, He made it possible for the church age to exist. He was ascended to be with the Father long before the Baptizing of the Spirit was placed into effect. Logically - He didn't need to be baptized with the Spirit. He was

already head of Body - no need to be made part of it.

6. The baptism is called by different names. "baptized with the Holy Ghost" Acts 1:5; "baptized into Jesus Christ" Gal. 3:17, Rom. 6:3; "baptized into his death" Rom. 6:3.

Since Eph 4:4-6 is very clear that there is only one baptism, then we must assume that all of these are one.

7. There is no Old Testament scripture that mentions such an occurrence, nor any that prophecy it's coming. Again, that is obvious in that none of these people were part of the church age. The Baptism of the Spirit is strictly a church age occurrence. The thing that brought an Old Testament person into Israel was circumcision. Indeed, circumcision would be a looking forward to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

8. Chafer in his BIBLE THEMES mentions on pp 110,111 that the baptism into the body is separate from the baptism into Christ. This would be hard to hold, in light of the plain declaration that there is one baptism. (Eph. 4:4-6)

SPIRIT BAPTISM MISAPPLIED

1. The usual Charismatic thought is that it is subsequent to the salvation experience. This thought has been covered in past studies. The idea that tongues is the signification that a person has received the baptism of the Spirit has been mentioned as well. Both lines of thinking are in error.

2. A Baptist theologian of the past generation by the name of E.Y. Mullins in an article in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, "BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" indicates that the texts relating to Spirit baptism are all related to water baptism, and that the Spirit mentioned with these references is to signify that the church is to be operating in the Spirit at those times when the believers are being added to the local church by water baptism. (Orr, James; "THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1939, pp 309-310)

He feels that the baptism of the Spirit ended before the end of Acts and that it never again took place. I think a look at the related verses will show this to be a very strained view.

3. Along with the view that the baptism of the Spirit is subsequent to the salvation experience, there are those that feel that this is a second work of grace which leads to complete sanctification and sinless perfection within this life.

In other words you might accept the Lord and go along as a good to moderate Christian for a time, be it a year or many years, and one day receive the Baptism of the Spirit and all of a sudden be totally sanctified and perfect - going out to serve God in a new manner. There seems to be no

basis for this thinking in the Word.

4. Another Baptist theologian, Dale Moody in "THE WORD OF TRUTH" (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans; 1981; p 447) according to Ryrie mentions, "God imparts the Spirit in baptism" (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 362) Another research paper for you: Are the indwelling of the Spirit and the Baptism of the Spirit the same act or occasion. Indwelling is a living place, while Baptism is an act of placing into the body of Christ. The two seem to differ, yet they are closely related to all that goes on in salvation. Indeed, the fact that the Spirit indwells may place us in Christ. The fact would become the act. More study might be appropriate on the possibility.

5. Some of the men we hold dear weren't as clear as possible on the doctrine. Ryrie mentions, "men like R.A. Torrey and D.L. Moody were unclear in this area. Torrey taught that a person could or could not be baptized with the Spirit at the moment of salvation (THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT [Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1972], pp. 13-4). In his biography of Moody, Torrey recounts Moody's baptism as something that occurred subsequent to salvation (WHY GOD USED D.L. MOODY [New York: Revell, 1923], pp. 51-5)." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 363)

Torrey tells us, "The baptism with the Holy Spirit is an absolutely necessary preparation for effective service for Christ along every line of service." He goes on to say in the next paragraph. "Any man who is in Christian work who has not received the baptism with the Holy Spirit ought to stop his work right where he is and not go on with it until he has been 'clothed with power from on high.'" This is in the context of the baptism being secondary to conversion and an item for which you must ask, but only after you are surrendered to God totally. (Torrey, R.A.; "BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1972, pp 13, 14) He goes on to equate baptism to filling. He seems to see a one time special occurrence that is subsequent to salvation.

6. Some hyper-dispensationals believe that the baptism of Acts is separate from the baptism of the epistles. Both baptisms are usually viewed as water baptism.

SPIRIT BAPTISM APPLIED

1. Probably one of the great tragedies of the church age is going to go into history as the schism between believers. I am not advocating the union of all believers, however I feel there is a wide gap that ought not be there.

I am a good Baptist by nature, education, and conviction so I can tell stories on my own breed. There was a man that died and went to heaven. At the gates he was introduced to an angel that was going to give him a tour of heaven. As the tour progressed they stepped into a huge building. Inside was a long hallway with many doors. The angel stepped to the first door. The door was marked Lutheran. The angel opened the door and introduced the new arrival to

everyone. They moved back into the hall and the man commented on how nice the Lutherans had been.

They then stepped to the door marked Christian Church....
They then stepped to the door marked Brethren....
They then stepped to the door marked Presbyterian....

All of the peoples were friendly and the man seemed surprised. The angel then stepped to another door. He turned to the man and stated, "Now, we have to be very quiet when I open this door. I won't be introducing you to these people." The angel opened the door and the man looked in only briefly before the angel closed the door very softly. The man asked why he did not get to meet these people. The angel stated, "Well, the Baptists don't know anyone else is here and we hate to bother them."

NOTHING AGAINST THE BAPTISTS! ALL OF OUR CHURCHES TEND TOWARD THE IDEA THAT ONLY "WE" WILL BE THERE.

In the area of the teaching of the Spirit the gap is of necessity due to the great divisiveness of the Charismatic movement as well as quite often the related life styles involved.

Jo. 13:35 mentions, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Unless you take that statement as a very idol mumbling of our Lord it is a very startling reality that most of us can't relate to.

To love the Charismatic is our job. We needn't participate in their antics and doctrine, but we are to love them.

To love the Baptists is our job! To love the Brethren as in Plymouth is our job! To love the Lutherans is our job, if they are believers! I've listened to some Lutheran radio, and it usually puts the fundamental preachers to shame. To love the independent Bible church people is our job if we are Baptists or Brethren.

WE ARE PART OF THE SAME BODY, AND WE ARE ALL PART OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND ME! I AM NOT SAYING LET'S GET TOGETHER WITH FALSE TEACHING! WE ARE, TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER, HOWEVER!

2. Indeed the above thinking relates to the believers within the local assemblies. To love one another would move toward a real working of the Spirit in most churches.

3. If we are baptized into the body of Christ and into Christ himself at the moment of salvation, then to fall away to a lost state would demand your removal from the Body, and from Christ.

What a challenge to the doctrine of the insecurity of the believer.

4. If you are a member of the body of Christ then God has a place for you to serve. You may be a nose to smell out false doctrine, or a finger to point at the dangers of the world. You may be a foot to do the door to door work, or you may be a knee to do the praying. You, however are not the brain so I trust that you will never act like it! You are something, so get to work. God has a ministry for every last one of us. It may not be glorious or it may be glorious. Never the mind, it is our place to do as He bids for the betterment of the ENTIRE BODY!

Cambron's "BIBLE DOCTRINES", pp 141-142 has a chart that might be of use to you. I would like to adapt it for your further study.

CONTRAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT
WITH THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT

BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT	FILLING OF THE SPIRIT
1. RELATES TO POSITION	1. RELATES TO WALK
2. EXTERNAL (POSITION)	2. INTERNAL
3. FOR EVERY BELIEVER	3. OPTIONAL WITH THE BELIEVER
4. NEVER COMMANDED	4. COMMANDED
5. OCCURS AT SALVATION	5. MAY OCCUR AT BELIEVERS WILL
6. OCCURS ONCE	6. MAY OCCUR MANY TIMES
7. OCCURRED POST PENTECOST	7. SOME FILLED PRE PENTECOST

03100

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE FILLING OF THE BELIEVER

DOCTRINE DEFINED

Chafer in his major themes mentions, "The filling of the Spirit may be defined as a spiritual state where the Holy Spirit is fulfilling all that He came to do in the heart and life of the individual believer. It is not a matter of acquiring more of the Spirit, but rather of the Spirit of God acquiring all of the individual." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas,

TX; Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, p 115)

What a beautiful thought - the Spirit doing all that He desires to do in my life. I trust that you contemplate that sometime. ALL THAT HE DESIRES TO DO!

DOCTRINE EXAMINED

1. Eph. 5:18, "And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit" Being drunk has the idea of the wine controlling the person who is drunk. Being filled has the idea of being controlled by the Spirit completely.

As the drunk is lowered, to a lower plain of life and activity, so the Spirit filled believer will live on a higher plain than the non-filled person. Not that they are in a fog, but they are being all that God wants them to be at all times.

Ryrie mentions that the drunk gives himself over to the influences of the wine as the believer gives himself over to the influences of the Spirit.

In his book on the Holy Spirit he states, in reference to the person under the control of wine, "he thinks and acts in ways normally unnatural to him. Likewise, the man who is Spirit-filled is controlled, and he too acts in ways that are unnatural to him." (Taken from: "THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1965, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 93-94) This does not mean that the believer is out of control with joy, peace and longsuffering. It is to say that the believer is under the control of the Spirit. It means that the person is doing all that they can to follow and serve the Lord via the Spirit's leading.

DOCTRINE RECEIVED

How can the believer be filled with the Spirit? This is a question that needs to be considered.

1. We cannot be filled by asking for it. There is no reference in scripture that tells us to pray for the filling. We are only told to be filled. This would indicate that it is a simple act of the will.

2. We cannot be filled by someone else asking for it. In other words the prayer of the saint in the congregation before the sermon asking for God to fill the pastor is technically in error. We might ask that the Lord would move the pastor to seek to be filled before he begins - however that might take some time for him to get ready for it.

3. We cannot be filled by denying ourselves of food, drink or other items. There is nothing that we can give up that will bring the Spirit's filling except for one thing. YOUR CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE!

4. We cannot be filled by meditation. No matter how psyched up we get, no matter how laid

back we get, no matter how quiet we get, we cannot be filled.

5. We cannot be filled by any work that we can do, save a clean life before God living from day to day in His control, and not in our own control. You have merely to seek out sin in your life and confess it properly and allow the Lord to take control.

If you are not willing to submit to the authority of your parents, you cannot be filled. If you are not willing to follow ALL THE LORD'S commandments you cannot be filled with the Spirit. If you are not willing to forgive another, then the Spirit cannot be in control, for you are. If you are in control, then the Spirit is not, and you are not filled.

If there is anything that you will not allow the Spirit to control in your life then you are not filled with the Spirit. That might include: Not following local, state or federal laws: speed limits, safe driving, copyright laws, etc. Not following whatever rules, or authority God has placed over you. We have choirs all over the country singing praises to their God with copied sheets of music, which is strictly illegal. How much praise do you think that the Lord hears? We have Christians breaking speed limit laws on the way to church. How excited does God get over such dedication?

Can a person be filled at a time when there is no conflict of interest? In other wards if God has told me to drink no more and I determine not to drink. At a point tomorrow I take a drink - was I filled from the place of being in His control and the point at which I determined to take a drink? It would seem that yes would be the answer. He had full control until my will decided to take the drink and disobey - or indeed take back the control that had been relinquished to the Spirit.

SIMPLE FACTS THAT HURT

Can't I sin just a little bit and still be mostly controlled by the Spirit? No.

Can't I use my mind to produce a feeling of filling and not be totally turned over to the Spirit? No. No matter what physical or mental contortions you may deem as profitable - they are worthless in relation to the filling of the Spirit!

Chafer mentions three items of concern before you can be filled. Walvoord and Ryrie elaborate on these three points as well.

1. I Thess. 5:19, don't quench the Spirit.
2. Eph. 4:30, don't grieve the Spirit.
3. Gal. 5:16, walk in the Spirit.

If you are grieving or quenching the Spirit then you are not allowing Him to control you. We will look at these in future sections.

The third item of "walk in the Spirit" would naturally relate to walking your Christian life in the control of the spirit.

Torrey on the other hand lists seven steps to being filled. You need to realize he is equating baptism and filling and is askew on this doctrine slightly.

He bases his first thoughts on Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (The following seven points adapted from, Torrey, R.A.; "BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1972, pp 11-37.)

1. Repent. Acts 2:38 (change your mind)
2. Repent. Acts 2:38 (renounce sin)
3. Be baptized.
4. Obedience. (Based in part on Acts 2:38 and on Acts 5:32.)
5. Have a real and intense desire. Luke 11:13
6. Ask. Luke 11:13
7. Faith. Mark 11:24

Point five, six and seven are looking for Church age truth in Jewish information. The asking for the Spirit is something that the Old Testament saint had to do, but we in this age automatically receive Him in His fullness.

You see, Mr. Torrey feels there is more to filling than what is normally seen. He is speaking of something that we must seek after and ask for. This would indicate that his filling is a second item that is dependant upon us, and not God. Indeed, he must have seen baptism and filling as the same, and that being, a special work aside from the indwelling of salvation.

It is easy to see how his teaching can be used by the pentecostal groups.

DOCTRINE APPLIED

1. It is a command. We are to be filled. The term filled in Eph. 5 is an imperative and something to be done. No rationalizations, no excuses, no comment, no discussion, no outs, no maybe's, no alternatives, no options, no AAAHHH but Lord's, no anything. WE ARE TO BE FILLED!

2. Some would ask how often you should be filled. In short the Ephesians text is in the present tense and several authors suggest that it be translated as "keep on being filled." The idea is as often as you need it, or maybe better yet, you are to be controlled continually. The choice of God would be to be filled once and never have need of it again, however God is realistic and has set it up so that all may be filled as they have need.

Constantly, should be the goal. It is a continual item of interest to the believer. Every time you take over control, there will have to be a resumption of power by the Spirit.

As a person matures they will continue to find new areas of life to yield to Him, and this will require new commitment to the Lord's control of that area of their life.

3. Some suggest Col. 3:16 as an equal to the Eph. 5:18 text.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

They equate the two passages, because in geometry there is a law or axiom which states if two things are equal to the same thing then they are equal. In other words if a=c and b=c then a=b.

I'm not sure what angles and lines have to do with scripture, but there may be a close similarity between allowing the word of Christ to dwell richly in you and being filled with the Spirit.

If we are filled with the Spirit we will fill our minds with the thoughts of Christ and vice versa if we fill our minds with the words of Christ we will probably be filled with the Spirit.

4. The result of not being filled as a believer, is only one. The result is sin. To not follow the command of the Lord is SIN. Now, if you take some time to consider the average Christian that is not walking in the Spirit, that is, one that is doing his or her own thing - then you have a sinning Christian. Every person that is living for themselves in the church is in sin. Need we guess why the average church is unfruitful?

RESULTS OF THE FILLING

1. FRUIT: The fruit of the Spirit will be the main result of the filling of the Spirit. Gal. 5:16-26 tells us what the fruit of the Spirit are. I have contrasted these with the opposites.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT	contrasted with	NO FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
LOVE		DISLIKE/HATE
JOY		SADNESS/GET ALONG ATTITUDE
PEACE		TURMOIL/UPSET/CONFUSION
LONG-SUFFERING		SHORT TEMPER/SHARP TONGUE
GENTLENESS		RUFFNESS/TERSENESS
GOODNESS		LACK OF GOOD/BADNESS/NASTINESS
FAITH		DOUBT/WORRY

MEEKNESS	OUTWARD/KNOW IT ALL
SELF-CONTROL	SUBMIT TO PEER PRESSURE/SIN

WHICH COLUMN DO YOU OPERATE IN? These items of contrast are easy enough to understand for most of us. We understand the basic meaning of the fruit of the Spirit. We also understand that the fruit is to be seen in our lives. This means when you are preaching. This means when you are buying gas. This means when you are disciplining your children. This means when you are in a business meeting that isn't going well. This means when you are taking a test. This means when you are fixing a flat tire. This means when you are discussing what that mealy mouthed creep said about you at the business meeting. This means at all times of the day and night, and all situations.

NOW, HOW MANY OF US WANT TO CLAIM THAT WE ARE REALLY FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT ALL THE TIME? MOST OF THE TIME YES, MAYBE MUCH OF THE TIME YET THERE MAY BE SOME TIMES WHEN WE AREN'T.

2. PROPER CHURCH SERVICES: Eph. 5 mentions that the filling precedes the following activities of the church. Eph. 5:18-21, "And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Worship, praise, singing, thanksgiving, submissiveness (Wow - even submissiveness from filling!).

Have you ever been in a service where you felt that everyone must be filled with the Spirit? In Denver years ago the pastor came for the usual Sunday evening service and ask for testimonies. The congregation began sharing and finally he interrupted, and had us sing another song. Before he had a chance to go further, another person stood and mentioned that they had something to share and this kept occurring. About 45 minutes into the service the pastor mentioned that he was not going to fight what was going on and sat down and enjoyed what was going on. We finished a little after the hour and all went away very refreshed (without a sermon!).

While we were home missionaries we were asked to present our work in a church in Denver. We drove down the night before and enjoyed a very neat couple's home. We went to church the next morning and found that they did not have the usual services. They sat in a square around a table on which the Lord's table was set. They shared from the word, from the heart and prayed. From time to time we would sing a song, then the service was closed with the Lord's table.

If you were to be in a group like this on a regular basis you would learn quickly that to be a part of the worship you would have to be filled with the Spirit a lot of the time during the week so that you would have something to share on Sunday morning.

3. SERVICE: Naturally the spiritual gifts would be involved in this, but the thought of filling

would also relate to the natural sharing of one's faith with those around them. Evangelism would be the natural result of filling.

Let's consider a few questions.

Can you be a spiritual person without being filled with the Spirit? This is a question of semantics probably. The point is this, if you are constantly filled, then you will be becoming a spiritual person. A new believer can be filled but not necessarily a spiritual person, in that he has much maturing to do before he can be walking in the spirit on a moment to moment basis.

Is it wrong for two believers that have been saved the same amount of time to be on different spiritual maturity plains? Only if one has been negligent in allowing the Spirit's control. The Spirit may have need of great maturity on the part of one for the ministry yet not need the same depth of maturity for the job of the other. It is the individual's responsibility to be filled, and allow the Spirit to draw the person to the maturity that He desires.

I trust that you will never look down upon a person that has less maturity than you. Be pleased that the Spirit has done what he has done with you and allow the Spirit to do the same with all other people. Indeed, they may not be below you - your opinion of your own maturity may be inflated.

To sum up let me share a quotation from Chafer. "From the nature of the filling of the Spirit, it may be concluded that the wide difference in spiritual experience observed in Christians and the various degrees of conformity to the mind and will of God may be traced to the presence or absence of the filling of the Spirit." (Taken from the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 117)

In short it seems to me if you want a simple key to the whole topic it is this. When you sin, I Jo. 1:9 it and He is back in control. The sooner you I Jo. 1:9 your sin the quicker He will be back in control. Is this an oversimplification? I TRUST THAT IT IS NOT!

03150

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE SEALING OF THE BELIEVER

THE DOCTRINE PRACTICED:

The sealing of the Holy Spirit is that process by which the Holy Spirit is sealed up within our own ego and person, so that He is rendered completely inoperative in our lives. NO! This is not

what sealing is, but many today seem to operate as if this were the proper interpretation and definition of the doctrine.

Eph. 4:30, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Note, that whatever this sealing is, it is for a long long time. It is till the day of redemption! We will have the Spirit until the day that we are finally and completely redeemed from this earth and miserable state! We also notice that we are not to grieve the Spirit in this verse. We will deal with this subject in a coming study.

What is a seal? An animal that likes to balance balls - yes. Christmas and Easter seals - yes. However, in this case it means much more. In the legal area it is something that indicates a guaranteeing of the contents of that which is sealed.

Let me give you some illustrations of seals? There are seals dating to the days of the Babylonians for certain. They have found barrel seals that are placed in the Babylonian period with pictures of a man and woman and snake. Seals have been around for many years. They would role the seal in fresh clay to leave the impression. The kings of Europe used ring seals. They would imprint warm wax with their ring so that all could know that the item was from the king. We still have the ancestors of the old time seal. When you graduated you probably received a diploma imprinted with a seal of some sort.

Gift shops still sell little seals with wax sticks. You melt the wax on the back of your sealed envelope and then press the seal into the hot wax. It is for ornamentation, yet it guarantees that the seal of the letter has not been disturbed.

When a new teacher's belongings arrived one summer in Wyoming, the driver had to use tools to break a steal band that had been placed on the container when it was loaded in Germany. That seal guaranteed that no person had entered that container along the way. The seal had a number on it that was a double guarantee of no entry. That number matched the receipt that the couple had signed in Germany.

As believers, God has sealed us in some manner, and the Spirit is that seal. He is our guarantee that something is going to happen, that our final redemption will come. He is also our guarantee that nothing is going to happen - that is our eternal security.

Since He is our seal, how can we know that we are saved? We can know by knowing the work and presence of the Spirit in our life. If you have known the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, then you have known the seal that guarantees your salvation.

There is the idea of approval as well in the seal. When the container was sealed there was an approval from someone on the other end that knew that what was inside was in good shape and

complete.

"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." II Cor. 1:22 Note should be made that the sealing is like indwelling in that it is for all believers, even the carnal and babes of Corinth. It is automatic, it is complete, it is irrevocable, it is impossible to reject when you are saved, and it is impossible to reject when you don't feel that you're saved.

The seal of the Holy Spirit comes when we believe and are saved. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Eph. 1:13, 14

Just when is this redemption going to take place? Either at death, or at the Rapture.

The seal on the overseas container, with its number also identified that container as belonging to that particular couple. So, the seal that we bear identifies us as belonging to the one that sealed us - God. II Tim. 2:19 tells us, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

It is of interest in the verse that God knows His own because of the seal that He has given, but notice that next phrase! Based on God knowing His own, Paul adds, "...Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Based on God knowing us, we are told to depart from iniquity!!

There are two terms used for seal in the New Testament.

Both terms are always translated as some form of the word seal. (sealed is Strong's number 4972 which is the Greek word "sphragizo"; seal is Strong's 4973 which is the Greek word "sphragis")

INFORMATION OF INTEREST

1. Ryrie mentions that Eph. 1:13 can be interpreted two ways quite perfectly, due to the construction. It can indicate that there was an interval of time between believing and the sealing. The other, quite valid, interpretation is that they occurred at the same moment. He also mentions, and he agrees with me, that logically it would fit best for the believing and sealing to occur at the same time, or in that instant when all the many things of salvation occur. However, logic demands the sequence of trusting, then those saving items from God.

2. It is hard to tell whether it is the Spirit that actually does the sealing or if He is only that which is given. It is clear that God sealed, but was it the Father, Son or Spirit. We can't be certain from the texts we are given.

Eph. 4:30, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." This text seems to indicate it was the Spirit, the verse can also read "in whom" ye are sealed rather than by whom. The preposition is translated both ways in the scriptures.

In II Cor. 1:21 it mentions that it is God that seals us. It would seem logical that if God is keeping, and God is the one that promises, and God is the one that seals that it would be the Father that does the Sealing with the giving of the Holy Spirit.

3. The II Tim. passage (2:19) does not specifically speak of the seal of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is not mentioned. It probably is, however authors tend to assume, then state it as fact.

4. Jo. 6:27 mentions that God sealed Christ. We can learn little from this due to the special relationship Christ had to the Trinity. Whether this is speaking of the same type of seal or not we don't know. I would assume possibly that if there were similarities that Paul would have mentioned it. Christ needed no seal in relation to redemption because He didn't need to be redeemed or saved, so I doubt that it was the same.

5. Actually the sealing of the Holy Spirit is the indwelling of the Spirit. His dwelling in us is that guarantee that is the seal.

APPLICATION

1. Ownership was one of the things that the seal of the New Testament day meant. In Ephesus they had a large lumber trade. Merchants of the area would come to select and buy lumber, then place their seal or signet on the lumber. At a later time one of his workers or servants would come to the harbor and select out the lumber that had their masters seal on it and take it home.

The seal is not unknown in real estate transactions. The Old Testament relates of times when deeds were sealed, and this is a picture to many of the seven seal book of Revelation. The seal was to be opened, or used by only certain people.

The seal implies ownership. We are bought with a price. Again, I must ask the question that I have posed in previous studies. If God owns us then how dare we begin to make decisions concerning what we are going to do in life without first contacting Him? We presume enormously to consider our lives apart from His wishes!

2. We have seen that the Old Testament saints were not indwelt, baptized, nor sealed. What can we draw from those facts? God is doing something special for us in the Church age. The next question is, why? Might it be that God is proving something very special to the principalities of the air? That no matter what God does for man, or offers to man, that man will turn against God. It seems that this may be a good reason for the dispensations.

3. The idea of sealing is also a very good doctrine for the insecure believer. If God has sealed us

then there is no way that we can unseal ourselves. He will keep us until all that He has promised has come to pass. Any concept of the seal in history relates that the seal guarantees the contents of something. How can the contents ever unseal itself? IMPOSSIBLE!

Ryrie has a very good paragraph. "The concept of sealing includes the ideas of ownership, authority, responsibility, and, above all, security. Sealing assures us of the security of God's promises to us, especially our salvation. We can be certain (a) that He possesses us, (b) that we have a secure salvation sealed by and with the Spirit, and (c) that He purposes to keep us to the day of our full redemption." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 360)

I like that thought that almighty God purposes to keep us!

4. The II Tim. text mentions that the sealed person is to depart from iniquity. We need not say much more than that!

5. It is of interest that the sealing is an act which yields nothing further than what it, in itself, means. Because of it we will continue to be sealed unto the day of redemption, however there is nothing further that will benefit or act on our behalf aside from its original intent.

6. II Cor. 1:22 and Eph. 1:13,14 both mention that the Spirit is our earnest. In real estate transactions there is what they call earnest money. It is money given by the buyer and received by the seller as a token of their promise to one another to consummate the deal. It is their guarantee to one another. God has given us the Holy Spirit as His earnest money to guarantee His deal with us. The Spirit is our guarantee that He will redeem us.

Not only are we sealed to that end but the Spirit is a double guarantee of what God has promised.

If we then are assured that we have the Spirit indwelling us on a permanent basis then we can have security! Tell that to the insecure believer and possibly it will do some good.

03200

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRIES TO THE BELIEVER

COMFORT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Lord told the disciples, "But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." Jo. 14:26

The term comforter is Strong's 3875, which is the term "parakletos," means "an intercessor,

counselor". (Strong) The term is only used of the Spirit in the gospel of John and once in I Jo. 2:1 were it speaks of Christ as the "advocate".

The Spirit comforts the believer in a number of ways:

1. When we are in tribulation. II Cor. 1:4 mentions, "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted of God." This mentions God but the Holy Spirit is named the comforter in four texts (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7) so this probably speaks of the Spirit.

How do you comfort someone that is in tribulation. Hurt with them, encourage them, remind them that the Lord is able etc. This is what the Spirit can do for us if we allow Him to.

This text also gives reason for some of our many and varied tribulations. They are sent our way so that we will have the ability to relate to others that come along during our lives that have need of our comfort and help. Is it any wonder a person going into the ministry has so many trials and tribulations? No, they are being prepared.

2. When we are cast down. II Cor. 7:6, "Nevertheless God, who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;" The text is likening the comfort to the comfort that comes when a friend arrives on the scene. Not only should the Spirit be a welcome comfort for us, He should be our friend.

3. When we have need of His ministry. This would come from the Word as He guides us to texts and helps us to understand the ideas set forth. It is also accomplished through the communion of the Spirit that we will see. He will encourage us as we pray and He can guide our thoughts along the proper directions.

He also encourages us and comforts us as He directs other believers to us for those purposes. This is an indirect work of the Spirit.

TEACHING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 14:26 mentions that the Spirit will bring things to the remembrance of the disciples. This specifically was to the disciples concerning the revelation that they would record in the future. "But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." The last phrase is what requires us to limit this specific promise to those that had heard Christ in person.

The previous text may have been for the disciples however I Cor. 2:9-10 indicates that the Spirit reveals things to us that we could not know otherwise. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for

them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

This should point up to us one very glowing fact. The education level of a person does not relate to the spiritual understanding of the person. The better the education of the believer the better his understanding will be if he is truly walking with God. That is understanding in the detail and knowledge of the specifics of the Word. The uneducated can find, at times, deeper depth in their spiritual walk than the educated, due to their desire to know God rather than know about God.

The key is being born again. If you consider the great liberal theologians and all their education. Education has done nothing for their understanding of the Word of God. They are not born again and do not have the Holy Spirit within them to teach them the spiritual truths. This is why they are off in all sorts of areas of falsehood.

I Jo. 2:27 is a statement, not that the believer needs no human teachers, but is to let the believers John was writing to know that the truth of the preceding statements would be made evident to them through the Spirit. If the text were teaching that there were no need for human teachers then we would not need Bible Institutes, colleges and seminaries, nor teachers at those institutions of learning. We would not need teachers in our Sunday Schools and churches. Teachers ARE needed.

The idea of no human teachers is not Biblically acceptable because the gift of teaching was given so that some might impart knowledge to others (Eph. 4:11). If there were no need of human teachers there would be no need for a gift of teaching. (II Tim 2:2 also)

I Jo. 2:20 speaks of the anointing of verse 27. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." We do have a teacher and instructor in residence! We need to acknowledge and listen to that teacher.

Our physical teachers can teach nothing unless we are receptive to what they teach, likewise with the heavenly instructor that we have; If we aren't open to His teaching then we will not learn. (See also Jo. 15:26 which mentions that the Spirit would testify of the Lord, and Jo. 16:12-15 which tells us that the Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth. This was to give them the information that they were to preach and teach to the church and relay in the revealed word.)

There is one other area in which the Spirit can teach us. The Spirit has imparted a spiritual gift of teaching for some to use in the ministry of the Word. Anyone ministering the Word with the gift of teaching is in a sense being taught by the Spirit and teaching others via the Spirit.

Equally true is the fact that a Spirit filled person teaching the Word is sharing information to the believer via the Spirit's directions. This would not necessitate the gift of teaching.

Spirit filled and gifted writers have opportunity as well. They minister to us, and the Spirit

ministers indirectly through them.

PRAYING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We do not know just how the Spirit is involved in our prayer life yet the scripture is plain that He is. The Spirit is involved in two ways in our prayer life.

1. He is in the business of guiding our prayer life as we allow Him control. There are times when you are very burdened for someone, and you just take time to pray for them. This has happened to me a time or two.

I may have shared this illustration in an earlier study. A few years ago I was studying and suddenly a couple in our church popped into my mind. They were not well known to us for we had never really gotten together. They were the picture of health. I just had a burden to pray for them at that moment. I had no idea what to pray so kept it general - that the Lord would meet all the needs of their life at that point in time. Two days later I received news that the man had died of a heart attach and his wife was being told at about the same time that I had been praying for them.

Only the Spirit of the Lord could prompt such things. At times He may burden you to pray on a continuing basis for a person. There are times when I am burdened for a specific missionary or problem, and will pray for it for a long time. Usually I pray until I know that the problem is resolved or until another missionary becomes the focus of my prayers.

Eph. 6:18 mentions that we are to pray in the Spirit. This would indicate that we are to be directed by the Spirit in our prayer life.

2. The Spirit assists us in our prayers at times. Rom. 8:26, "Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Now, I'm not sure what all this verse means but I would like to challenge you with a humorous, but serious interpretation of this verse.

We do not know how to pray as we ought and the Spirt intercedes for us. May we apply this to the prayer of the saint that absolutely knows that he needs a new Corvette? And what would the Spirit do upon hearing such a request. Yes, GROAN! No, this is not the meaning of the verse necessarily, yet I'm not so sure that the first part isn't partially true.

At times we do not pray as we ought for we are asking amiss as the book of James tells us (James 4:3). When we are asking amiss, I feel that the Spirit is interpreting, or converting our message into something usable for the Father.

In computers there are different languages used. Some computers can use programs that translate

or convert information from another computer and use it. The conversion makes the information meaningful to the receiving computer. It seems that the Spirit translates things into language that the Lord can understand.

A prayer such as, "Oh, Lord I need a new car." can be translated a number of ways, and the Spirit interprets the statement correctly in light of the situation and God's will?

The term infirmity may show forth our very basic lack as believers, and that lack is our prayer life. We need help in that area of our spiritual life to say the least.

This verse also is a part of the basis for the idea that the Spirit leads us in our prayers, that is, to the areas in which He desires we pray. These areas might be those things that we don't know about, or those things that we wouldn't think of on our own.

Verse 27 of Rom. 8 is also of interest to our thoughts. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." God knows the heart of man because the Spirit is making intercession for us ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD!

LEADING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The leading of the Spirit is not just a New Testament occurrence. There were people that were led in the Old Testament.

In the account of the servant seeking a bride for Isaac, we see this. Gen. 24:27, "...I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." The prophets also mention that they were lead of the Lord to speak and act.

The New Testament is bold in its statement that the Spirit does lead. Indeed, the Spirit lead's every believer that will allow Him to lead. Rom. 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Galatians declares that those that are led of the Spirit are not under the law. Since we know that the church age saint is not under the law, then all believers must be led by the Spirit. "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

There are some things that the Spirit will not do as He leads the believer. He will never contradict the revealed Word of God. He will never add to the Word of God. In essence, the Word is our guide in many many areas.

It was of interest to me in 1992 someone predicted the rapture was going to occur on October 28. Naturally it did not occur. The news reports mentioned that many had quit their jobs, some sold their houses and some women had abortions. Now, if God really was leading in the setting of the

date of the Rapture, why would he lead people to sell homes and quite jobs. The evidence demands that there was little leading of the Spirit in these lives. The abortions really bother me. Abortion is the killing of children. How could a believer rationalize it is better to kill a baby than to be carrying a child at the time of the rapture? Logic is lacking!

There are some things that the Spirit will do when He is leading. He will lead and guide in areas that the Word does not cover such as geographical area of ministry. He will encourage and stimulate toward the Word and it's clear commands of living and instruction.

The leading of the Spirit is very much determined by our proximity to the Lord. In other words if we aren't filled with the Spirit then we cannot really look for guidance from Him.

It is like a car moving down the street. As long as the driver is in the drivers seat and directing the car he can lead or direct that car as he desires, however if he crawls into the back seat and releases the wheel the car is not directed in any sense by the ex-driver.

Please take time to read Acts 16:6-10. Paul was sensitive to the Spirit's leading and was directed to the places of witness that were on God's mind. It should be remembered also that all of the places Paul went were also due to the leading of the Spirit. The Spirit may use different methods of leading in different situations.

Paul was headed to different destinations and the Lord intervened in a real sense in this text, yet He at times just placed some towns on Paul's mind and gave him a burden for them. The Spirit does not always use the dramatic methods of leading, or He may, it is His choice.

You may find that the Lord will be very dramatic in some leading. If you lose your job then you may assume that the Lord is leading you to something new. At other times you will only have a burden in your life to do a certain thing and the Lord will give you continuing peace as you press forward in that direction.

Acts 13:4 in speaking of the first missionary journey mentions that Saul and Barnabas were sent forth by the Holy Spirit. Earlier in the text the Spirit is active in bringing this about. Please read Acts 13:1-4. A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD LEADING AND GUIDING IN THE SENDING OF MISSIONARIES!

(Some Miscellaneous texts: Acts 8:29 mentions that the Spirit told Philip to go; Acts 10:19-20 records the account of Peter being sent to the house of Cornelius; Acts 20:22,23 shows that the Spirit was leading Paul to Jerusalem.)

COMMUNION WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

II Cor. 13:14 states, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." The term communion is of interest to us

especially since it is between the Spirit and ourselves. This is the Greek term koinonia or fellowship. How can the Spirit and the believer have fellowship? Good sermon material for you to develop! At the very least we can know that we can.

FUTURE OF THE SPIRIT

Walvoord has a lengthy discussion of this on pp 227-234. We will only touch on the subject today.

In the Tribulation:

Rev. 7:14 mentions that many will be saved during the Tribulation period. It is assumed that the Spirit will be the agent of regeneration as He has been in the church age. "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they who came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

We are not told that He will indwell the saints as He did in the Church age. We might assume that He will, based on the line of thinking that has been presented in previous lessons. If He did not indwell in the Old Testament, because of the lack of regeneration, but does indwell in the New Testament because regeneration is completed, then we might assume that the Tribulation saint will also be indwelt. All Tribulation saints and new Millennial saints will be regenerated as were the New Testament saints. It is logical that they will be indwelt.

The aspect of the Spirits ministry to the lost world may be missing after the Church age however. His conviction that was mentioned in John (16:7-11) will probably not be in effect. Thessalonians (II Thess. 2:5-12) indicates that His special presence will be removed at the rapture.

The tribulation saints will be martyred from the looks of the book of Revelation so they may die shortly after salvation. If they die then this question may be irrelevant.

There are prophecies of the Spirit being poured out upon the Jews in the end times so the Spirit will be active on earth in some manner. (Joel 2; Zech. 12:10, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.")

The following texts will show that there is an indwelling of some sort in the kingdom age. Whether it is the same indwelling of the church age or not we aren't told.

Millennial Kingdom:

During the Millennial kingdom there will be an indwelling of the Spirit that seems to be a

general indwelling. Ezek. 36:27, "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them." verse 26 also relates.

The Spirit will be upon the Lord during His reign in the kingdom. Isa. 11:2-3, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom, and understanding,...."

We, the Church age believers, will be in heaven during the tribulation and reigning with Christ in the Millennial kingdom. The saints of the Tribulation will probably be with us as well. The Kingdom saints will live throughout the kingdom age, unless they are unnaturally killed. In these cases, we are not told of their determination. Some feel that they will be at the Great White Throne, and others feel that they will be raised at the end of the kingdom.

Since Christ is going to be there on earth, and since we know He has power over death, He may raise them from the dead on the spot. We just are not told.

APPLICATION:

If you hurt - He comforts you.
If you need knowledge of the Word - He gives it.
If you need to know where to go - He leads.
What more do we need?

Some believers need much more. I knew a man that knew that he was living in sin, he knew that the Lord was caring for him, he knew that the Lord wanted him to change his lifestyle, yet, he was confused and didn't know what to do. He knew what to do, he just didn't want to do it. HE NEEDED TO GET OUT OF SIN.

God has perfectly equipped us for something. What? The work of the Lord! He equipped us with a Leader to guide us to our place in the church ministry, a Teacher to help us understand the Word, and a Comforter in case we hit hard times.

We have it all, yet we want more - all that the World system can offer. It doesn't compute. We should be satisfied with His provision! His provision of Himself to draw us, to save us, to indwell us, to comfort us, to teach us, to lead us, etc.

03250

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRY THROUGH THE GIFTS

It is obvious that the gifts have been misused from the beginning. This is seen in the epistle to the Corinthian church. This has been true for most of history. The other extreme is also true. Many have completely sidetracked the gifts due to the fear of being mistaken for the "other

guys." Fundamentalists and Evangelicals have often over reacted to problems others have with the Holy Spirit, by ignoring all aspects of the Spirit.

This is true in almost any area where we want to refrain from identification with problems others have. A current example is the contemporary music. Many want to refrain from the use of the Charismatic inspired choruses and music. Yes, it is good to reject much of this music. Some of it is doctrinally in error. Yes, it is good to reject the music, because in purchasing it you are furthering the propagation of false doctrine. HOWEVER, you need not refrain from all choruses. Many are from an age past, long before the Charismatic movement started into the music business. There is much good music that is being rejected because it looks like the wrong stuff.

Another point might be made at this point. Why are fundamentalists not producing some good music?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DEFINED:

Pache states, "It is a certain qualification given by the Spirit to each individual believer to enable him to serve within the framework of the body of Christ." (Taken from: "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Pache, Rene; Copyright 1954, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 180)

I'm not sure what he means by "a certain qualification". Qualification seems to indicate an attribute or certain thing that the person has, rather than the thought of ability.

Ryrie tells us that "A spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 79) This seems to be the better thought - that of an ability given by the Spirit.

Might we combine the two definitions to bring about the better ideas? A spiritual gift/gifts are special abilities given to the individual by the Holy Spirit, for use within the local church for the building up of the saints.

We cover the gifts themselves in ecclesiology so we will just take a quick look at the gifting of the saints at this point.

A gift is not an office, nor a special supernatural ability to tell others off, nor a geographical location. (Some pastors think that they should be given pastorates only in Southern California and the Pacific Northwest, but never in the Midwest Especially Nebraska and Wyoming, and ESPECIALLY IN THE WINTER.)

A gift is not just any ability that a person may have. Some mention that a good painter has the gift of painting. They may have, but it isn't a spiritual gift. The gifts are listed in the scripture

and they are fewer than many believers believe them to be.

I trust that I won't burst anyone's bubble but there is no gift of writing, nor gift of youth work, nor gift of janitor, nor gift of gab, nor gift of talebearer, nor gift of pastoral critic, nor gift of ..... .

Some suggest a gift is an ability that the Lord has enhanced through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This might be suggested in some cases, such as teaching, however it is certainly not true in all of the gifts. Consider the sign gift tongues. No natural ability was needed prior to the speaking in tongues. Indeed, there is no real indication that any natural ability is involved in the gifts. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ABILITY which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen." I Pet. 4:11 This would indicate the ability is given. They are not natural abilities or they wouldn't be gifts.

Walvoord goes one step further, and rightly so, and states that they are not natural abilities enhanced. His thinking is of interest. The old person is of the natural birth as are all natural abilities. The new birth brings with it a new person and new abilities. The spiritual gift is new! "Spiritual gift must not be regarded, then, as an enlargement of natural powers, but a supernatural gift bestowed in keeping with the purpose of God in placing that individual in the body of Christ." (Walvoord, John F., A.M., Th.D.; "THE HOLY SPIRIT"; Grand Rapids: Dunham Publishing Co.; 1958, p 167)

He mentions earlier that the gift is bestowed at the point of the baptizing of the believer into the body of Christ. However, this idea of giving at the baptism contradicts the seeking of the better gifts that Paul mentions. (I Cor. 14:12; 12:31)

As to time - I'm not sure at this point when they are given. There is indication to me that gifting is a result of a person's walk with God. If God wants a person to become a pastor teacher, and the person goes into training, then the gift would be given. However, if the person did not follow God's call there would be no need for the gift to be given.

The gift may go with an office or position yet not necessarily. The gift of pastor teacher is one that normally goes with being a pastor yet the gift would work well in ministries like Rescue Missions and in some cases where the person is shepherding a group of people that are not necessarily a church.

The gift of teacher does not have to be at Most Important Seminary, but it may be teaching in a Sunday School class, a rescue mission, a Bible study, or in the pulpit. The gift of pastor teacher requires both the shepherding and teaching. Teaching can go on in any geographical location. (There is a section in ecclesiology on the gift of Pastor Teacher - topic D06800.)

The Spirit gives the gifts both sovereignly and specifically. I Cor. 12:8-11, "For to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To

another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, various kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the very same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

As He wills, shows the sovereign action of the Spirit, and the multiple types of gifts are listed thus showing that they were specific gifts.

It would be interesting to know if there is any basis upon which the gifts are given other than by The Spirit's sovereign choice. Does He know that a person will enjoy that gift as well as using it? Does He know that a person will use that gift effectively?

Every believer has at least one gift, but may have more than one, while not necessarily having all of the gifts. (I Cor. 12:7; I Cor. 12:11) I have known several people that have two or three gifts but very seldom are more than three evident at a time.

It is not uncommon for a gift to surface after several years of ministry.

I have felt for many years that my main gift was teaching while I have other gifts that are not of the public nature. In recent days I am beginning to see the gift of administration coming to the forefront. Not only do I find that I function well in areas of administration, but I also enjoy that sort of work.

I Pet. 4:10 mentions, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The clear message here is that the gifts are for the help of others, rather than for the one gifted. The gifts are for the edification of the church (Eph. 4:11ff)

There were some gifts that seem to have been for the beginning of the church. Heb. 2:3,4, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?"

The fact that Paul at one time in Acts was healing people with cloths that he had touched and then later could not heal himself and a couple of others would indicate that the gift of healing had passed away in Paul's own life time.

The text which many use to show that the gift of tongues and prophecy have passed away is I Cor. 13:8-13. Some say that it proves that they passed away and others disagree. There is no proof acceptable to the Charismatic to show that the gifts have passed away, be it I Corinthians, any other text, or even logic.

This text mentions when the perfect is come then the sign gifts will pass away. The charismatic will say that the perfect is referring to Christ and His return so the gifts are still here. The non-Charismatic feels that the Perfect is the Canon of Scripture, or the completion of Revelation.

It will be interesting to see if the kingdom theology people don't shift the "perfect" into being the kingdom restored.

The list of gifts is found in three different locations. Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:8-10; Eph. 4:11. The list includes "apostleship, prophecy, miracles, healing, tongues, evangelism, pastoring, ministering or helps, teaching, faith, exhortation, discerning spirits, knowledge, showing mercy, giving, administration." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 81. There are also some listings of the gifts in different arrangements in ecclesiology - topic D06750)

There is a verse which tells us to covet the better gifts so we must assume that our desire must have something to do with the Spirit's distribution of gifts. ("But covet earnestly the best gifts;...." I Cor. 12:31) It would also indicate that they are given at different times. You may have some of the lesser gifts, but you can seek after the better gifts and evidently receive if it be the Spirit's will. (I Cor. 14:1, 39 both show that prophecy in Paul's day is one of the gifts to be desired. The term desire in 14:1 is the same Greek word that is used in 12:31 and 14:39. I Cor. 12:28 indicates that there are levels of gifts as well.)

There are some authors that see the Eph. 4:11 passage as a presentation of gifted men rather than gifts. This is true in a sense. They are men, yet they have the specific spiritual gift that is mentioned. The Spirit gave the gifts to the men and then lead them to minister in the particular church. If I am a pastor teacher, pastoring in Cheyenne, WY, I am in a sense a gift to that assembly of believers, however I am nothing special, because He could have lead many men with the proper gifts to minister to that assembly. The gift is what is given to the assembly not the person. It is the gift that is of importance, rather than the gifted.

Some hold to what they call a primary, secondary gift possibility. For example your primary or main gift may be the gift of teaching. You may have other gifts that are manifest and used at other times but are not as well used as the teaching. You may have the gift of helps along with teaching. These often seem to go together.

Is it wrong to not use your gift if you know what it is? Since all gifts are given to build up the church, and you are a part of that church, then if you are able to use your gift and have opportunity to do so, but refuse, then it would be wrong. You would be limiting the overall effectiveness of the assembly.

Does every congregation have all of the gifts present? No, for at times some congregations are without pastors. (Unless there is a non-practicing pastor-teacher present.)

If you look at the finances of the churches you may wonder where the gifted people are that have the gift of giving.

Does the individual congregation have all of the gifts present that are required to run the church adequately? There is no verse for this, but it seems logical that if the Lord has raised up the church to do His work that He would supply all the gifted people needed for that job. This is not to say that some non-functioning, or non-attending believers wouldn't short the local congregation at times. If I as a teacher was the only teacher a church had then, if I decided to take a month or two off during the summer - I would be wrong and they might well be less effective than the Lord desires for a time.

Are all of the gifts present and functioning at all times during the church age? No. There were some gifts that were foundational and used to bring the church into existence. (Eph. 2:19-22 mentions that the apostles and prophets were foundational to the church.) There is no indication that there are any apostles left. If there are, they should be on Social Security by now. They would be almost two thousand years old.

I might mention that some in Fundamental/Evangelical circles feel that the gift of prophecy has become the gift of preaching.

Were the Old Testament saints gifted? As such, no. The times when they were given special abilities may have been similar to the gifting of the New Testament, but there was no indwelling Spirit, and no indication that there was a gifting of all believers.

Can a gifted person that is not filled by the Spirit use his spiritual gift? I don't think that the Scripture tells us anything about this. I would assume so. The effects of the judgment by fire upon anything that arose out of that ministry might be questionable. The effectiveness of the gift might also be in question. The Spirit may well limit the effect when He is not in control.

Will the gift be used as effectively as it could be if it is used when you are not filled with the Spirit? I would assume not. Example: If you had a gift of giving and you were not attending on a regular basis and your giving was on the slide. You are still giving but not as much as you could.

Can you have a gift and not use it to the fullest? Yes. You may use it a little or a lot. The emphasis should be on the lot however, so that you are as big a benefit to the church as possible.

APPLICATION:

1. The emphasis is not to be on "Which one do I have?", but on the use of the one I have.

2. The emphasis is not to be on which one do I have, but on what can I do to find out what I can do.

3. Every Christian has a gift. This demands an answer to the believer that comes to church and sits doing nothing.

True, the gifts can function outside the church, however there should be some fruit from that ministry without, which benefits the within of the church. The gifts are for the benefit of the church not the outside world.

If a person does nothing outside the church and does nothing inside the church, then there is error. It may be his, in that he does nothing, or it may be the churches, in that they do not allow him to exercise his gift.

4. Since the gifts are for the betterment of the church it would seem that the pastor of a given church would be encouraging his members to find out what their gift is and to begin to practice it. This would indicate the need of seminars on gifts now and then, especially for relatively new believers.

5. Since some may have more than one gift you might encourage that person with helps to scratch around and see if he might also have the gift of teaching.

6. If you are short of a teacher, might it not be a proper time to mention that the Lord normally supplies each church with enough of each gift to maintain the church and encourage the folks to see if they aren't the one that is gifted. If nothing comes up from this then you should begin to pray for a new member with that gift, or reevaluate your need of a teacher.

I have seen times in churches when teachers would move away and within days a new family would begin to come and guess what - yes, a new teacher.

7. Now, if you know that you are the person to fill the teaching position, that is great and you can be overjoyed about it, but don't you ever feel that you are God's gift to that church! It is your gift that is God's gift to the church and NOT you!

03300

THE HOLY SPIRIT, AN HISTORICAL VIEW

When I was a new Christian I was sitting in a preaching service when a pastor mentioned that he didn't think that the "outer darkness" of the New Testament was the eternal state, or hell.

Based on that comment, I was off and running on a study of my own to find out what "outer darkness" meant. As I studied, I set down some very correct observations of the term. I finally formed a thinking that this was an intermediate place between heaven and hell where the not so

good, but not so bad people went. It wasn't hell for they were pretty nice people, but it wasn't heaven because they weren't that nice.

I mentioned this to a pastor a year or so later and he went off the deep end, telling me that I was teaching Catholicism and purgatory. I wasn't sure what purgatory was much less the other big word he used.

I finally mentioned all that had gone on to an older layman that took time to look into the word and explain to me that the Gospels were given to the Jewish people and that my interpretation was probably incorrect.

Now, if I had lived in the AD 300-400 days I would have been called to a council and condemned a heretic by the pastor. I made my mistake in trying to interpret the texts, out of the context of the entire Bible, and what God is doing in different times. I did not want to go into an area of false doctrine, I just stumbled in because I had no training in how to study the Word.

In the early church even the theologians were untrained in the finer points of interpretation, indeed, interpretation came along later in time as well. (the principles and theories of.)

We want to look briefly at the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We will not go into the liberal or Neoorthodox positions. (Walvoord has a section on Liberal and Neoorthodox views of the Holy Spirit. pp 253ff. He also lists a group of books that deal with this topic in detail in note one on p 237.)

EARLY CHURCH:

The early church carried through with a belief in the Holy Spirit by their use of the name in relation to the baptismal formula however there wasn't a Theology 101 on Pneumatology in the Bible College of Ephesus. The doctrine of the Spirit came about slowly. Probably the reason for this was that there were other doctrines that were coming under fire. The deity of Christ was a major problem that had to be dealt with.

Many of the early converts probably had a knowledge of the Old Testament and they would have known a little, if not a lot of information about God the Father. They had known much of the Lord Jesus through the Gospels and the things that they had heard. The Holy Spirit would have been a natural topic not to come up for awhile.

I'll be quite honest, as I have taught through Theology there are many areas of study that we haven't been able to touch on, in all the generations since the Lord was here. I'm sure pastors and teachers have studied in some of these areas, but their work has never been placed into print for others to read and interact with.

Each time I state that something would make a good research paper, I'm saying that I have yet to

see info on the subject and haven't had time to get into it myself.

A side note for free: I think it is very sad that anyone can write a self help book and get it published, even if it isn't a proven principle, and yet we have many men of God out there researching in areas that we haven't even discussed and they can't get it into print. This work on theology went to publishers, and the reason for rejection at one publisher was that they could not make a proper profit on such a project. PROFIT is the motivator for most publishers today, not Spreading the Word and information concerning It.

THE CHURCH FATHERS:

Some of the early witnesses to the Spirit are found in the writings of the Fathers.

This information comes from Walvoord. (Walvoord, John F., A.M., Th.D.; "THE HOLY SPIRIT;" Grand Rapids: Dunham Publishing Co.; 1958, pp 238-239)

"The personality and distinct office of the Holy Spirit are clearly set forth in Ignatius."

"Have we not one God, and one Christ, and one Spirit of Grace that was shed for us?" Clement, (c. 100) (Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, ch 46, v.6.)

"Justin Martyr, according to Smeaton, 'is an emphatic witness to the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit."

Walvoord quotes Fisher stating that Irenaeus held to the deity and eternality of the Spirit even though he felt there was a subordination to the Son as there was of the Son to the Father. Fisher also mentions that Clement of Alexandria (150-c. 215) speaks of the Spirit, Father, and the Son as the "Holy Triad".

H.B. Swete in "THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH" tells that the Spirit was active and evident in the church life and individual lives long before it was dogma to the church.

"THE SHEPHERD" was written by Hermas the brother of the Bishop of Rome, Bishop Pius. (Bettenson, Henry; "DOCUMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH"; New York: Oxford University Press, p 41; used by permission of Oxford University Press) This was written in the area of 150 AD and is full of symbols. Some liken it to the Revelation. In it Hermas mentions, "And when I had walked a little, I fell asleep. And the spirit caught me away, and carried me through a certain place..." (Visions I vs. 3) In vs. 20 he mentions a servant of God having the approval of the "Spirit". Little can be learned of the doctrine of the Spirit from this source, but he is mentioned.

The rise of the doctrine of the Spirit came around 170 AD from the followers of Montanus. He and two women named Prisca and Maximilla declared the age of the Paraclete and with it new

revelations from God. They held to a very high moral standard which drew men like Tertullian to the movement. They were called the Montanists.

They were moving away from a formal church to a Spirit type of church life, but their insistence on new revelation brought them ultimate rejection. Even with this, the doctrine of the Spirit was not formulated to any great degree.

Sabellianism (AD 215) presented the thought that God was one God and that He presented Himself in three modes. This gave some definition to the trinity and the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost even though it was error. This was the first major error that was set forth concerning the Spirit.

Arius (325 AD) a presbyter of Alexandria picked up on the heresy of Monarchianism which held to one God in three modes, but that the Father was crucified.

Arius held that God was first and that He generated the Son and then the Son created the Spirit because the Word told him that the Son created all things.

The Council of Nicaea was set to settle the dispute over the trinity. Athanasius was the one that had been opposing Arius. The Council of Nicaea made the following statement concerning the Trinity: "We believe in one God, the Father All-sovereign, the maker of all things visible and invisible;

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, Son only-begotten, First born of all creation, begotten of the Father before all the ages, through whom also all things were make; who was made flesh for our salvation and lived among men, and suffered, and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the Father, and shall come again in glory to judge the living and dead;

"We believe also in one Holy Spirit." (Bettenson, Henry; "DOCUMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH"; New York: Oxford University Press, p 35; used by permission of Oxford University Press)

We still see no real statement of the doctrine of the Spirit.

The council of Nicaea did not declare the Spirit to be God but implied such by linking the Holy Spirit to such a statement about the Father and the Son.

The Council of Nicaea was a minority of the church leaders and when 90 bishops later gathered to dedicate a Church they issued "THE DEDICATION CREED, 341 which is more specific about the Spirit. They were also more lengthy on Christ.

"In accordance with the tradition of the Gospel and of the Apostles we believe in one God,

Father...."

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ his son,...."

"And in the Holy Spirit, who is given to them that believe for comfort, hallowing and perfecting, as also our Lord Jesus Christ commissioned his disciples, saying, 'Go ye forth and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'; namely, of a Father who is truly Father, a Son who is truly Son and a Holy Spirit who is truly Holy Spirit, the titles not being given in a vague or meaningless way but accurately denoting the particular existence [or personality] and rank and glory of each that is so named, so that they are three in existence [personality] but one in agreement." (Bettenson, Henry; "DOCUMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH"; New York: Oxford University Press, pp 58-59; used by permission of Oxford University Press)

The creed of Constantinople in 381 AD mentions the deity of the Holy Spirit. The cause of this creed speaking to the subject is that there were some followers of a man by the name of Macedonius that began to detract from the deity of the Spirit. His followers held that the Spirit was a creature under the control of the Son. They were called Macedonians or Pneumatomachians or "evil speakers against the Spirit". (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 71)

The statement was as follows: "And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-giving, who proceeds from the Father, who is to be glorified with the Father and the Son, and who speaks through the prophets."

Augustine (354-430) Wrote the DeTrinitate a work on the Spirit. He presented the Spirit as God very clearly.

The Council of Chalcedon in 451 confirmed the work of Nicaea and Constantinople.

The Synod of Toledo in 589 after studying the topic added the phrase, "and the Son" after the Father in the creed of Nicaea and Constantinople. This was to show that the Father and the Son were one and that the Spirit proceeded from both. The Eastern church rejected this change and continues with just the "father" in the statement. (An earlier Council of Toledo in 447 AD used this phrase but the 589 session evidently made it official. The statement was called the FILIOQUE CLAUSE. Fili has to do with "son".) This meeting was to determine if the Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son or only the Father.

Ryrie has a quote that is of interest. "The deity of the Son was settled at the Council of Nicaea; the deity of the Spirit at Constantinople; and the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son at the Synod of Toledo. The presence of heresy had forced the church to settle these great doctrinal matters." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY";

Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, pp 386-87)

From this point on, the main thought of comment is on the personality and deity of the Spirit. Little concerning his work appears until the reformation, when Augustine's writings became a basis of interest. During the reformation there was an emphasis on the work of the Spirit in regeneration. The reformers also laid emphasis on the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit to counter the idea that the priest was the only one that could explain the Bible.

RECENT FINDINGS:

A man by the name of John Owen (1616-1683) wrote a book DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT and it is still held as a classic work on the Spirit. He was a puritan. (The Holy Spirit, His Works and His Power are listed by the same author in a 1954 Kregel release and may be the same one. Ryrie mentions it in his Bibliography in the Holy Spirit book and mentions that Kuyper held it very highly.)

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) also wrote a work on the Spirit.

The Plymouth Brethren (1825) were very instrumental in the understanding of the baptizing work of the Spirit as well as His illumination of the believer.

Neoorthodoxy (which rose out of liberalism) sees the Spirit as only an operation of God and not a person of the Godhead. (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 389)

Neoliberalism is the old liberalism that takes sin a bit more seriously to paraphrase Ryrie, also teaches that the Spirit is only an operation of God. They reject both the deity of Christ and the Spirit.

Pentecostalism has probably done more to harm the doctrine of the Spirit in some ways. They have perverted it greatly, yet out of the false doctrine has come the need to refute it and the doctrine of the Spirit has been more closely defined in recent years.

APPLICATION:

1. The heresy that you may face in your future ministries will feel like the roof is caving in on you, yet you will rise to the occasion as did the fathers, and Scripturally refute all comers! Do not fear false doctrine. The falsehood of the early days did not stop God's program.

If, and we believe we do, hold the truth, the very Word of God, then we have the answers that we need to refute false doctrine no matter when or where it comes. We have only to go into the Word and find those answers.

Might we draw some simple application. Some say the Gospel is the important thing, so we don't need to major on minors. This is true to a point yet proper doctrine is called for in Scripture. We might wonder, however if some of us don't get tied up in the detail of the doctrine and fail to live it? Indeed, might we get so tied up in the detail of doctrine that we forget to reproduce spiritually as the Lord has commanded us?

2. We need to watch for new falsehood and counter it as soon as possible. Now, mark my words, I am not advocating denominations, yet there is something to say of the councils of the past. They united many, many churches in many doctrines over the early years.

I tend to wonder if the proliferation of so many types of church government and styles of churches and doctrines aren't from the fact that the church has no standard to go by. Many churches assume what pastor tells them is right. It may or may not be!

I think there is some benefit in this area to the fellowships that have sprung up in recent years that allow the churches to be autonomous, and yet have a group of believers and churches to fellowship with, as well as discuss beliefs.

There may be a bit of dampening to the progress of error in these fellowships, such as General Association of Regular Baptists, Independent Fundamental Churches of America etc.

3. Don't be afraid to go against the tide if you are convinced that what you believe is correctly based on the Word. You need to seek out the advice of church fathers, commentaries etc. Yet, if you feel the church is in error you need to go forward. Write an article, discuss it with other pastors or past classmates.

There have been some like Athanasius that have had to stand against some strong tide and let the waves buffet them for the truth of Scripture.

Beware, however that you aren't on a wrong wavelength! Don't jump in with both feet. Take time and pray and consider long and hard. You may have missed finding that one verse that will blow you out of the water.

4. There may be a time when you will have to make a decision concerning a group with which you work. You may see changes being made that are not in keeping with the Word. When you have prayerfully considered things before the Lord, and you have made a good study of the Word, if you continue to feel the group is in error and it is an error that you do not desire to be associated with, then you must take steps to separate yourself from the group. This may well be a very hard thing to do.

A pastor in a certain group of churches lead me to the Lord many years ago. I was forced to not attend one of those churches recently due to the doctrinal error that I was hearing from their constitution and teachers.

When some of the Baptist conventions went liberal there were many good men that disagreed with the new doctrines. Some of them formed and/or joined other groups of pastors of like faith.

Others, usually the older men, had invested their lives in the conventions and they thought they could turn them around. Since their churches, parsonages, and retirement funds were controlled by the conventions, they stayed to do what they could. (Which turned out to be very little.)

This item of application grows out of my needing to take a stand at different times of my life. I have changed colleges of attendance, and left institutions that I felt were moving away from what was Biblical. It was not easy, but I felt that it was needed.

5. There is one further point to be made. Just because you disagree with something that you are introduced to, don't automatically reject it as false doctrine. Take some time to properly understand what this new point is and then go to the Word to see if there is any validity. If the new point or teaching is based on scripture, look it over and compare it to other Scripture and see if it be true. Just because it is new, many in our day reject it - just because we've never believed that way before.

6. Write and hopefully some day the publishers will begin to publish some of your information.

7. The fathers and the creeds are not inspired, yet they can give us some good information if we take time to read them and consider them.

8. You are the future's history and theology writers. Get busy! You may feel that you have nothing to contribute, but you may well develop a line of thinking that has never been studied before. Example: I have been thinking and studying the thought of where the garden of Eden was, and I have amassed a lot of information. Some day as I continue, I may submit it somewhere for scholars to consider. Indeed, as I present it to classes I am given new ideas and references that may well relate. I take these and work with them and develop my thinking. I am at the point in my study that I feel that I can almost state that I know where the Garden of Eden was located. (You might find this an interesting study. It is located in topic D04350)

WRITE IT - YOU'LL LIKE IT!

03350

THE HOLY SPIRIT OFFENDED

There are a number of ways that man can go against the Holy Spirit. Evans follows the outline given below. I would like to follow this format in this section. ("THE GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE")

OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT BY THE SINNER
RESISTING
INSULTING
BLASPHEMING
BY THE BELIEVER
GRIEVING
LYING TO
QUENCHING

SINS AGAINST THE SPIRIT COMMITTED BY THE SINNER

RESISTING THE SPIRIT: Resist according to Funk and Wagnall is, ".....to strive against; act counter to." ("FUNK AND Wagnalls STANDARD DESK DICTIONARY"; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Inc., 1977)

Stephen in his sermon told his listeners that they were resisting the Holy Spirit as did their fathers (Acts 7:51).

The context mentions the fathers: They persecuted the prophets, they killed the prophets, they betrayed and murdered Christ, and they received the law but didn't keep it (vs. 52,53). They even rejected Stephen's teaching and killed him (vs. 54-60).

The term used here is Strong's number 496 and is the Greek word "antipipto". This is the only usage of the word in the New Testament. Young's concordance tells us it means, "to fall over against". Vine mentions, "to fall against or upon". (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Vincent mentions that it is used in classical Greek of someone falling upon an enemy in war. (Vincent, M.R.; "WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT"; Mac Dill AFB, Florida, MacDonald Publishing)

In the context it would be the rejection of the message: In what Stephen said, the rejection of the fathers was not listening to the message of the prophets, and the rejection of the listener was the rejection of the message of Stephen.

When used of the Spirit then it is the rejection of God's message as delivered via the Holy Spirit. The rejection of the Gospel would be RESISTING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

In the outworking of our doctrine it would be the rejection of common grace as delivered by the Spirit. The grace extended to these men and their fathers was quite specific.

Can the believer resist the Holy Spirit? In the context of Stephen we were speaking of non-believers, yet there is a distinct possibility of the concept of rejecting the Word of God in the

believers life as well. The believer does not reject what the Word tells of salvation, indeed, if the person is a believer they have accepted that Word. The problem comes when we speak of the person receiving the Word in other areas of life and the person not listening or in essence rejecting the Word.

Example: When teaching I saw students that were in rebellion against the school, but were really rebelling against the Lord. These people could hear lessons and messages that directly applied to them, yet they would not change their actions. This to me is resisting the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires to do all that He can in each life, but when the life is unresponsive then the Holy Spirit is resisted.

INSULTING THE SPIRIT: To insult is, ".....to treat with insolence or contempt; disparage; abuse; affront....." according to Funk and wagnalls.

Heb. 10:29 uses the word, "enubrizo" the only time that it is used in the Scripture. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of god, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (despite is the term under consideration. It is Strong's number 1796: ".....to treat insultingly....." according to Vine.)

Newell in his commentary on Hebrews mentions that this term is an intensified version of a term that is used in Luke 18:32. "for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully treated, and spit on;" (spitefully is the term mentioned.)

The Hebrews text seems to have to do with contempt for and abuse of Christ's work and shed blood. Newell mentions that the people in Hebrews were knowledgeable of things, but unregenerate and had rejected the Spirit's work, and that work to them had diminished in importance till they counted the Spirit as not present. (Taken from: "HEBREWS VERSE BY VERSE"; Newell, William R.; Copyright 1947, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.) (This is drawn from the fact that "unholy thing" can be translated "common thing." Scofield mentions this also in his side note. They have counted the blood of Christ a common thing - they have ignored the Spirit's application of this truth.)

Have you ever been talking to someone and have them walk away in mid-sentence? Have you met someone eyeball to eyeball - said hello and have them totally ignore you? We would be insulted and this is in essence what these people were doing. They were viewing the Spirit as insignificant. They were looking the Spirit in the eye, eyeball to eyeball, and walking away.

BLASPHEMING THE SPIRIT: Funk and Wagnalls says of blaspheming, ".....to speak in an impious manner of (god or sacred things). 2. To speak ill of; malign."

Years ago in the Navy we used to play touch football for something to do. One day the officers and enlisted men went to the field to play some football, but the officers noticed that we enlisted

men weren't really being open and serious about going after an officer. One of the officers stopped the game and said, "Now look, we are here to play football and not to stand on military etiquette. You play football just like you would if we were all enlisted men." To which one of the enlisted men said, "Shut up you stupid knotheaded idiot, we want to play football." Now, in military etiquette that would have been insubordination to an officer and punishable. That was speaking in an impious manner!

The term used in scripture is, "blasphemeo" Strong's number 987. Young defines it as ".....to speak injuriously....."

The main usage of this term is in the synoptic gospels. Matt. 12:31; Mk. 3:22-30; Lu. 11:14-21. The other mentions of the word are found as follows: Rom. 2:24 speaking of the name of God being blasphemed; I Tim. 6:1 where not only the name of God, but the doctrine of God is blasphemed; Titus 2:5 mentions the Word of God in relation to blasphemy; Jas. 2:7 speaking of the name of Christ being blasphemed; Rev. 16:11,21 speaking of God of heaven being blasphemed.

The Matthew text mentions that the attributing of miracles to the Devil is the blaspheming. The Pharisees had accused Christ of casting out demons by the power of Satan. "Wherefore, I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, neither in the age to come." (Something for free that is unrelated, this is one of the verses that the Roman Catholics build their doctrine of purgatory on. The age to come is purgatory but all can be forgiven in the age after that, speaking of eternity.)

In vs. 31 we are told that blaspheming of the Spirit won't be forgiven. In vs. 32 we are told that speaking against the Spirit won't be forgiven.

Let us consider some facts from the texts.

Matthew mentions that these are lost men involved. He also mentions that they have rejected the works of the Spirit. They spoke evil of the Spirit's work. Mark tells us that eternal damnation is the result (3:29). Mk. also mentions that ".....all sins shall be forgiven....." except this one.

The rejection of the Work of the Spirit unto Salvation is the only thing that really fits these facts. They are rejecting his revelation to them of God's grace and salvation. The miracles were to validate Christ as the Messiah. This they attributed to Satan.

The question comes up quite often today - Can you blaspheme the Spirit today? Yes, and indeed many do every day as they reject Christ.

Another question comes to mind. Why will God allow his Son, Himself, His name, His Word,

His Son's name and His doctrine to be blasphemed yet not the Spirit? It would seem that He would allow anyone to blaspheme as they wish, just to be sure they have opportunity to be saved. The rejection of the Gospel is that final blaspheme against the Spirit that He cannot overlook or tolerate. It is that fact that when they reject the Spirit's ministry they are rejecting the gospel and thus condemning themselves to eternal torment. They have rejected God's authority over them and the possibility of God's mercy having effect upon them.

The blaspheme comes only when they have rejected the Spirit's ministry ultimately, and finally. This was the case of the Pharisees. They had been rejecting for so long and this was the final blast so to speak.

Be sure that you understand this thought that believers cannot blaspheme the Spirit, and be sure you can communicate it to another believer. You will probably have people come to you fearing that they have committed this unforgivable sin.

We should teach this in our churches. I have had older Christians that were fearful that their sin was the unforgivable one. They do not understand the text and doctrine, so fear out of ignorance.

SINS AGAINST THE SPIRIT COMMITTED BY THE BELIEVER

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT: There were few things in life as a teacher that grieved me more than to have to flunk a student. I'm sure that my students found that one hard to believe, but it is true. When a student doesn't turn in work that he needs to pass a class, it hurts me deeply. Not that they are doing anything to me because they aren't, but that they are wasting all that work and money because they are too lazy to do the work as required.

It also hurts to see God call a student to a school for a purpose and see the student sitting around like a zombie wasting God's time, money and talents. I grieve to a point in this case. It sorrows me greatly.

Funk and Wagnalls states of grieve, "....to cause to feel sorrow or grief." Eph. 4:30 uses the term, "...Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," The term used is "lupio." The context of this statement in Ephesians is in the middle of a list of vile things. Lying, anger, give place to the devil, stealing, corrupt communications, etc. GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT. I suspect from the inclusion of this phrase in this list of sins would indicate that any sin in the believers life is grief to the Spirit.

Grieving the Spirit then is sin. Any sin in the believers life is going to grieve the Spirit.

The first step of grieving is when we take control from Him and impose our own control upon our life. Each additional sin adds to that grief. I Jo. 1:9 is the only remedy for grieving of the Spirit. I Jo. 1:9 assumes that you will attempt to rectify the problem.

One walking in a state of sin will only continue to deepen his sin and assume more and more the appearance and action of an unsaved man. There will be no fruit of the Spirit - no peace of the Spirit - no activity of the Spirit. In other words if you are walking in sin do not assume that you will be comforted, taught or led by the Spirit. YOU WON'T BE!

Unmarried young people. Let this be clear! If you have sin in your life on a continuing basis, don't you dare tell anyone God is LEADING you to get married. To be led you need to be filled. Mark it down in stone if you need to. To be led you need to be filled! I have had teenagers tell me that they have been praying that the Lord would lead them in their relationship. They now believe that the Lord has directed them to be married. This sounds so spiritual and is neat in the cases where the teens are walking with God in a manner in which the Spirit has freedom to lead them.

The problem is that some of these "lead" Christians are openly defying their parents in marriage, or are allowing other sins to continue on in their life. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT LEAD OF THE SPIRIT WHEN THEY ARE IN CONTROL!

LYING TO THE SPIRIT: Funk and Wagnalls states of lying, "The act of telling lies; untruthfulness." A lie is "An untrue statement made with the intent of deceiving; a false impression." (Funk and Wagnalls) One of the classic texts on lying to the Spirit is Acts 5:1-11. Take time to read this passage. (John 8:44 also relates)

The context of Acts 5 tells us that some had sold all their belongings and given all to the church for distribution to the saints. Ananias, with Sapphira sold and gave part of the money. They then told someone that it was all of the money. We aren't told whether they told the apostles, the people or the Lord in prayer. The indications are that they told at least the apostles and possibly the people.

Verse four mentions that their lie was not to men but unto God. "...Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Vs. 9 mentions specifically the Holy Spirit.

The question comes, "If they lied to men how is it a lie to God?" There are a couple of possibilities.

a. They were lying to church leadership - lying to them was the same as lying to the Spirit. YOU THINK ABOUT THAT ONE FOLKS! Have you ever lied to the church leaders? Have you ever told them you didn't have time to do something, just to get out of doing it?

b. In prayers, they may have indicated before men that they had given all. (Verse eight might indicate that this is not the case.)

The first possibility seems the best to me. There are some scriptural passages that might add weight to this thought.

I Thes. 4:6-8, "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit."

Lu. 10:13-16, shows that those that heareth or despise the apostles heareth or despise Christ himself. The next phrase (last part of v. 16) mentions that anyone that despises Christ despises the one that sent Christ.

I Sam. 8:7, "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."

Num. 16:1-11, The people gathered against Moses, but God took it personally. AAAAAWWWWSSSOOMEE!!! The indication is that lying to the Lord's leadership, if not to any believer, is lying to the Lord Himself. If this be true and if we realized this throughout Christianity would we not revolutionize the lifestyle of the average believer?

QUENCHING THE SPIRIT: Funk and Wagnalls defines quench thusly, "To put out or extinguish, as a fire. 2. To put an end to."

The term is "sbennumi." (Strong's 4570) Young defines it as, ".....to quench." (It is used in I Th. 5:19 of the Spirit.)

Hebrews 11:34 mentions the violence of the fire of Shadrach, Mechach, and Abednego being quenched. In this context you might gain the idea that the fire isn't put out, only that the effects of the fire on the person were nullified. Indeed, the fire continued to burn, because others were confronted with the fire and killed (Dan. 3:21-25).

In Eph. 6:16 the term is used with the Armor of God, specifically the shield of faith. It is to be used for the quenching of the fiery darts of Satan. Again fire extinguisher isn't the idea, but nullifying the effect of, would be the idea.

I Thess. 5:19 states simply, "Quench not the Spirit." It should be observed that this is in the midst of simple statements of proper Christian activity which is introduced by the phrase, ".....furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." 4:1

Thayer tells us that it means ".....to suppress, stifle." (Thayer, Joseph Henry, D.D.; "GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p 572)

Walvoord indicates the belief that it means to say no, or not yield to the Spirit.

To compile all of these thoughts we might assume that quenching of the Spirit is either the extinguishing of His ministry to us, or more exactly, the nullifying of His effects upon us. It would seem that if we aren't being controlled by Him that we are, in effect, nullifying His effect upon us. It would also seem that if we are not filled or controlled by the Spirit we are quenching Him.

The conclusion must be that quenching the Spirit is directly related to the control, or no control of the Spirit in the individual life. The cure: Restore Him to control of your life.

God leads - unless you quench Him.
God teaches - unless you quench Him.
God comforts - unless you quench Him.
God fellowships - unless you quench Him.
God prays - unless you quench Him.

MAN! THAT REALLY PUTS THE MONKEY ON OUR BACK! IF GOD ISN'T WORKING IN OUR LIFE WE KNOW WHY! DON'T WE?

If He has led you to give, and you don't - YOU QUENCH!
If He has led you to go, and you wait - YOU QUENCH!
If He has taught, and you don't obey - YOU QUENCH!

APPLICATION:

In conclusion may we consider one more verse?

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16) What a promise to the believer!

This phrase "walk in the Spirit: is a present tense, thus if we continue to walk in the Spirit we WILL NOT FULFILL THE LUST OF THE FLESH. As believers we are told to avoid the walk of the flesh and here we have an iron clad promise and answer as to how to avoid it!

Again, we see that the monkey is on our back. It is a conscious decision of our own, as to how we walk the Christian walk. We have a will that must decide to allow Spirit control on a continued basis. We must decide who is running our life!

Does this give new meaning to that old tried and true text of James 1:13-15? "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringth forth sin...." Vs. 17 is usually left out, but is the stark

contrast to our walking in the flesh in what was just read. James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father...."

We reject all that is good, for all that is bad, when we assume control of our lives and tell the Spirit to go back into his corner!

Think on these things, to quote a famous author! Think on these things!

03400

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S EMPOWERMENT OF THE BELIEVER

"And, behold, I send the promise of my father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Lu. 24:49

The term relates usually to the putting on of clothing or garments. Thus, it would relate to the putting on of power in some way. (endued is Strong's 1746, "enduo") The term is used of putting on armor in Eph. 6:11; of putting on royal apparel in Acts 12:21; and John the Baptist being clothed with camels hair in Mr.1:6.

Paul in Rom. 13:12, 14 mentions that we are to put on the armor of light and the Lord Jesus Christ. This may relate to the idea of the armor of Eph. 6 and the warfare that we are in at the present time.

Acts 1:8 uses the term as well. "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me...."

It would seem that this is something we do, or that we can control. It seems to me that this is a result of the Spirit controlling us and working through us. If this is true then as we are filled we have this power available to us.

The promise of Lu 24:49 is for the disciples and they received that power on the day of pentecost. As a sidelight, let's look at a question for a moment. What happened on the Day of Pentecost? We all know that the Holy Spirit came upon the people in the upper room after the sound of a wind, and there appeared tongues of fire over their heads. So what? What happened?

Were they empowered? Yes, Acts 1:8; Lu 24:49

Were they indwelt? Since they hadn't been, and since they were promised indwelling it would seem that yes, they were.

Were they filled? Yes, they were controlled and the gifts were operative.

Were they sealed? Since they were indwelt and this is the seal, yes they were sealed.

Believers after the book of Acts experienced the indwelling and sealing at salvation and the filling and empowerment as they were controlled by the Spirit. Filling and empowerment come as the believer allows the Spirit to control them.

FACTS CONCERNING POWER:

The power is from God. The power is for the propagation of the Gospel. The power is secondary to the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

The term is quite descriptive. It is Strong's 1411 and is the Greek word dunamis, which we gain our current word dynamite from. It is translated a number of ways. Wonderful works Mat. 7:22; mighty works Mat. 11:20; power of God Mat. 22:29; power Mat. 22:30; ability Mat. 25:15; virtue Mr. 5:30; miracle Mr. 9:39; miracles Acts 2:22; power Acts 4:33; miracles Acts 19:11, I Cor. 12:10, 28; power Ro. 1:20; principalities nor POWERS Rom. 8:38; etc.

I Cor. 2:3-5 uses the term in stark contrast to our own power. "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." We must learn that we have no power in and of our own. We must learn that the power that is available to us is from God. WHAT A KICK IN THE PRIDE!

And what might we assume that this power is for? Since we have this power for evangelism and the furtherance of the Gospel, then we need not expect to see this power at any other time in life. In short when you go out to buy a car, don't wait for the power to dicker to come upon you cuz it won't.

When might we expect the empowerment? When witnessing, when teaching/preaching, and when writing if the communication of the information is to further the Gospel, or any time preceding and leading up to any of the above.

Epp asks a question, then answers it for us. "We have the assurance that the Spirit is given to comfort us. Why does He teach us? Why does He guide us? Why does He set us apart for Himself? Why does He provide power? For our personal joy and satisfaction? Not primarily. There is satisfaction and joy in receiving these things from the Spirit of God, but these are only a means to an end. The primary goal is something higher and better. It is all to make us better witnesses for Christ." (Epp, Theodore H.; "THE OTHER COMFORTER"; Lincoln: Back to the Bible Broadcast, 1966, p 249)

In all that Mr. Epp mentions, I think there may be far more than even he indicates. I think that we need to think back over our study of the Spirit and consider some of the things that we have learned.

True the power in Acts 1:8 is for witness however from a brief look at the term power there are other items of business that the Spirit is into with the term power. He indwells us and offers many ministries to us that are in essence an empowerment.

1. GRACE: What benefit do we derive from grace which involves the Spirit? SALVATION - that takes power.

2. CONVICTION: We as believers are convicted of the sin in our lives and as such are brought forth to be holy people prepared for a purpose. His conviction is powerful at times!

3. INDWELLING: We are indwelt by God Himself and all that implies. Personal protection from all foes! As we look at the Devil and demons we will see this protection takes power!

4. FILLING: We can be controlled by the Spirit and produce in our lives the fruit of the Spirit and maintain holy and pure lives. Knowing man's nature, I think that we can safely say that takes power.

5. SEALING: We can be ever sure of our salvation and ever sure that He will one day finish the redemptive work that He has begun in us. We can also know that there is nothing that can keep these things from happening.

6. COMFORT: We saw that He comforts us so that we might comfort others that are in the same infirmities. Many can speak from experience and state that to properly comfort someone else, there is a cost to the comforter. They become involved and begin to share in the hurt. Power to commit one's self to this is needed. The Spirit, voluntarily placed Himself in the hurt of the believer.

7. TEACHING: He is teaching us through the Word so that we can know the Lord's will and what direction our lives should take in reference to Him and His holiness.

8. COMMUNION: We can have fellowship with Him that is as close as any fellowship that we can find with man, indeed it should be closer, in that His side of our fellowship will be of a perfect nature.

9. PRAYING: He is interceding in our prayers for us with the Father so that all that is requested will be within the Lord's will.

10. GIFTING: He has gifted some to train us to do the work of the Lord. Not only evangelism but all work of the Lord. II Tim. 2:2 tells us that we are to be teaching faithful men so that they

can teach faithful men. Etc.

11. LEADING: He is leading us into different types of work and ministry so that we can minister to the lost as a witness, and to minister to the saved as a part of the body of Christ.

12. BAPTISM: He has baptized us into the body of Christ so that we are a part of a large organism that is dependant upon each and every member. We have value to the body even though we may have the smallest of jobs to perform.

In all of these areas, we can see the power of the Holy Spirit. To what conclusion have we come?

We are being ministered to by the Spirit so that we can minister the Gospel to the lost and minister in a number of ways to the saved. We are to be trained within the local church to do that job and the Holy Spirit gives a large portion of that training, not only directly but indirectly through teachers and ministers.

All this is backed up by the power of the Holy Spirit as it is manifested to the lost and to the body of Christ through Spirit controlled individuals!

AS WE USED TO SAY IN THE NAVY - STICK THAT IN YOUR PIPE AND SMOKE IT! SINCE THAT PHRASE ISN'T FITTING FOR OUR SETTING, MAY I SUGGEST THAT YOU STICK THAT IN YOUR MIND AND MEDITATE UPON IT!

SO WHAT? There are 2.5 billion lost people in the world, the majority of present missionary workers are coming home, and others that are ready to go to the field can't raise support.

So where is the POWER of the Spirit?

We see little evidence of His power in the church today. Part of the reason may be found in the following.

In people: People are not being filled - people are not in the business of furthering the Gospel.

In churches: There are no missions programs. The churches are filled with people that are not interested in missions.

In mission agencies: They are wrapped up in mechanics and organizationalism.

In missionaries: Materialism/meism/strategies/programs

"LIGHTING CENTRAL FIRES"

"Dr. E. Stanley Jones said: 'Whenever we have been troubled in conscience about our spiritual impotence we have added a new wheel, a new commission or a new committee, a new plan or program, and in the end we have discovered that we have added one more wheel, but with little or no power to run either the old or the new. we are busy turning old and new wheels with hand power instead of lighting central fires.'

"If those early disciples had not received the gift of the Holy Spirit they would have scattered and their cause would have come to naught. They had the gospel but they lacked that impelling power that sends all of us out as living witnesses of that which we have seen and felt. Prior to the Day of Pentecost they were timid and fearful, now they were courageous and willing to die for Jesus if need be. On the Day of Pentecost they learned nothing new about Jesus but they received a divine unction which completely transformed them. They were different afterward and the world has never been the same since the Day of Pentecost. It is very interesting to observe what took place on the Day of Pentecost, but it is far more interesting to observe all that has taken place through the lives of spirit-filled men since that great day." A. R. Clippinger (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949)

You have read this information concerning the Spirit and His relationship to you. What are you going to do? Are you going to move forward in your life? Are you going to leave control up to Him?

The knowledge you have places you in a position of needing to respond one way or another. I trust that this study will bring some into that precious, close, walk with the Lord that so many desire, and that so many reject.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS, NOT HIS. HIS CHOICE IS TO WALK WITH YOU. WHAT IS YOUR CHOICE?

ANGELOLOGY

03450

THE DEVIL

A BIOGRAPHICAL OF THE DIABOLICAL

To properly know him, and to properly know about him we must know where he came from. It would seem from all indications that he was an angel that had higher aspirations. He took a big step and fell flat on his face. (Lu. 10:18, "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.") We are not told that he is not an angel, so we must assume that he is of that class of being. There are other indications, such as the fact that he was a part of the heavenly throne scene, which is controlled by the angelic host. He was booted out of his heavenly abode and he

has been very upset since.

His name was Lucifer in the beginning.

To begin with we need to know something about angels themselves to know about the devil.

1. Angels are created beings: Ps. 148:2-5 Verse 5 mentions of angels and the heavens, "...for he commanded, and they were created." As created beings they are not to be worshiped and John mentions this quite clearly in the book of Revelation.

They are close to us, in that God created them for His purposes, as we. Part of their ministry is to us also. This would show a close relationship, even though we have no knowledge of their presence around us.

2. Angels are everlasting but not eternal: Lu. 20:36 mentions that the angels never die which indicates their everlasting nature. The fact that they were created, shows that they were not in eternity past, thus not eternal. It is good that the Lord defeated the Devil or he would continue as he is for eternity future.

3. Angels are spirit beings: Heb. 1:13,14 tells us that they are ministering "spirits," yet they do seem to appear as humans at times. That is a point to contemplate some time. Just how do they minister, just how do they function as spirit beings in a physical world. We will touch upon some of these things later.

4. Angels are powerful: II Thes. 1:7 Christ will appear with "mighty angels". The term translated mighty is the term from which we gain the term dynamite. They are shown in Daniel as warring with others, which also demonstrates their might. II Pet. 2:11 tells that some have "power and might". See also Ps. 103:20 which speaks of their strength.

AS WE CONTINUE ALONG REMEMBER THAT SATAN HAS THESE QUALITIES AS WELL AS THE ANGELS, SO YOU AREN'T DEALING WITH A PUSHOVER! He and His, are mighty and powerful.

5. Angels are wise: II Sam. 14:20, "...and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God...." The Devil also is wise in his work! He can make sin look like ice cream.

Although the Devil is an angel, he is referred to as a person, and he has personality. Let us look specifically at his characteristics and consider his personality.

1. His personality is seen by the pronouns used. Many personal pronouns are used in describing the Devil. (Isa. 14:16 "thee"; Job 1:8 "thou"; Job 2:1,2 "himself" & "thou"; Zech. 3:2 "thee"; Mat. 12:26 "he"; Lu. 11:18 "his")

2. His personality is seen by his attributes.

a. He has intelligence: II Cor. 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices." We see here that we can know some of his tools so that we can prepare. Since we can know his tools, and know how to counter him, WHY DON'T WE? Eph. 6:11 - We are told to put on the armor of God so that we can stand against his wiles. This is a command and not something that is optional. We are to be confronting the Devil, not giving in to his every whim. He is a deceiver as well as intelligent. Rev. 12:9 "...Satan, who deceiveth the whole world...."

You can mark your minds that he will be visiting you through every tool that he can muster up. He will try to sneak up on you when you least expect it. He will attempt to damage, delay, hinder, or stop your ministry.

b. He has memory: Matt. 4:6 When tempting Christ he quoted scripture. Unless he carries around a computer Bible, he was quoting from memory. That is a scary item to consider. The Devil has committed Scripture to memory. He will use it whenever he can. How much Scripture do you have in your on board memory banks?

He is going to remember all those weak points that you have, he is going to remember all those bad things you did so that he can remind the Lord of them, and he will remember to come see you from time to time even if you resist him and find the victory. The passage concerning the Lord's temptation indicates that the Devil returned to tempt the Lord at other times. He likes to just check you out now and then.

c. He has knowledge: Rev. 12:12 tells us that he knows "...that he hath but a short time." He can reason and think and know all that he can observe about you, so give him a GODLY EXAMPLE TO STICK INTO HIS MEMORY BANKS! He knows you. He knows your weaknesses. He knows what angers you. He knows what tempts you toward sin.

d. He has will: II Tim. 2:26, "And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." See also the I wills of Isa. 14:13. He has a will and that will is bent on usurping God in any manner that he can. He wills to destroy you, he wills to destroy anything that we can build, and he wills to destroy anything that will help in God's overall program.

e. He has desire: Lu. 22:31, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;" He desires to work us over! He desires to defeat us! He desires to corrupt us! He desires to deceive us! He desires to do all that He can to stop us from serving God in a proper manner.

f. He has pride: Ezk. 28:17, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty...." I Tim. 3:6 warns that the elder should not be a novice lest he fall into the same problem that the Devil had -

pride.

Knowing that the Devil was prideful, and that he is full of pride is one of the best deterrents to the believer being prideful. If the Devil is the seat and beginning of pride then the believer should shun it like a plague!

I don't see many prideful pastors, yet I see some arrogant pastors. What is the difference? Pride is being proud of who and what you are. Arrogance is being proud of who and what you think you are, and letting everyone else know who and what you think you are.

g. He has wrath: Rev. 12:12, "...Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath...." That wrath will be unleashed in the end time. I am joyful that we believers will not be here to suffer under that wrath.

You might also remember that as you walk with God, he becomes angry with you. It is the Lord that protects us, via His ministering angels.

h. He has lust: Jn. 8:44 tells us that the devil has lusts and that his children have the same lusts. A good study some time might be to see what he desires, and then make sure that you do not desire the same things. Some of the things he desires, are for believers to stumble, for you to sin, and for others to sin. He desires power, he desires to usurp God (by the way that is what we do when we take control of our lives from the Holy Spirit), and he desires many other things as well.

i. He has speech: Job. 1:6-12 is the conversation between God and the Devil concerning Job. He communicates quite well with his coworkers as well.

j. He has power: Rev. 13:1-4 tells of the power of the dragon that is given to the beast.

3. His personality is seen by the fact that Jesus treated and dealt with him as a person. Mt. 4:1-11 tells of the temptation of the Lord and the use of personal pronouns would indicate Christ felt the Devil had personality. If the Lord treated him with care and wisdom, then we that are not divine ought to take even greater care, and seek more wisdom so that we may face him when he approaches.

4. His personality is seen in the fact that the Biblical writers treated him as a person. James uses a personal pronoun when he tells his readers to resist the Devil, James 4:7. John also uses personal pronouns in describing the binding of the Devil for the Millennium, Rev. 20:1-7. Zechariah describes a scene where the Devil is involved and waiting to cause problems. Zech. 3:1, "And he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him."

5. His personality is seen in his described possession of parts of the human anatomy. He is mentioned as having a heart. Isa. 14:13, "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will...." Ezek. 28:17

also mentions the heart.

6. His personality is seen in the description of him as a beautiful person. Ezek. 28:11-17 Vs. 17 mentions, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty...."

7. His personality is seen in the fact that he communicates with people and angels.

a. Christ himself during the temptations. Mt. 4:1-10

b. Jude 1:9 Michael rebuked the Devil when they disputed over the body of Moses.

SATAN IS SEEN IN TWO MAIN PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

We are given information about Satan in Ezek. 28:12-15 and Isa. 14:12-17.

Ezek. 28:12-15. This text speaks specifically to the king of Tyre however most agree that some of the terminology demands that the text go further than the literal king and extend to the Devil, the power behind the king.

Terms that indicate the Devil: perfect in beauty, vs 12; full of wisdom, vs 12; you were in Eden, the garden of God, vs 13; you were blameless in you ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you, vs 15; his former state was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, Vs 12.

There are some other items of information that we can learn from this text as well.

He was richly covered with jewels. God did not spare expense when dealing with His angels. It might be good to realize that if the angelic host deserved jewels, what might the believer expect when he arrives in the eternal state. I suspect that we will be surprised.

He was into music. This may relate to Gen. 4:21 and Cain's line. Many believe that the first mention of music in Cain's line is significant. Not that all music is bad, but that the line of Cain found it and worked with it. It seems evident in our day that the line which is spiritually dead, has twisted music to the limits.

Verse fourteen seems to indicate that he may have been involved in the throne area of the Lord. It may relate to the four creature scene that Ezekiel and Revelation mention. Many writers feel that Lucifer may have been in charge of this heavenly scene before his fall.

He was perfect until iniquity was found in him. Contemplate that moment in eternity past when Lucifer rebelled, the moment God saw Lucifer fall. The moment Lucifer realized God knew of His evil.

Isaiah 14:12-17 gives us further information as well.

Vs. 12 - Fallen from heaven. Lu. 10:18 talks of Satan falling as lightning from heaven. (The context is the Lord discussing the disciple's shock over the demons obeying their commands.) Rev. 12:7-9 speaks of his being thrown out of heaven. Rev. 12:4 indicates that he took some with him.

The phrase, "...who didst weaken the nations!" is used by some to prove that there was a pre-Adamic race that fell and was destroyed. This allows for the cave men of science to have a niche in the Biblical scheme.

The term used for nations (go'ee = strong 1471) is a general term that can mean as little as a massing of people. It is used of nations, however it probably refers to the angelic host that the Lord had created not some pre-Adamic race.

The phrase "cut down to the ground" would indicate that he is limited to this world. Job shows us that there is access to the Lord, but this is the only other area of operation that he has.

The cause of the fall was pride and his desire to be more than he was I Tim. 3:6. Now you know where that phrase, "Pride goeth before the fall." came from.

Vs 13,14 mention the I wills of Satan:

1. "I will ascend into heaven" This is his bold declaration of his overall intention, that is, to take over heaven. He desires all that God has and all that God is.

2. "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God" The stars may refer to the angels. Fallen angels are termed stars in Rev. 12:4.

3. "I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north," This probably is referring to the heavenly throne scene in some way. (Some suggest Ps. 48:1,2 as a possible interpretation. This would probably better refer to the Millennium but has possibilities if reference to Satan.)

4. "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds"

5. "I will be like the Most High" It seems that he had in mind that he was going to replace God!

It has always crossed my mind that the Lord must have given Lucifer a tremendous amount of power; otherwise Lucifer would have known that he couldn't usurp the Lord. There must have been in his mind that possibility, or he wouldn't have attempted such a thing. When you combine his great wisdom, great power and great pride, you must wonder in his conquest of God's domain, if he were really using the wisdom that had been given to him. This may give us

indication of how strong the effects of pride can become. It can give us unreal levels of confidence and make us feel we can do more than we can.

You might have drawn the application yourself, but in case you did not, may I suggest that "I WILL" is not a proper phrase to use with the Lord.

"NOT MY WILL, BUT THY WILL" is a little more appropriate!

The Devil's sentence is set, his future is set, and it will come to pass. Verse 15 tells of his final abode - the pit. Rev. 20:10 tell of his being cast into the lake of fire. Jo. 16:7-11 mentions that his doom is sealed even now, but that the Lord has just not imposed the final punishment. Some of the angels evidently preceded him to the pit, II Pet. 2:4. Jude 6 mentions that they kept not their first estate.

Vs 16-17 "They that see thee shall narrowly [squinted eyes] look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, who did shake kingdoms, Who made the world like a wilderness, and destroyed its cities, who opened not the house of his prisoners?"

Two items to note: First there seems to be a loss of his attractiveness and glamor, and secondly the phrase, "who opened not the house of his prisoners" is a sad commentary on his followers. He could not loose his followers from their situation in the pit and Sheol. (His angelic followers are in the pit, while his human followers are in Sheol awaiting The Great White Throne Judgment.)

IN SUMMARY THE DEVIL IS:

1. A created being. Ezk. 28:13,15
2. A perfect being when created. Ezk. 28:12,15
3. A wise and beautiful being. Ezk. 28:15
4. A fallen being now. Ezk. 28:15
5. An ambitious and prideful being. Isa. 14:13,14 (I wills)
6. A usurper. Isa. 14:14 (Wanted to take God's place)
7. A cast down being that will be cast into the lake of fire. Isa. 14:12; Rev. 20:10

He is now the prince of this world (Eph. 2:2) yet he is limited by his Creator to certain things, Job. 1:6; 2:1-8.

APPLICATION:

1. He is very wise and powerful. We need to be on our guard for him. He cannot defeat us in the final analysis, yet he can give us some major headaches. He can sidetrack us and destroy our testimony if we allow it.

James 4:7 tells us to submit ourselves to God and then it tells us to resist the Devil. If you remember the story of Joseph and Potifer's wife you will remember that Joseph went out for track, and got himself out of there. We need to do the same when the Devil's ploys come our way. He is very real and he is very active. We need to resist him.

2. Be careful of stories you hear of the Devil. You might remember that Madeline Murray was trying to get all religious broadcasting off the air. Thousands of letters went out to religious organizations asking them to write the Federal Communication people to protest. The FCC received thousands of letters. As it turned out, the whole thing was a fake. The FCC was not considering any action and spent millions of dollars to inform the letter writers of that fact.

Other items turn out to be fake as well. In the East there was a Baptist minister that was preaching a series of messages on the Devil. He began getting treats from the local Satanic church. They even threatened his life. He continued to preach, but one day disappeared.

The headlines for several days read of the kidnaped preacher and the fear that he was dead. The Devil was receiving a lot of bad press. There was a newspaper article that appeared telling of his brainwashing and the fact that Dr. Narramore had become involved in helping the pastor recover. Come to find out a week or so later the pastor turned up somewhere else in the country. He had taken off with his entire savings account.

God received a mass of bad press due to this man's prank. Some MESS and I'm sure the unsaved world loved it.

Be sure that the Devil will do all that he can to hinder your family life, your marriage, your ministry, your prayer life and any other area of life he can get at you in. Beware and resist him.

03500

THE FALL OF THE DEVIL/NAMES OF THE DEVIL

When did Satan fall? Basically there are three main positions set forth. We will look at these different thoughts.

1. The Gap View: This position believes that between Gen. 1:1 and 1:2 there was a period of time when Satan fell. The first verse speaks of God's creation, and verse two is what is left after Satan's rebellion. The people holding this position feel that Satan was placed in charge of the earth and he destroyed it as part of his rebellion.

2. The Days of Creation View: (Post creation) This view sees Genesis 1:1 as the introductory statement and then 1:2 is the beginning of the creation. Chapter one and chapter two are parallel texts describing the creation. Then chapter three develops the idea of the fall. The Devil fell

sometime between Gen. 2 and Gen. 3.

This is based on Job. 38:7. The creation seems to follow the creation of the angels in vs. 1-7. Those saying that the devil fell post creation use verse 6-7 to show that all The sons of God were present at the creation, thus the fall had not yet occurred. They build their thought on the fact that the Sons of God mentioned are ALL of the angelic host. They fail to understand that the fall may have occurred and that the Sons of God mentioned do not include the fallen host. The fallen angels would not necessarily be called the sons of God after the fall, thus proving nothing more than the angels were created before the creation of heaven and earth disproving their own theory.

This fall was in the spiritual world not in the physical realm, thus the creation need not be in existence. Indeed, there is little if any evidence to show that it was.

3. The Pre-creation View: This view holds that Satan fell before creation was set into motion. Job. 38:4-7 indicates the angels were in existence before creation. They are spirit beings and as such do not need the material world to operate in. There is no reason that this could not be the time of Satan's rebellion.

SATAN'S FINAL DOWNFALL

1. His sentence was prophesied in the garden: Gen. 3:14,15, "And the Lord god said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

2. His sentence was mentioned by Christ: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Jo. 12:31. Christ was speaking of the cross.

The indication is that the Devil is cast out of some place. This would be fitting to the book of Job and the Devil having access to the throne of God. It would seem that this text is stating that the Devil after the cross did not have access to the throne area. (some suggest that this merely states that the Devil won't gain the position of replacing the Lord. [Dickason])

3. His sentence was mentioned in the context of the ascension: ". . .the prince of this world is judged." (Jn 16:11) The judgment seems to be a done deal for the Devil. Christ was talking of the ministry of the Holy Spirit and part of that ministry was based on the fact that the Devil is judged.

4. His sentence was mentioned in relation to the work of the cross: "And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Col. 2:15

5. His sentence was mentioned by the writer of Hebrews: He declares that the Devil is destroyed. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," Heb. 2:14

6. His sentence was mentioned in The Revelation: John tells
us that the Devil will be cast down to the earth in Rev. 12:7-12. The indications of this are one of three.

a. The Devil will yet future be cast from the throne area to the earth area.

b. The Devil will yet future be restricted to the earth ONLY as opposed to the principalities and powers of the air.

c. The Devil was cast out from the throne area, at the time of the cross.

Without giving a day or two over to the Revelation text it seems that the content of this text would best fit the end times. Since the Gospels and Colossians seem to indicate that the Devil has been thrown out of the throne area then this text would best fit a restriction of the Devil to the earth for a season. (The mention of those that overcame with the blood of the Lamb demands that the statement be at the very least, post cross.)

7. His sentence was mentioned as having a final fulfillment: The Devil's final end is recorded for us in Rev. 20:10, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." This is a very good verse to prove that the lake of fire is eternal, for the beast and false prophet were there for the one thousand years and they are still there. If they didn't burn up in 1000 years then it must be for eternity. (Rev. 19:20 shows that the beast and false prophet were cast into the lake prior to the kingdom Rev. 20:1-3; Rev. 20:10 shows that they are still there.)

His sentence will be controlled by Christ. Rev. 1:18 shows the Lord as the one with the power to carry all of this out. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hades and of death."

There is a period between the Rev. 12 text and his final end in the lake of fire. In Rev. 20:1-3 it tells us that there is a thousand years in the end time during which the Devil will be bound and unable to work. This is during the Millennial kingdom.

After the one thousand years is up the Devil will be released for "a little season." 20:7 shows his release.

So let us recap what we have seen. The Devil fell at some point before the creation of the

heavens and the earth (Job 38:1-7). His fall left him to wander the earth, the atmosphere and the heavens. He had access to the throne of God to make accusation against the saints in the Old Testament economy (Job 1 and 2). At the cross, there was a judgment that was set. There seems to have been a limiting of his activities to the atmosphere and earth proper (Principalities and powers of the air). In the book of Revelation there is a further limitation which will keep him on the surface of the earth. He will be limited completely for the Millennial kingdom, but then he will have freedom for a brief time to assemble his followers for one last rebellion in which all will find their physical destruction and their eternal end. He will be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity.

THE NAMES OF SATAN

Do you know what your name means? I looked up Stanley once many years ago and found that it meant a "stone lay". In today's idea lay means a string of flowers that the pretty Hawaiian girl gives you when you disembark in Hawaii.

Now, imagine a string of stones hung around your neck. How uncomfortable can you get? I told a class once that they could probably relate to the meaning of my name, and the way I piled on the homework.

In the old English a lay was a valley or plain. A plain made of stone. This is all very irrelevant to our study of Satan, except to draw attention to the fact that his names have meaning, other than just names. Names don't mean much any more unless it is Kennedy or Getty or Onasis. In the Biblical times the names had great meaning.

We want to spend some time on the names of Lucifer and see if they don't have some meaning to us in our walk with the Lord.

1. He is called the Devil: He is called the Devil and is described as our adversary in I Pet. 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;" We oft think of the devil in red, with horns and a long pointed tail. I believe he is much more hideous than that. I don't think anyone would care to look at him.

Some picture him as hairy with goat's legs, ears, and horns. This comes from the fact that the Hebrew word translated devil in other literature means hairy or shaggy, and is translated goat or satyr in Isa. 13:21; 34:14.

There are four terms translated Devil in the New Testament. We will only look at one of them, but a study of these four terms might be profitable.

The term used in I Peter is "diabolos" which means slanderer, traducer, malignant accuser. Now you know where the slanderous Christian gets his or her ammunition.

The term adversary is quite needful of our understanding. He is our enemy. We ought not mess around with his troops and his methods, or we may get ourselves into trouble.

So if he is our enemy we should think of the idea of enemy. How many Americans during WWII would have gone to Germany and put on a German uniform and hollered Hey I'm an American? You say, "Not many." So why do so many Christians go into the world and take on the dress, activities, and philosophies of the enemy and call themselves Christians? So why do so many go into the business world and operate under the worlds practices and methods and call themselves Christian? Dangerous, in my way of thinking.

2. He is called Satan: Satan means adversary or opposer. II Cor. 12:7 mentions, Paul's thorn in the flesh or "messenger of Satan". I Thess. 2:18 mentions, "Wherefore, we should have come unto you, even I, Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us."

The hindrance of Satan can take on many forms. It may be a physical problem that slows us down or hinders our thinking. It can be financial problems that hinder us from doing those things that we would like to do for the Lord.

We need to remember that there is nothing that the Devil hinders that God hasn't allowed (Job 1, 2). We need to work through and around those hindrances to gain the glory for the Lord. When I first studied the Devil for a series of sermons, I found that there were great hindrances that were not present before nor present after the series was finished. I found myself in a multitude of problems, not impossible problems, not large problems, not bad problems, but just many, many time-consuming problems that took time away from the proper study of the subject. Ultimately all was completed and the Lord blessed the study both to my own life and understanding, but also to my students.

3. He is called the Accuser of the Brethren: Rev. 12:10 states, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night." In the Old Testament economy the Devil accused the brethren of wrongs that they had committed (Job 1, 2). In the days when we had baby sitters we always told the children that we would ask for a report when we arrived home. When we arrived the sitter would report and the children knew that misbehavior would gain a spanking. They were usually - I repeat usually, found without accusation. The Lord must have enjoyed those saints that gave the Accuser little ammunition to use in his accusations.

4. He is called Enemy: In the explanation of the parable of the tares, Christ called the Devil the enemy. Matt. 13:39 tells us, "The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are the angels." This shows the Devil as the enemy of God and His program. Since believers are God's children and are an integrated part of His program, it is safe to say that the Devil counts us as enemies as well.

5. He can be an angel of light: II Cor. 11:14, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." The context of this passage is false teaching. It is wise to look very carefully at all teaching that you receive and compare it to the Scriptures. You should get yourself into the habit of questioning all commentaries and books - even if they are written by fundamental people. You will find some false teaching if you look. Don't allow the Devil to gain a foothold in your life through false teaching even if it comes from an innocent source.

6. He is called the Prince of Devils: Mt. 9:34, "But the Pharisees said, He casteth out demons through the prince of the demons." Mt. 12:24, "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons." He is in charge of the demons and is very much aware of our weaknesses. He will use his workers in any way that he can to hinder our work for the Lord.

7. He was called the Anointed Cherub: Ezk. 28:11-17 This shows the high position of his past and is a stark contrast to his present position. All because of pride!

8. He was called Lucifer: Isa. 14:12-14 tells us of this fact. The term means "morning star" which is a name given to the Lord Jesus, Himself in the Revelation.

The term morning stars is applied to the Cheribium in Job 38:7, however is a general term, in my opinion. The Revelation passages mention "the" morning star. The term "the" is an article, referring to a specific person. This along with Satan's name indicate that there are two usages of the term. One, a name for a specific being, Christ and Satan, and the other a general term for a class of the angelic host (Rev. 2:28; 22:16). The term Lucifer is even a nice name if you can get by the stigma of it.

9. He was the Son of the Morning: Isa. 14:12-14

10. He is called the Prince of the power of the air: Eph. 2:1-3 He is the prince of the air. He operates within that sphere. TALK ABOUT AIR POLLUTION!

11. He is called the Prince of this World: Jo. 12:31, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Jo. 14:30, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." He is behind the world system and it is not hard to see evidences of his influence upon that system. Look at the corruption of our own country and it's people in politics, crime, etc.

In the 1992 presidential elections, it was evident that the American public was more interested in their pocket book than with moral issues. They elected a man that favors homosexuality, abortion, and deception because he promised to fix their money problems. Something is very wrong.

It was encouraging to know that the popular vote was close and that many of the independent

votes would have gone to president Bush had Mr. Perot not run. America is slipping slowly into a spiritual state which God will judge.

12. He is called the God of this World: II Cor. 4:4, "In whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." He has not only blinded, but they have bought his line completely in our society.

13. He is called the Tempter: Mat. 4:3, "And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." I Thes. 3:5 also mentions the term. Have you experienced him?

14. He is called the Wicked One: I Jo. 5:18, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Some promise! (see also I Jo. 3:12)

15. He is called Beelzebub: Mt. 12:24, "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons." The term means Lord of flies or prince of devils. Can you imagine being called the Lord of flies? What an honor.

16. He is called a Murderer: Jo. 8:44, "...He was a murderer from the beginning...." He will truly live up to this in a physical sense in the Tribulation and post Millennial times, when he will lead many to their deaths. He is busy leading people to their spiritual death today. He has been in this business, both past, present and will be yet in the future.

17. He is called a Liar: Jo. 8:44, "...for he is a liar...." If you are a liar, then you know who you serve. He is called the father of the lie in this same text.

He is called many other names as well. I will just list these for your future study.

Angel of The Bottomless Pit: Rev. 9:11:
Belial which means good for nothing: II Cor. 6:15:
Crooked Serpent: Isa. 27:1:
Deceiver of the Whole world: Rev. 12:9
Evil one: I Jo. 5:19
Great Dragon: Rev. 12:9
Great Red Dragon: Rev. 12:3
Leviathan: Isa. 27:1
Old Serpent: Rev. 12:9
Piercing Serpent: Isa. 27:1
Ruler of Darkness: Eph. 6:12
A Roaring Lion: I Pet. 5:8
A Serpent: Rev. 12:9

A Wolf: Jo. 10:12
A Thief: Jo. 10:10

There may be some that I missed as well. And lastly we need to realize that he is a tremendous Fundamentalist of sorts. He believes in Christ being the perfect Son of God. He believes in Christ's ascension. He believes in Christ's coming again. He believes many things that we do! He knows doctrine. And he memorizes Scripture.

Augustine gave him one further name from the Latin, "Simius Dei" (pronounced dai). Simius = imitator and Dei = of God. Imitator of God. "The ape" as Augustine called him.

APPLICATION:

1. What's in a name? Lot's if you are talking about Lucifer! There is nothing for us to fear from him, however if we will only resist him. We have the power of God to resist with, if we only will.

2. The more that you know the enemy the easier it is to defeat him. We need to study and know the Devil so that we can counter his attacks upon us.

I trust that these introductory thoughts to the Devil will spur some on to even greater study. There is little written on the Devil, his effect on believers, and his control over the lost. Check your local Bible college library to see how many books you can find on the Devil. You will probably find few.

03550

DEMONS

INTRODUCTION:

Satan the father of the lie has fostered a lie that is the lie that won't lie down until he lies down in the lake of fire and that lie is this; Satan is a lie. Many religions today do not believe in Satan. Indeed, some of our mainline denominational ministers deny the reality of hell and Satan.

THEOSOPHY: "There is no personal devil. That which is mystically called the devil is the negation and opposite of God. The devil is not to be confounded with Satan, though they are sometimes spoken of in Scripture as if they were identical. In such cases Scripture presents the popular belief." (Taken from: "SATAN IS NO MYTH"; Sanders, J. Oswald; Copyright 1965, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 75-76)

Theosophy is a movement that was started by Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky in 1875. It

contains reincarnation, and is somewhat similar to Hinduism and Buddhism.

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY: "There is no personal devil." (Taken from: "SATAN IS NO MYTH"; Sanders, J. Oswald; Copyright 1965, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 75-76) Unity was founded by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in 1889. Their headquarters is in Lee's Summit, Missouri. They believe in positive thinking and feel that prayer and thought can lead to health and prosperity.

SPIRITISM: "There is no devil and no evil spirits. All spirit people of wisdom know that there is no fearful devil. All spirits in the other world are nothing else but the souls of those who have lived here." (Taken from: "SATAN IS NO MYTH"; Sanders, J. Oswald; Copyright 1965, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 75-76)

Such blind people, these must be, to avoid and overlook such a large number of Scriptures. I have a series of sermons and studies on Satan and have not dealt with the subject in great detail. All of this Scripture that has been presented in previous studies on Satan must be over looked if you are to believe Satan doesn't exist.

Even within our mainline denominations there are many that will not accept a literal hell and Devil. God is a God of love, so how could he create a place like hell, or let a being like Satan roam the earth. Most feel that information about hell and Satan are figurative and not literal, thus allowing them to assign some generic, less gruesome interpretation to the references.

We will be dealing primarily with demons in this section; so let's see what demons are like.

DEMONS

Scofield has a note page 1003, of his reference Bible concerning demons. If you have this available, take time to read through it. He assumes that the creatures mentioned in II Pet. 2:4; Jude six are not part of the created angelic host. If these creatures are not the fallen angels, then you must believe that there is a created host of demonic creatures. The fact that the demons Christ dealt with did not want to be bound, would indicate that they were the same as the creatures Peter and Jude referred to. (Lu 8:31 "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.") One is left to wonder from the terminology if the demons are out only at the good pleasure of God for His own purposes. The fact that the fallen angels are in bounds in the abyss would move one to observe that the demons must be fallen angels.

If they are fallen angels then it would also follow that the fallen angels are enjoying their freedom, only in that they are limiting themselves to that which is allowed.

Demons are spirits: Mt. 12:43,45 Mentions unclean spirits. A part of the spirit world - angelic host if you see the whole. They are, it would seem, fallen angels. They are spirit beings but the

term spirit is used of the Holy Spirit as well as man's spirit - both saved and lost, so this is little help in knowing what the demons are. They are similar in nature to the Spirit and man in that they are immaterial and nonphysical.

Demons vary in wickedness: Mt. 12:45 "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself" This shouldn't surprise us. Man, in the spiritual realm, varies in wickedness. We have in our race riots the people that are killing, looting, and burning, while people of their own neighborhood are helping the police. We observe also in murder cases the person that murders, and then there are those that kill, and mutilate.

Demons are Satan's emissaries: Mt. 12:26-27 "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I, by Beelzebub, cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they shall be your judges." The Jewish leadership believed in demons, partly because of the nature of demon possession in their time, but there must have been some knowledge of it from other sources. What a research project. How did the Jew of Christ's time know of Satan and demons? Send me a copy if you make such a study.

Demons are numerous: Mk. 5:9 "My name is Legion; for we are many." Legion in the Roman army meant three to six thousand soldiers. In this case there were "about two thousand" swine that ran into the sea. The term can also indicate "many". (legion is the Greek "legeon" (Strong's number 3003) always translated legion and only appears four times in the New Testament.

Needless to say, there are more than enough of them around to allow the Devil to do the work that he desires to do. He is not limited in work to do, nor helpers to do it.

Demons can enter and control man and beast: This point is shown in one passage where the Lord cast demons out of a man and they requested to enter into swine. (Mk. 5:2-5; Mk. 5:11-13; see also Acts 8:6-7; Acts 16:16-18)

Mr. White, a missionary to China for 25 years, tells of over three hundred cases of demon possession with which he himself was connected. He details the conversation with demons.

"Who are You? The reply came in the Maori tongue: Offspring of the serpent. There proved to be nine demons and they gave their names as they came out. The last was an English speaking demon though the woman herself could not speak English. It resisted, begged to be allowed to go into a child present in the room threatening to injure the patient's body if compelled to come out. At last it meekly said "Yes, I will come out.' The woman was thrown bodily off her seat into the middle of the room. This woman then lived a normal life for many years."

The majority of fundamentalists believe that demons cannot indwell a believer. Merril Unger and Charles Ryrie are the only current writers that I have run across that would disagree with this. Unger writes strictly from an experience level, and Ryrie is illogical in his presentation if you think seriously at all about what he presents.

Demons seek embodiment: They not only seek it but may well require it for any peace of existence. Scofield mentions that they seek embodiment, and indicates that he believes that they are powerless if not (p 1003). I think I would make it even more than this - it seems to me that they are in misery when outside of a body.

Mt. 12:43-44 "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none." There seems to be something undesirable in their existence.

Mk. 5:7-12 vs. 7 "I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." This was in the context of being cast out.

Lu. 8:31 "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep." This would indicate that they had the possibility of being cast into the pit with the rest.

Other references that you might want to study in relation to possession: Mt.4:24; Mt.8:16,28,33; Mt.9:32; Mt.12:22; Mk. 5:15-16; Ac.8:7; Ac. 16:16.

Christ seemingly had power over their geographical location:

Mk 5:10 "And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country." It is evident that the Lord controlled their destination. The question that might arise is whether Christ had this control because of His being God, or if all believers can control the destination of demons. I suspect personally that it was the Lord's deity that was in play.

Demons are unclean, sullen, violent and malicious: They are not beings that one should desire to have for friends. They cause trouble and suffering for those that have a relationship to them. Mt. 8:28; Mt. 9:33; Mt. 10:1; Mt. 12:43; Mk. 1:23; Mk. 5:3-5; Mk. 9:17,20; Lu. 6:18; Lu. 9:39.

Demons recognized Christ as God: The demons are wiser and more knowledgeable than the lost of the generations since Christ walked the earth. They knew who He was. Mt. 8:31-32; Mk. 1:23-24; Ac. 19:11-20; also Ja. 2:19.

Demons are powerful: Ac 19:11-20 shows that the demons have power over the lost even in the outward physical realm. Their power is great enough to overpower men.

It is also interesting that there is never an attack of this sort recorded in scripture toward a believer. Indeed, in all of the reading I have done I have not found any case of it in the personal stories that have been related.

Demons fear being out of a body: They seem to know they will be tormented, indeed it would seem that they could have been cast into the abyss by the Lord. Mt 8:29 "And, behold, they cried out, saying, what have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come here to torment us before the time? The time is to be understood as the day of judgment of the demons.

Lu 8:31 "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep." "Deep" would indicate the pit.

Demons affect people physically: They can cause mental and physical problems for those that they indwell. Mt. 12::22; Mt. 17:15-18; Lu. 13:16.

Demons may find manifestation in asceticism/forbidding to marry etc.: I Tim. 4:1-3 speaks to the fact that forbidding to marry is a doctrine of the devils.

Demons can influence by causing departure from the faith in the believer: This is done via the false doctrine and teaching that is brought forth upon the world. The believer listens to, and accepts this false teaching and is drawn away from the truth I Tim. 4:1.

Demons are in conflict with spiritual Christians: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12

We find that I Tim. 4:1-3 mentions some will be drawn away by "seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons,"

A CHRISTIANS RESOURCES ARE:

Prayer and fasting: Mt. 17:21 "Howbeit, this kind goeth not out except by prayer and fasting."

The whole armor of God: Eph. 6:13ff

Exorcism in the name of Jesus Christ: Ac. 16:18 Paul cast the demon out of the maid that had disturbed the work of Paul.

There are some theologians that believe the demons will rise from the abyss in the end time and quote Re. 9:1-11,20 which describes the locust from the bottomless pit. This may indeed be the demons that have been bound, even though the text does not state this. What a thought. Even more demons to assist in the work of the Devil.

OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING DEMONS:

By observation we can see that the demon activity has vastly decreased after the cross. Indeed, after the book of Acts there is little mention of evil spirits or demons. We might also observe that there is no record of strong demon activity before the Gospel accounts either.

These two observations would lead one to think that the demon activity of the Bible may have been directly linked to the fact that Christ was here on earth preparing to reconcile man to His Father.

Note might be taken in the New Testament, that nowhere are Christians told to cast out demons, nor are they given specific power over the demons. Matt. 28:18ff and Acts 1:8 would indicate that we have all the power that is needed for the life we are to live in this age. If we ever come up against demons I believe it is evident that if we need power we have it. We have the victory over the demons, in that Christ has died on the cross and they are subject to the judgment that is upon them.

They have no power over the Christian that I can see, indeed the opposite is strongly indicated. The worst that they can do for the Christian is to hinder his ministry, or oppress them. Oppression usually comes when the believer is not walking with God however at times he oppresses those that are really doing a good work for the Lord.

The main spiritual battles are not waged with demon possessed people but with the temptations that we lay upon ourselves by responding to the environment that God allows us to enter into. The people we are with etc. The devil will make those situations as neat and innocent as possible yet our lusts can carry us into great sin. This is not to say that we might not one day come up against demon possession!

OPPRESSION: I would like to talk for a few moments about the oppression of believers. Oppression is the pushing down or burdening of a person by some power or authority. Dictators oppress their people.

Oppression can be illustrated by a car. If you are a car and you are a believer, then the Holy Spirit is the one controlling you. He is the driver. At times the devil finds you and puts you in the middle of a demolition derby. The Holy Spirit is within, and the devil, nor the demons can ever get in, but they can really bounce you around with the other cars in the derby.

We are the temple of God II Cor. 6:16 so we cannot be possessed by an evil spirit.

Someone has said, "The devil loves to fish in troubled waters." Let him find a floundering or slipping Christian and he will be at work quickly. A loose living Christian is a prime candidate for oppression.

I would like to give you some examples of oppression that I have seen in recent years. One is a young girl in high school that was given the lead in the school play entitled "Rosemary's Baby." The play was a story of a girl having a baby by the devil.

Her parents and the girl were all "Christians" but they thought little about the part. As the girl progressed through the practice etc. she starting becoming depressed. As time went on the depression deepened very quickly and she ultimately tried to commit suicide. Oppression is not to be toyed with. It is serious business for the lax believer.

I once heard an account from a missionary in South America that had reached a tribe with the

Gospel, and some had been saved. The missionary lived a little distance away. One night an empty hut became alive with voices and activities. The Indians could see no one in the hut, but things came flying out the door and vile swearing was to be heard. The Indians called the missionary and he came. They all sat around the hut singing hymns and praying. Soon all was quiet and nothing more ever happened.

One further account and I will move on. This account is not unlike many I've heard and read about. It indicates that the Devil has power to oppress even Christians that are walking with the Lord closely. The oppression is great as you will see.

A young Christian who went home one night after visiting friends, was bothered by a spiritual situation he and his friends were in. He had a surprise confrontation with the devil that evening.

He set about to pray that God would send two people burdened for the same thing, to pray with him. As he started to pray a sudden fear came over him. He had the feeling that if he asked for the men something would happen. He hesitated for a long time then began to pray - again the fear came. He asked God's help in this and finally asked God for the two men and as he finished the fear began to intensify. He continued asking God's help and soon the fear went away and he fell asleep.

As you can see Satan didn't want these three to pray, as he knew it meant problems for him. The story doesn't end here with the devil in defeat, as he tries once again. The man awoke later that evening shaking and crying in fear. In fear of what? Nothing. He could see in the room, there was nothing there. He got out of bed and turned the lights on and sat at his desk still shaking and crying. He knew now it was the devil and he wanted to pick up his Bible, but as he tried the fear intensified. He tried several times. Finally he began to pray, again asking that God would step in, and very soon after, the terror passed. This was Satan's second try to stop the prayer group. The following evening the man received the answer to his prayer. Two friends had been talking about the same thing and the following day they met for prayer.

Demons can be dealt with in the same way you deal with Satan. If they begin to bother you, get on your knees and pray - claim the victory that the blood of Christ provided.

As I have mentioned, don't go looking for them, but if they show up, don't run. Stand your ground and seek the help of the one that can put them running, God.

Remember that song we sang as kids. One door and only one and yet the sides are two. I'm on the inside on which side are you? If you are on the inside of the door of salvation then you cannot be possessed. If you are on the outside then beware.

SOME MISCELLANEOUS TEXTS FOR FUTURE STUDY:

Demons are spirits: Mat. 8:16

Demons are intelligent: Mat. 8:29; Lu. 4:41; Mk. 3:11
Demons are unclean: Mat. 10:1; Mk. 3:11; Acts 8:7
Demons have no fellowship with Christ: Mk. 5:7
Demons can cause blindness: Mat. 12:22
Demons can cause illness: Lu. 13:11-17; Mat. 9:33
Demons can cause insanity: Lu. 8:26-36
Demons can control the mind: Lu. 8:35
Demons can control speech: Mat. 8:29
Demons can cause dumbness: Mat. 12:22
Demons can control at any age: Mk. 9:21
Demons can carry out God's plan: I Sam. 16:14; Rev. 9:1ff; 16:1ff
Demons are many: Mk. 5:9
Demons are a kingdom: Mat. 12:26
Demons are vicious: Acts 19:11-20; Mat. 8:28
Demons are wicked: Mat. 12:45
Demons can cause suicidal tendencies: Mk. 9:22
Demons have supernatural strength: Lu. 8:29
Demons need a body to indwell: Mat. 12:43
Demons believe in Christ: Lu. 8:28

They are, they can do, and they may be many things, but they are no-match for the Lord and Savior that we have as a personal friend and helper. Trust in Him and they will not sidetrack you.

03600

ANGELS

Before we begin, let us take care of some of the more theological questions that have come up from time to time concerning the angelic host.

How do you spell angels? ANGLES OR ANGELS? IT IS SPELLED ANGELS! I don't know how many times I have seen teachers and pastors spell this word incorrectly. It is similar to the word that describes the book of Psalms. Each individual section is a Psalm, not the plural Psalms. Often I hear pastors asking their congregation to turn to Psalms 15. It is the 15th Psalm in the book of Psalms.

Now, to answer some of the great theological questions of our time:

1. How many angels can rest on the point of a needle? The entire host - stacked on top of one another.

2. Can two angels occupy the same space at the same time? Sure - spirit's don't occupy space.

3. How many angels walking side by side can walk through the eye of a needle? None, any angelic being big enough to roll the stone from the grave is to big to fit through the eye of a needle.

That out of the way, we can move on to other things. In relation to the angels, if you accept the Biblical record, you will have ample proof of angels existence. If you don't, you won't!

They are mentioned from Job and Genesis to Revelation. They are in 34 books of the Bible. They are mentioned over 300 times in the Scriptures. There seems to be ample evidence of their existence, even though we cannot see them.

"Angel" means messenger.

1. Angels are created beings: Ps. 148:2-5 Verse 5 mentions of angels and the heavens, "...for he commanded, and they were created." Col 1:16, mentions that all things were created by Christ. The creation included principalities and powers of the air. The angelic host and demonic contingent are all within this classification of beings. (see Jn 1:1-3 also)

It might cross one's mind as to the method of their creation. Man was created and then woman was created. Did God create the lower angels first, then move on to the Archangels, or begin with the higher and work to the lower. We will not get into which He did when creating man and woman. (Some womens libers suggest that God created man and then corrected his mistake and created woman. Others suggest that when God created, She created woman first and then man. If you reject the Scripture, you can come up with all sorts of false teaching can't you!)

We might assume since there is no marriage among the angels, and that the angels are masculine, that ALL of the angels were created at the same time. There may have been time intervals between the angels but all at one occasion.

Ps. 148: 2,5 mentions the following concerning their creation. Verse two, "Praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts." Verse five, "Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created."

There is some discussion as to when they were created. Refer to the notes on Lucifer for more on this question. Chafer mentions, "According to Scripture, long before the creation of man God created an innumerable company of beings described as angels." (Taken from the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 151f) Others are just as plain that the creation of angels was at another time.

Ryrie mentions, "The Bible does not undebatably state the time of their creation. They were present when the earth was created (Job 38:7, NIV) so their creation had to be prior to the Creation of the earth." (Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 124)

2. Angels are everlasting, but not eternal: They are like man, in that all of us were created beings, not having eternal presence in the past. We began at a point in time. We will, both angels and mankind, continue to exist into eternity future so are everlasting, but only God is eternal (Lu. 20:36 mentions that the angels never die). It is good that the Lord defeated the Devil or he would continue as he is for eternity future.

3. Angels are spirit beings: Heb. 1:13, 14 tells us that they are ministering spirits, yet they do seem to appear in human form at times. Gen. 19:1 mentions the two angels that came to take Lot away from Sodom and Gomorrah. Jn 20:12 tells of the angels present when Christ arose. It is to be assumed that these appearances are similar to the theophanies of the Old Testament when God appeared to man in the form of men. It is a manifestation of a spirit being as man.

Whether they take on actual physical characteristics or not is not clear in Scripture. There is some indication that they do take on physical form, rather than being an image. The angels that came to Abraham, just before Sodom and Gomorrah partook of food and drink. This would indicate the physical form. Also the same beings performed physical activity with man when attempting to protect and then remove Lot from Sodom (Gen. 18-19).

4. Angels are powerful: II Thes. 1:7 tells us that Christ will appear with "mighty angels". This term translated mighty is the term from which we gain our term dynamite. II Pet. 2:11 tells that some have "power and might". Ps. 103:20, "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word."

Later we will consider the thought that they are ministering spirits. They have some relationship to us. We should remember that they are powerful and strong. This will help us relax and trust in the Lord's protection.

5. They are personal beings: They have the traits of personality.

They are intelligent: I Pet. 1:12 mentions that they "...desire to look into...." certain things which would indicate intelligence.

They have emotion: Lu. 2:13 tells us that they can praise God which indicates feelings.

They have a will: Jude 6 tells us that some fell, thus they have a will with which they can chose. They can reject God's authority.

They are wise: II Sam. 14:20 mentions that angels are wise. "...and my lord is wise, according to

the wisdom of an angel of God...."

6. They do not marry: This is stated in Mk. 12:25, and is indicated in the fact that they are mentioned in the Masculine gender in Scripture (Gen. 18:1-2) However Zec. 5:9 mentions two women with wind in their wings. You can do a research paper on whether they are angels or not. Send me a copy.

7. They can fly: Zech. 5:9, "...for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven." Is. 6:2 describes the Seraphim and their six wings ending with the phrase, "...with two he did fly." Indeed, they fly swiftly according to Dan. 9:21.

It is indicated in Daniel that they use their ability to fly for the purpose of transportation from one point to another. The ability to fly may or may not be a literal flapping of the wings type flight. In their appearance to man, it probably is, yet as spirit beings, they can move from place to place without a source of motivation. Some might suggest that it may be the wings that are described in their physical appearance is merely for man's understanding - that they really don't have wings. This is a possibility, yet the descriptions of Isa. 6, Ezek. 1, and Rev. 4, of the throne scene seem quite literal.

8. They are innumerable: Heb. 12:22 mentions, "...an innumerable company of angels." Q. How many is that? Dan 7:10 mentions 10,000 times 10,000 which would be 100 million. Plus there must be more!

9. They are organized: No they don't have a union! There is a level of "archangels mentioned" which indicates this organization. Jude 9, "Yet Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses...."

There seem to be other archangels: Dan. 10:13 mentions Michael as one of the "chief princes". There seems to be an organizational structure under the archangels from Eph. 3:10, "To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,"

Gabriel is mentioned and seems to be of a messenger. Lu. 1:19 mentions, "...I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings." This was to Zacharias in the announcement of the coming of John The Baptist. Lu. 1:26 tells us "...Gabriel, was sent from God...." to tell Mary of the Lord's coming. Dan. 8:16 shows Gabriel as one that could explain something to Daniel. Again in Dan. 9:21ff Gabriel is shown as revealing things to Daniel. It could well be that the angel that Michael helped in Dan. 10 was also Gabriel.

Acts 8:26 mentions that an angel directed Phillip to go to the area where he found the Ethiopian Eunuch. Since Gabriel is a directing and message bearing angel this may have been him.

Michael seems to be a warrior for the Lord (Dan 10 and Jude 9).

10. They rejoice over the salvation of man: Lu. 15:10, "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of god over one sinner that repenteth." Whether they are happy because God is happy, or whether they are so involved with mankind that they rejoice, is not mentioned in Scripture. Since they are ministering spirits, and they seem very involved with the activities of man, it would seem logical that they are joyful due to their involvement with man.

We are left to wonder at the relationship between angels and mankind in the eternal state. We are told from Scripture that mankind will not have a marital relationship in the eternal state, so we will be in a sense, very similar to the angelic host. We will be spirit beings as they. What the relationship will be will be of great interest.

11. Angels learn from man: I Cor. 4:9 indicates that we are examples to them in some way. That is scary if you think about it. Just when are you teaching them something? Are they watching when you step into sin? I assume that they can be watching at any time. This should move us to more righteous living!

12. Angels are superior to man in some ways: II Sam. 14:20 indicates that their wisdom is greater than man's. II Sam. 24:15,16 shows an angel destroying men quite effectively. (70,000 men) Ps. 8:5, "For thou hast made him [man] a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

13. Angels are inferior to man in some ways: I Cor. 6:3 mentions that man will judge the angels. It is quite possible that this speaks of man judging the fallen angels, for there is no indication in the Word that the unfallen angels have a judgment, nor even a need to be judged. Eph. 3:10 tells us that men have knowledge that the angels do not have. It would seem that both classes have their strengths and weaknesses.

14. They will accompany Christ at his coming: Mt 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." (Mk 8:38 also)

They will accompany Christ, however they do not know the time of that coming. Mk. 13:32, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels who are in heaven...."

Since the Devil was discussed at length we can gain much insight into the angels. Everything that is true of Satan's characteristics - personality - spirit etc. would also be true of the cherubim, indeed all angels.

MINISTRIES OF THE ANGELS:

1. They seem to guard, or minister to believers: Heb. 1:14, "Are they not all ministering spirits,

sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "them who shall be heirs of salvation?" would indicate believers.

Matthew also mentions something that the Lord told them. Mt. 18:10, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father, who is in heaven."

2. They serve or watch over God: Isa. 6:1-3 shows the throne scene of God. Ezek. 1 and Rev. 4 also mention this same scene. It is the throne of God and is depicted as being protected by four angelic beings. The beings are described in great detail. Most feel that these beings are cherubium. Just why God needs watching over, is not known. I surmise that it is more of a serving, rather than protecting ministry.

3. They serve as guards: Not to guard God, but rather to guard something for God. Gen. 3:22-24 tells that the Lord stationed them at the entrance to the Garden of Eden to bar Adam and Eve from reentering it.

4. They intercede in spiritual battles: In Daniel there is an angel that had appeared to Daniel and mentioned that he had been delayed. Dan. 10:13, "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia." How many of these battles go on in the spirit world is unknown to us. Since these beings were linked with countries, it is assumed that when any empire rises and falls, that there is a spirit world battle as well.

5. They ministered to Christ:

BEFORE HIS BIRTH: Lk. 1:26-33 is the announcement of Christ's coming birth to Mary.

AFTER HIS BIRTH: Lk. 2:8-13 is the announcement of the Lord's birth to the shepherds.

AFTER HIS TEMPTATION: Mt 4:11, "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

THEY WERE AVAILABLE FOR HIS PROTECTION: Mt 26:53, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Also, the thought is shown in the temptation of the Lord in Mt. 4:6.

BEFORE THE CROSS: Lk 22:43 mentions that an angel appeared and strengthened him in the garden just before his arrest.

AFTER BEING RAISED: Mt 28:2 tells that an angel rolled the stone from the grave entrance.

6. THEY MINISTER TO BELIEVERS: Heb. 1:14, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent

forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Acts 12:7 tells of Peter's release from prison via an angel. Acts 17:23-24 shows that they ministered in time of trouble for Paul. They are involved in ministering to saints after their death. Lu. 16:22 mentions that the beggar Lazarus was carried away by angels. Jude nine mentions that Michael was involved with the body of Moses after Moses died.

7. THEY MINISTER TO THE NATIONS: Dan. 12:1 mentions Michael as one that stands for Israel. Revelation is quite specific in the fact that the angels are involved in the closing out of the end time activities.

8. THEY MINISTER TO THE UNBELIEVERS: If you can call it ministry. Herod was struck by worms, Acts 12:23, "And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and died." I Chron. 21:15 is the account of the angel destroying people due to the sin of David.

This shows a real down side to the angelic host, where man is involved. God deals with man via the angels, and it is not pleasant. The angels are involved in the separation of righteous and unrighteous in the judgment.

I am reminded of Michelangelo's painting that depicts the angels escorting the lost to their judgment. The terror pictured on the lost men is indication that the painter knew well the horribleness of God's judgment.

9. THEY MINISTER TO GOD:

WORSHIP: Heb. 1:6, "...And let all the angels of God worship him." Rev. 5:8-13 pictures the living creatures and the 24 elders Worshiping.

PRAISE: Ps. 148:2, "Praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye him, all his hosts." (Also Isa. 6:3) Can you imagine a praise service in heaven? Must be quite a scene!

REJOICE: Job. 38:7, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

SERVE: Ps. 103:20, "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." This seems to be a class of beings that enjoy serving their God. It is curious that others of the same class chose not to serve God. Why did the demons desire to rebel. It must have been linked to the pride of the Devil and their overall desire to be out from under God's dominion. It is similar in man. There are believers that desire to serve Him, and believers the desire to be rid of Him.

SOME LOGICAL CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING ANGELS:

1. They can operate outside the laws of nature. This is due to the fact that they are spirit, not physical beings.

2. They were created with free choice as is demonstrated by Satan and those angels that fell with him.

3. There is no salvation provided for the angelic host. This is demonstrated in that the fallen angels in the pit are to be preserved till the end. Jude six

4. Mat 25:31 mentions the "holy angels", which might lead one to conclude that the unfallen angels have been in some way confirmed in their good nature. Be this an act of their own will, or more to the logical end, an act of the Lord.

I Tim 5:21, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels...." This term elect has puzzled some for years. There are two answers that fit.

a. The angels that did not chose to follow Lucifer were confirmed or elected to be retained as good angels for the Lord's service.

b. There were some that were elect before any angels fell. The non-elect fell and the elect remained in the Lord's service.

Either position would fit, but don't ask for a verse for either.

5. Since they have no mater, they would be immutable [unchangeable], save the fact that some fell.

6. They are all ultimately subject to God, even Lucifer and the fallen angels.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The angels are an important class of beings to us, even though we do not realize their presence. They are involved in the rising and falling of nations. They are involved in our own safety evidently.

2. A text that I have not mentioned that is of interest to us is Heb. 13:1,2, "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." This text indicates some items that we need to consider. First of all, the angels are active now in the church age. Secondly, angels may appear as normal people. And finally, the Lord may be allowing us, from time to time, to have contact with these heavenly beings.

Many years ago we had the habit of stopping to help people having trouble on the road. We still do at times if it seems safe. One night very late we were returning from Colorado Springs and

the snow was heavy plus plus. It was a very wet, driving snow and almost big drops of rain. A night when no sane person would be out.

We happened onto an old jalopy of a pickup with the hood raised. I stopped and walked back to find an old bearded scuzzy looking guy that should have been in the mountains panning gold, sitting on the radiator with a foot on each side of the engine with a book of paper matches trying to fix his truck. The matches would not stay lit and he was having a terrible time. I went back to our car for a flashlight and some tools and fixed the truck for him. As I was working, he kept saying over and over how much he appreciated me stopping and that he didn't even think of anyone stopping to help him. He was really shocked that anyone would stop.

As I got back into my car fairly well soaked, this passage came across my mind. Who knows? I have no idea! The situation was so very out of the ordinary that I had to wonder. The man was so nice, and friendly that I felt that he could have been more than just an old man in trouble.

3. We have assumed something in this study. We have assumed that there is one class of being and that general class is angels. We assume also that there are no other beings.

There are cherubim, seraphim, angels and then there is Lucifer. Are they all the same beings with varying offices or are they slightly different types of beings created for the Lord's purposes?

I feel that our study would apply equally well if either were true. It seems that they are all angelic beings with some differences. Their qualities and characteristics would be similar.

I personally feel that there may be different classes of angels. There would be the typical angel, then the archangels, and the cherubim. Again, don't ask for a verse, however the logic of what we know of the angels would indicate classes rather than just offices or levels.

4. There seems to be a lack of real study on the subject of the angels in the practical aspect. Much detail is to be had in the specifics of the angels, but the practical application is limited. This is partially due to the fact that the angels are operating in another sphere, and the Scriptures are silent as to what goes on when they operate in our sphere.

Example: Why do they come so that we can minister to them as Heb. mentions? Is this for the purpose of testing us? Is it a learning experience for the angel? Some very good questions for a research paper. (As usual, send me a copy.)

03650

ARCHANGELS

A fun study is to compare the following accounts and list the similarities as well as the differences that are listed. Ezekiel one; Ezekiel 10; Isaiah six; and Rev. 4:6ff. There are some questions that should come up. Why the differences? Why the similarities? Are these the same scene? Where is this scene? Etc.?

I think that most feel that these are the same scene with different men's perceptions of that scene. The perception of the men gives us the differences, while the similarities come from the fact that they viewed the same scene. There is also a possibility that the scene was viewed from different distances and angles of view, which could also cause the differences.

We will see in this study that there is warfare being waged in heaven. Consider for a while why there would be warfare in the heavenlies. Might it be related to the fact that the Devil is still attempting to usurp God? Yes, this is the case. He accomplishes this by causing doubt in believers, by ensnaring the lost, and blocking, or slowing God's work here on earth.

We will also see that there is organization in the heavenly scene. Again, take some time to consider why. There are several possibilities. First, there is chaos without some organization. Secondly, God is an organized Being. This can be seen in the creation. The warfare dictates the need for organization. What army in history ever functioned without organization. The American Indians often lost battles, according to the movie version of history, because the white man knew they all followed what the chief said, and if the chief was killed, chaos usually followed.

Within this organizational system there are different levels of angels. We want to look at these classes of angels as well as the angels that are mentioned by name.

ARCHANGEL

The term Archangel is Strong's 743 and is the Greek term "arkangelos." It is used of Michael in the New Testament, but the term is not used of him in the Old Testament. Michael is mentioned in the Old Testament, however and the term prince is used of him there. Vine mentions that Rom. 8:38 and Eph. 1:21 use the term "arche" as principalities. This is the prefix placed with angel to form archangel.

Funk in his word origins book mentions that the term "arche" means "beginning" or "origin". From this we use the term before other terms to show the preeminence. Archbishop, archenemy, archeology, etc. (Funk, Wilfred; "WORD ORIGINS AND THEIR ROMANTIC STORIES"; New York: Bell Publishing Co., MCML)

The term is used of one coming with the Lord for God's people. The verse states, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;" 1 Thess. 4:16 The indications are that the archangel will be with the Lord when He comes.

Jude nine names the archangel Michael.

1. Michael means "Who is like God?" according to Dickason. He mentions that this is quite a contrast with what Lucifer mentions, "I will be like the most High" (Is 14:14).

He is mentioned in Da. 10:13. Michael came to assist a messenger sent to give Daniel some information. They struggled with the Devil, or his emissaries.

Michael is mentioned as "one of the chief princes" which would indicate more than one "chief prince." This could be one other or many others, there is no way to know from this text.

Da. 10:21 mentions "Michael, your prince" speaking to Daniel. Michael was in some way Daniel's prince. ("prince" = Strong's 8269 = "sar." Strong states, "a head person (of any rank or class)" The term is a general term that is used 381 times in the Old Testament. It is used of many things all of which show a headship of the person. It is used for things such as princes of Israel, princes of other nations, religious leaders, political leaders, the Messiah and as we know the angelic host.)

The princes of Persia that Daniel mentions would give the thought that there may well be a hierarchy within Satans forces as well.

Da. 12:1 mentions Michael as the prince of the children of Israel. In some manner Michael stood for the nation Israel. This would indicate that he was a special angel of protection for the nation.

Jude nine mentions that Michael contended with the Devil over the body of Moses after Moses died. The contention is not what we want to observe. We want to see the fact that Michael had a battle with the Devil and that he won the battle.

In this text Michael is entitled the archangel. It might be observed that Michael had two terms used of him. There are two terms for this class of angel. The terms used are "prince" and "archangel", one being in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament. It would seem that the two are both descriptive of a position or office within the structure of the angelic host.

Revelation 12:7 tells us that Michael and his angels fought with the dragon and his angels. This would indicate that Michael has angels assigned to him to control and direct in the spiritual warfare going on in the heavenlies.

2. Gabriel Means "God's hero" according to Ryrie. I will list the verses which mention him and add comments as needed.

Da. 8:16: Gabriel is instructed to give Daniel information. The verse mentions that Gabriel spoke with a man's voice.

Da. 9:21: Again in this verse Gabriel is giving information to Daniel. It might well be surmised that the messenger of Dan. 10:13 is also Gabriel. This would put Michael and Gabriel fighting the forces of the Devil together.

Luke 1:19: This verse shows Gabriel to be a messenger again, only this time he is giving information to Zacharias about the coming birth of John The Baptist. In Luke 1:26 he is seen appearing to Mary, again giving information. He is certainly a messenger.

Luke 1:19: In this verse he is mentioned as one that "stands in the presence of God...." This would indicate that he is specifically a messenger that awaits God's command and is God's messenger to man upon certain occasions.

Conclusions relating to archangels:

1. There is more than one prince in the Old Testament.

2. The princes of the Old Testament are probably the archangels of the New Testament.

3. Michael is an archangel.

4. Gabriel is possibly an archangel. This is impossible to determine. He is not mentioned as such. He is definitely a messenger as opposed to the warfare of Michael, so may or may not be an archangel. If he is an archangel then the class of archangels can have different duties. (Messenger/warrior)

CHERUB

This is Strong's number 3742 and Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament's number 1036. Strong mentions of keruwb, "a cherub or imaginary figure" TWOT mentions that it is a name for angels that are pictured in Scripture as part man and part animal.

It comes from an Akkadian term meaning "to bless, praise, adore". It is used first in Gen. 3:24 of the guards at the gate of the garden of Eden. They were next seen on the ark of the covenant and on the drapes of the tabernacle. Their image was used in Solomon's temple and will be used in the Millennial temple according to Ezekiel. (Ex. 25:19; 37:8; Ezek. 41:18-25)

II Sam. 22:1-11 records a song of David which depicts God riding on a cherub. This might relate to the idea that the visions depict the throne of the Lord over the four creatures. Ezekiel mentions that the creatures have wheels under them, and that they move with the wheels. (Ps. 18:10 is a similar thought of the Lord riding a cherub.)

I Ki. 6:24-27 shows that there were cherubs in the temple that Solomon built. (II Ch. 3:11-12 also)

Ezek. 9:3 depicts the cherubim on the ark (formed by man at God's instructions) and the fact that the glory of the Lord is leaving that position as God prepares to leave the temple. This was His dwelling place from the time of the Exodus to the time of Ezekiel.

Ezek. 10:2-14 shows the cherubs to be the four creatures that are under the throne of God in the heavenlies. (Ezek. 1 and 11:21 also mentions them) The description is very detailed and i.s similar to the vision of Isaiah in Isa. 6:1ff, and John in Rev. 4:6ff.

Ezek. 28:14-16 names the Devil as a cherub before he fell. He was one of the highest angels originally. Verse fourteen mentions, "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of god; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire." The idea of walking might well indicate that he was walking in and out among the creatures that Ezekiel mentions. The term "anointed" and the term "covereth," as well as the phrase "upon the holy mountain" indicate that he had access and/or position other than that of one of the four creatures. I wonder if He might have had the position of Gabriel originally. Gabriel would fit into this terminology.

CHERUBIM

Cherub = Funk and Wagnalls, "A representation of a beautiful winged child, the accepted type of the angelic cherub.....In Scripture, a celestial being."

In Gen. 3:24 the cherubim were stationed at the gate of the garden of Eden after Adam and Eve had been sent out. The fact that the four living creatures are called cherubs would strongly indicate that this is the dwelling place of God at that time in history. (Topic number d04350 is a study on the Garden of Eden and mentions this dwelling place of God.)

(To summarize the texts: Ex. 25:18-22 speaks of the two cherubs on the lid of the ark; Ex. 26:1 speaks of the ones on the curtains; Ex 26:31 speaks of the ones on the veil; Nu 7:89 tells of the fact that God communicated with Moses from between the cherubim on the mercy seat; I Ki. 6:23-35 mentions Solomon's temple; I Ki. 8:6-7 depicts the cherubim on the ark as the glory of the Lord came to Solomon's temple.)

SERAPHIM

Seraph according to Funk and Wagnalls is "A celestial being having three pairs of wings." ("FUNK AND WAGNALLS STANDARD DESK DICTIONARY"; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Inc., 1976)

Isaiah 6:2 and 6 are the only references which use this term. It seems to be speaking of the same creatures as Ezekiel describes in his chapter ten.

I, have for years, thought that this was a descriptive term of the beings named cherubim. The

similarities between the cherubim and seraphim are great and the term seraphim is closely related to fire. The Cherub would be the class of the being, while Seraphim would be a term describing their appearance. I have never run across anyone that agreed with me until in 1991 when I looked it up in the "THEOLOGICAL WORDBOOK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT". They agree with me!

Billy Graham disagrees. He views the Seraphim as lower than the Cherubim. This is seen in "ANGELS:GOD'S SECRET AGENTS" New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975, p 49.

Dickason also disagrees and suggests that the seraphim are different from the cherubim. "Another special class of angels are the seraphim. They also, as the cherubim, are closely associated with the glory of God and are probably related closely in class to them. (Dickason, C. Fred; "ANGELS ELECT AND EVIL"; Chicago: Moody Press, 1975, p 65)

Dickason also makes a distinction between the cherub of Ezekiel and the living creatures in Revelation. He bases this on the differences in the two authors descriptions. Personally, if John were looking from one side only, his description of the beings would be very similar to the creatures of Ezek.

Application:

1. Col. 1:16, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers - all things were created by him, and for him;" Even with the warfare that is raging on around us on the spiritual plain, we can have a confidence in God. He is in control even in that realm. He has his army and it is constantly controlling the influence of the Devil and his followers.

2. As we begin to see the powers of the angelic host we should remember that the demonic host is also powerful. We should put a healthy respect into our thinking, as we would do battle with the Devil and his. We need not fear them, but we should not be overconfident. Prayer is the key to controlling the Devil's activities and not our own might, power, and wisdom!

3. Daniel depicts a great watchfulness over Israel in the spiritual realm. I assume the angelic host is also as watchful and active on the behalf of the church.

With the Spirit indewlling individuals, with the Spirit gifting individuals to build up the church, with Christ present when we gather together, with the angelic host watching over us, just what are we doing in the church today? Planning softball leagues, aerobics, fellowship dinners, sweet heart banquets, Christmas Banquets, teas, etc.

Why aren't we planning evangelism campaigns, missions conferences and edification seminars?

REALLY, ARE WE WORTHY OF ALL THE ATTENTION GOD HAS GIVEN US?

03700

OCCULT

It has been reported that there are three times more witches and fortune tellers in the old West Germany than there were preachers.

There are murderers in prisons in this country for killing in the practice of human sacrifice.

In America we have schools teaching courses in witchcraft. Americans spend over two hundred million a year on astrology. It has been reported that Americans buy two million Ouija boards a year. I have been told that there is a "rent a witch" firm in Ohio.

Doubleday has an occult book club with over a hundred thousand members. Baseball clubs hire astrologers to help in the seasons games.

So, do you think that the occult is active in our nation? Indeed, Christians dabble in it at times.

Have any of you ladies been around when someone was determining the sex of an unborn child? There are several methods. You can swing the wedding band suspended on a thread over the unborn baby. If it swings one way it's a boy and if the other way it's a girl. Spit into Saniflush and if it turns one color it's a boy, if it turns another color it's a girl (This one may have some basis in science). Take the number of the month of conception and add the age of the mother at conception and if the total is even it's a girl, if it's odd then it is a boy.

Have you read your horoscope? Have you ever had a wart removed in any manner other than medically? Have you ever water witched? Have you ever used an Ouija board? (See appendix one if you want further information on water witching. It contains information I assembled after being told by a student that he and a Christian leader had been out water witching and that he didn't think there was anything wrong with it.)

If you answered any of these yes, then you have been involved in the occult. We tend to accept some of the Borderline occult in America.

Why do we as Christians accept the Devils activities as all right?

a. Education - we've been bombarded with it. We are in the world system, and being influenced by it.

b. Movies such as Shirley McClain's movie on her experiences, Friday the 13th and many many more.

c. T.V. series Friday the 13th, as well as a number of movies that uplift the occult.

d. The television show Bewitched may have started some of the acceptance - cute witch with a cute wiggling turned up nose. What can be the matter with that? It is witchcraft.

e. We are not spiritual enough to discern the good from the bad.

f. There are talk shows now that have "good" witches that make it sound really good.

Let us move now into our study of the occult.

Occult defined: The term relates to something that is secret or hidden. It relates to things that are beyond the normal understanding - related to the mystic or dark side of things.

Some of the parts of the occult are:

parapsychology
palmistry
horoscopes
astrology
crystal balls
Jean Dixon type prophecy
tarot cards
seances
drugs
Ouija boards
astral projection
water witching
removing warts
the sixth and seventh books of Moses

Let's see from the start that Satan is able to do great feats.

Satan's copies before Pharaoh: Ex 7:8-12 Aaron's rod became a serpent - The magicians did the same - Aaron's serpent ate those of the magicians; 7:14-25 Water to blood - v22 "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments"; 8:1-7 Frogs upon the land - v 7 The magicians did it, also; 8:16-19 The lice came - v 18 Magicians tried but couldn't; 8:20-32 flies - Magicians don't try; 9:1-7 livestock killed - Magicians don't try; 9:8-12 - boils - Magicians couldn't even stay in court of Pharaoh v 11.

What do we learn here? God can and does limit the Devil's miracle power when He wants to, or the Devil's powers may be limited by the nature of the Devil himself.

The power we see today in the Occult is by God's permissive will and we need not get upset. We need only avoid it and/or deal with it if it comes up. We need not go looking for trouble. It will find us if the Lord wants us involved. We aren't to be ghost busters, or demon dumpers, we are to be good soldiers of the Lord.

Take a moment to read Ex 20:4,5. This text speaks of idolatry. This is the putting of something in place of God. It is the looking away from God. It is looking to something else for help, wisdom, and guidance. These are the things people in occultism are looking for. Occultism is very close to idolatry in principle.

Let us take time to look at some of the specifics of the occult, so that you will know what the occult is. I fear that many believers do not know what they are dealing with.

Astrology: Astron means star and logos means discourse. It is the finding out of how to live your life from the stars. It is allowing the horoscope to control your life and run how you think.

In 1500's NOSTRADAMUS studied the stars for years. Many predictions come from him. Some were true. He believed God guided our lives and affected our lives by the stars and planets and constellations. To believe in this is to believe that every light bulb in a light bulb factory affects the life and future of the cockroaches and the spiders.

The stars in the early days were, and even still are, believed to affect the growth of crops etc. This is linked to the same thinking that produces astrology.

Astrology refuted:

1. Finding your future, from other than God, is a form of idolatry. Lev. 19:4 "Turn ye not unto idols, nor make...melted gods."

2. Astrology is allowing unsaved people and the devil to have
control over your life.

3. Isa 47:11-15 shows the end of the star gazers.

What about just trying it? One pastor said this. He tried it just once. The reading said he should drive more carefully that day. Later that day he noticed he was driving much slower than usual. It had affected his life. He said that was enough.

Sure astrology works to some extent, but it is the devil and certainly his workers behind it.

Mind reading: The mind reader supposedly can through thought waves tell what you are thinking, with no verbal or physical communications. The mind readers have been exposed so many times over the years that one should be surprised to find anyone that believes in them

however there are many that do.

If the mind reader is not tricking his viewer, then his information is coming from some source other than God. That source is probably Satan.

Ouija board: There were four million boards sold in the U.S. in 1967. The board usually has a yes in one upper corner and a no in the other corner. The alphabet, and numbers one through zero are printed on it as well. There is a glass or pointer that the participants lightly touch. The pointer then points you to the yes or no, or if the answer is longer will spell out the answer to your question.

Finding out information from non natural, nonscientific means leaves you gaining information from the supernatural. God does not operate this way and there is only one other in the supernatural that does.

Prediction: One of the current favorites is Jeanne Dixon. Jeanne Dixon once mentioned that she had a snake crawl up on her stomach and look at her. She said that she saw in those eyes the wisdom of the ages. Sounds like Eve and the garden! She is a good Roman Catholic and claims her powers of prophecy are from God.

Let's see what God says about the accuracy of His prophecies.

Deut. 18:22 mentions that the prophesied item must come to pass or the prophet is a false prophet.

Deut. 13:1-3 If the item comes to pass and a prophet tries to get you to follow other gods he's false.

If Jeane Dixon is one of His then the Lord has slipped in the last few hundred years. She is in trouble for Deut. 18:20 says a prophet presuming to speak for Him will die. Deut. 13:5 also states false prophets are to be killed. I wonder if she would like some literal interpretation and quick application?

The predictionist can usually by viewing the world situation, and knowing history, give a 50% accurate set of predictions. They can also subscribe to a subscription service that will help them in assembling their information.

ESP: Extra sensory perception is basically knowing about what someone is holding or thinking about without communication. It is usually done in tests with shapes on cards. Some offer proof of this by suggesting twins that often sense when the other is dying. This may or may not be ESP. It is communication on a thought level. This goes into the mind reading area, also.

ESP refuted: Some say what's wrong with using this sixth sense, or whatever it is.

1. God gave us six senses: Sight sense, smell sense, hear sense, touch sense, taste sense, and good sense. Those are the only senses we need. No other sense is found in the Scripture. If He had given us some super dooper sense why didn't He make it one we'd know all about like the others? Why didn't He tell everyone how to use it.

2. If God didn't give us a super sense then where does it come from if someone has it? THE DEVIL.

Witches: The Old Testament gives us some information concerning witches. Ex 22:18 They are to die. Deut. 18:10-12 states that witches are an abomination unto the Lord. Gal 5:19-21 tells us that you can't be a witch and be saved.

Coven and Sabbaths: A coven normally contains six male, and six female witches, with a high priest or high priestess. They meet monthly and have several festivals during the year.

It is reported that during these ceremonies they remove their clothes and bath in salt water. The salt water bath is to purify them.

Witchcraft: This is the practice or craft of the witch. It involves all that they are and all that they do.

One of the famous cases of murder in California might be of interest to you.
There is a book named Helter Skelter which details the thinking and actions of Charles Manson and his followers. His thinking seems to have been a mixture of Rock and Roll, the Devil, witchcraft, and Indian myths. ("HELTER SKELTER"; pp 239-242))

This study is continued in topic number d03750.

03750

OCCULT CONTINUED

Firewalking: This has been verified over and over again. People walk on super hot coals with no pain and no burns. Some of this may be a hoax for tourists, but many are for real.

I read once of a woman that was carrying her baby across coals. She was not fully prepared and dropped her child which died the seconds before they could reach it.

If everything the devil does is a mimic or copy of something God has done, what does firewalking copy? Try Dan 3:17-27 - read it.

Firewalking refuted: We are limited to natural laws. Heat causes burns which are painful to the human body. For this natural law to be laid aside we must have supernatural intervention. God

or Satan. God intervenes in nature for his purpose and glory. There is no glory or purpose for God in firewalking, thus we can safely state that fire walking is of the Devil's power.

Transference: There are several ways mentioned in "The Devil's Alphabet" were something is transferred. You can transfer disease or a problem to someone in a casket and it goes away. This is done by saying a little saying beside a casket just before burial and then throw something of yours in. I have to wonder if this isn't part of the reason back in history when it became a part of the ritual of funerals to go up to the casket and "view the deceased."

Transference can come from the dead to the living. Someone seeing a suicide victim - suddenly the same feelings and fears associated with the other persons death become part of the viewers life.

One missionary dealing with a sorceress on her death bed for salvation - her son choked to death on a bean as the woman renounced the devil.

Put your family and yourself under God's protection when you deal with the occult.

Rod and Pendulum: What is it? We have mentioned the swinging of a ring over an unborn child to determine sex. Have you ever heard of a dowser or water witch? A forked rod or stick run by a man to find water.

They diagnose and treat ailments with this system. They even in color therapy move a pendulum over colored threads. The pendulum picks the thread color and that thread is moved over the affected area. This, by the way, can be done over the phone. Healing has resulted. You tell me where it came from.

Dr. Koch tells of a clergyman that can approach graves with a pendulum and tell the sex of the occupant with 100% accuracy. Even graves 100 years old.

Mediums: The Scripture is clear concerning mediums also. They are to die, Lev. 20:27; Anyone consulting a medium is to be driven out, Deut. 18:11.

Seances: The seance is a meeting of people interested in reaching the dead. There is usually one that is in charge. When the dead spirit is reached there is often voices and/or appearances. Sometimes unnatural things occur as well. Tables lifting, lights, etc.

The late Bishop Pike spoke with his dead son several times through mediums.

Mediums: The medium is the one that controls the gathering, and is the medium through which the dead spirit is contacted. Their voice at times becomes the voice for the dead spirit.

The thought of this occurrence is to gain knowledge from the other world. Isa 8:19 tells us not to

seek advice from the dead. This should be enough to deter any believer from being involved with such things.

A couple of other references that might help in this area: I Sam 28:3-25 Samuel was brought back to talk to Saul; I Chr. 10:13,14 shows Saul was punished for seeking a medium instead of asking of the Lord for information.

Raising from the dead: Some believe that people can have the power to raise others from the dead. Those occurrences that have happened, are done through trickery.

Some religious people have taken the Bible wrongly and believed that they could raise someone to life. The problem is that they were not able to.

Letters of Protection: These are letters that are given that supposedly protect life and property. They were passed down from generation to generation with the property. I read of one in Germany that was written on parchment. It was a promise from Satan to protect the property. The account mentioned that within hours of the removal of the paper from the barn, the farm was hit by lightning and destroyed. This barn and farm were near a great explosion of a munitions train during the war, yet sustained no damage. The farm was about 300 years old, as was the parchment. Not only had it survived World War Two, but it had survived several other conflicts, and catastrophes as well.

Mental Suggestion: This is the ability of talking to people with sickness and suggesting to them that they are now well. The power is in the mind of the people involved.

Ghosts: The accounts of ghosts are common, even with believers involved. There seems to be an activity of spirits in this physical world. These probably are not the ghosts that he lost think of, but rather demons, having their fun. Ghosts are supposed to be the spirit's of dead people that seek to communicate with this world.

Meditation: Meditation is the art of being quiet and emptying your mind. A new business has been formed in some cities. It is called Mind Control. They will teach you to meditate. Big companies are sending their workers to it so they can learn to relax and get away from the stress of corporate America.

At the end of the course you are taught how to have two symbols of Divine Intelligence come upon you. They will give you advice in love, life and business. You can choose what intelligence you want. George Washington, Jesus or any other.

Transcendental Meditation: This is usually felt to be centered in Hinduism. It takes meditation one step further. It is an emptying of the mind so that a dead spirit can take over your mind and think through you.

I am told that it is taught in some public high schools at taxpayers expense. Something seated and produced by Hinduism is taught, while Christians can't even pray.

Meditation is something that the believer should be involved in, however it is not the meditation of the occult. It is thinking and considering the Lord and His Word, not emptying our minds for some other being to fill.

How do we meditate upon the word?

1. Feel the need. II Cor. 4:16-18 shows we should be thinking and meditating on the spiritual - the Word and God.

2. Enjoy the quest. Seek new things from the Word.

3. Take a paragraph and read it. State what it means. Memorize it? Think about it. Apply it personally. Commit yourself to doing it. Act on it. Pray for help.

Astral Projection: This is also termed Out Of Body Experience. It is something that happens at times, whereby a person exits his body and can view their own body from a distance. Some travel to other places, while others just view themselves and return. The close range O.O.B.E. experiences are often related to the person being very sick or injured, and they watch as the doctors work on them.

Some tell us that this is a Scriptural principle and offer as
proof Ezekiel's experiences of being transported. They also suggest II Cor. 12:2-4 as Scriptural proof of out of body experiences. Not so! Some also suggest that Christ wasn't really raised from the dead, but that he was one of the early O.O.B.E.'ers.

Astral Projection refuted: The very fact that they say Christ was an OOBE'er tells me they are out. I Cor. 15:12-15 says if Christ didn't raise from the dead then we are false teachers and our faith is in vain.

God has limited us to time and space. What Ezekiel experienced and quite possibly what Paul as well as other prophets experienced, may have been similar to this astral projection, in that the devil often copies from God. Indeed, little of the Devil's work is original, but most of it is copied as we've seen.

If it was God's first, we have some very important facts which don't hold true in the devil's phenomenon.

In Scripture they were of God's idea - they were involuntary. As far as the man was concerned - they were for revealing God's information for God's purpose. ALSO, if we could get out of our bodies to escape pain why didn't God teach us all how to do it so we could just have our body

carried into the dentist or doctor for repairs while we fly to Hawaii.

May I suggest the following as some of the devils possible counterfeits:

THE DEVILS COPY	OF GOD'S ORIGINALS
high priests	pastors
witches	Christians
walking on fire	Shadrach, Mechach, Abednego
astral projection	Ezekiel, Paul
pendulum	prayer and God's leading
divination	prayer and God's leading
astrology	prayer and God's leading
covens	churches
clairvoyance	discerning of spirits
demon	angels
medium	Holy Spirit
fortune tellers	God's leading and prayer
palmists	God's leading and prayer
tarot cards	God's leading and prayer
Ouija board	God's leading and prayer
transcendental meditation	meditation on the Word
seance	prayer meeting
prophets	God's prophets

Conclusion:

From my studies I find several things of importance.

1. Even in dabbling in the occult, people find themselves depressed - uneasy about the Bible and prayer.

2. When Christ faced the occult, it was stopped cold when He commanded. In other cases in the Scripture it was by command of an apostle, or by prayer.

3. Those in the occult that become Christians usually have a strong battle coming out, but they do have victory. They also lose their powers to do things that are not natural.

4. Many, many in the occult have horrible times sooner or later.

5. Many things of the occult have been covered up and have become acceptable to the world as a whole. For example: Ouija boards and pendulums for finding an unborn baby's sex.

6. Almost everything is enticing. It is pleasing and usually is desirable in some way.

7. Christians are often troubled by different parts of occultism but never does Satan have the final victory. The book of Job is our promise of that. Job specifies very clearly that the Devil's power over Job was limited by God.

8. Most of the time when people in occultism want help, or when people are plagued by problems linked with the occult, they seek help from the church. Interesting.

9. In reference to number eight, we might mention that quite often Catholic churchmen have been ineffective in helping people, but when a born again Christian is asked, help is available.

10. A question. How come the occult formerly was under cover but now is out in the open?

Fact. The occult is open where Christianity is at a low point. Voodooism is rampant in some South America countries where there is little religious activity. The U.S. is at a record low spiritually, and the devil is making hay while he may.

I might add one element. Drugs. They are used in most Voodoo and witchcraft. We need to know about these things for they are becoming more and more a part of our culture. The Occult is in the public school systems to a point. Some systems allow teaching in the area. There are many students that are involved in the occult as well, and they affect the other students.

I heard an ad from the public library just the other day about the witch that was teaching a girl witchcraft. Come to the children's library to see if this girl becomes a witch. It was an ad for children to come to the public library to hear a book read.

Television programs are pushing it. Toy stores are pushing it. The devil wants Christians involved in these things to ruin their testimony and lives, but remember we have the Holy Spirit within us and He is more powerful than Satan.

Consider Rev 9:19-21. Millions dead yet they hang on to these sins in the end time. Murder, sorceries, immorality, theft, and idolatry. Sounds like the occult will be rampant in the end.

Let's see to it that we keep ourselves and our families from these things. Separate yourself from it unto God for God's glory and your sake.

If the devil copies God's miraculous and everyday ways of working with man, why settle for 2nd best (the devil's), when we can get God's best.

I would like to list a number of terms with a short definition for each. This should help if you do any reading on the subject.

GLOSSARY:

AMULET: An ornament that has a spell or writing on it that wards off the evil spirits. It is worn around the wrist or neck.

ANIMISM: The belief that all objects have a soul. (Rocks, chairs etc.)

ASTROLOGY: The belief that the stars and planets control our lives, and the thought that our lives may be predicted on the basis of the universe.

AUGURY: The practice of divination.

BEWITCH: To cast a spell on a person or thing to bring about harm.

BLACK MAGIC: Witchcraft.

CHARM: A spell that has power to do things. It is also something that one wears that is related to the occult.

CLAIRVOYANCE: Predicting what can't be known.

CONJURE: To call forth a dead person or demon.

COVEN: Group of witches and/or warlocks. Often six witches, six warlocks and one priest or priestess. Thirteen total.

CRYSTAL GAZER: A person that predicts the future with the help of a crystal ball.

CURSE: Declaring evil upon a person, or the result of same.

DEMON: A fallen angel that is servant of the Devil.

DIVINATION: The predicting of the future by any means.

EXORCISM: The process by which demons are cast out of a person or dwelling.

E.S.P.: Extra-sensory perception. Knowing through mental powers.

EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION: Knowing something without senses, knowledge, or contact with a person.

FAMILIAR: A spirit that abides in an animal that serves and helps the owner.

FETISH: An object that primitives believe have power to ward off evil and bring good fortune to the owner.

FORTUNE-TELLER: Someone that predicts the future of a person. They use different means. (Crystal balls, palms, cards etc.)

HEX: A spell to ward off evil.

HOROSCOPE: A prediction of a person's future based on the stars. It is both a diagram for the predicting, and a prediction either verbal or printed.

INCANTATION: A chant or saying that is repeated to bring about certain things, such as a hex or some magical occurrence.

MAGIC: Power over forces other than natural, by the use of spells etc.

MEDIUM: Someone that is used to speak between a person and a spirit. The medium may just be a contact or may speak for the spirit.

NECROMANCY: Calling forth of spirits to attempt to foretell the future.

OCCULT: Those things relating to supernatural occurrences and powers.

OUIJA BOARD: A board with the alphabet and numbers on it. A pointed piece points out messages from the spirit world.

PALMISTRY: The foretelling of things by looking at the palm of a person's hand.

PHRENOLOGY: Telling the future based on the feeling of the skull.

POLTERGEIST: Ghosts. They are usually seen as fun loving ghosts that don't do harm.

PRECOGNITION: Knowing the future.

PREMONITION: A feeling of something that will happen in the future.

PRESENTIMENT: A feeling of something that is going to come to pass fairly soon.

PSYCHIC: Someone that is sensitive to the supernatural and forces related to it.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA: Events or occurrences that are unexplainable by normal laws of nature and logic.

REINCARNATION: The process by which a soul comes back in this life numerous times, via different bodies or levels.

SATANISM: The worship of the Devil.

SEANCE: A meeting of a group for the purpose of communicating with the spirit world. A medium usually leads the meeting.

SOOTHSAYING: Foretelling the future.

SORCERY: The use of power obtained from spirits to do things.

SPELL: A word or words that have magical power when spoken or repeated.

SPIRITISM: The thought that the spirit world communicates with this world through mediums or objects.

TAROT CARDS: The cards a fortune teller uses to predict the future. There are twenty-two of them and each has a picture on it.

TELEPATHY: Communication between two people without speaking, hearing, seeing etc.

TRANCE: A condition where a person is not conscious of themselves or their environment.

VOODOO: A religion from Africa that is centered now in Haiti and the Netherland Antilles, based on spirit control and worship.

WARLOCK: A male witch. Usually they gain power from the Devil.

WITCH: A female witch. As the warlock, they gain power from the Devil.

WITCHCRAFT: The practice of magic accomplished with powers from the Devil.

WITCHES' SABBATH: The meeting of a coven for the practice of rites. This is at midnight.

MISC. INFORMATION THAT MIGHT HELP IN YOUR STUDY:

Deut. 18:10-13
I Sam. 15:23 lists divination as comparable to rebellion against God.
Isa. 8:19 Ezek. 21:21 mentions three items: a. Shakes the arrows: The arrows had names or places written on them and the arrows were shaken and dumped on the ground, or thrown in the air. They would follow the direction of the arrows, or go to the place written on the top one. b. Household idols. c. Look at the liver: They would cut the liver from an animal then split it open.

They determined the message from the number of, or color of the rocks found inside. Others used the color of the flesh itself to determine the answer to their question.

See also Nu. 22:7; Nu. 23:23; II Ki. 17:17; Ezek. 12:24; Ezek. 13:6; Acts 16:16-21.

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CONCLUSION

We've all heard comments about the wolf in sheep's clothing. We all relegate that in the spectrum of Christianity to the liberals and false teachers under the umbrella of "Christianity." I would like to suggest that today we have little ways in which it is really the devil creeping under that umbrella - slowly but surely sneaking into the church and its activities.

II Cor. 11:13-15 states, "For such [are] false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

We normally relate this to the false teaching that is made to look like truth. We do have a serious problem with this today. The churches divorce rate is currently about the same as the worlds. We have accepted the world philosophy of, try it you'll like it. If you don't, divorce it.

We are also seeing more and more unsaved people as church members. Some are even on the boards of previously sound churches. Indeed, I have been told of unsaved sitting on the boards of fundamental churches.

The Devil has been copying the Lord's ways, means and ideas since the beginning.

I trust that you will take this section as with a grain of salt until you do some thinking about it on your own in future days, but I have been tossing it around a lot over a long period of time, and feel that there is a bunch of truth in it.

In this study I would like to just think of the devil's influence on the church. He doesn't have to copy the church or the Lord's doings, He now just has to wait a few months until the church copies the world's ways and he has his stuff into the church at the church's invitation.

Just what are some of these items that we, the church, copy?

What I'm about to say may not be bad, but consider it - beware of it - act on it.

1. When I was growing up the rock and roll stations introduced us to the top 40! Today we have top forties of Western, Blue Grass, Popular, Rock, Heavy Metal AND now CHRISTIAN MUSIC! We have Christian rock, Christian rap and I recently heard music that was an attempt to copy the New Age music recently.

2. We have had toy action figures with us for a number of years, at least since Star Wars, and in the late 80's we were introduced to BIBLE ACTION FIGURES!

3. We have for years had Sunday School songs and choruses, but now we have Christian words put to everyday tunes of the world. (Brother John, I've Been Worken on The Railroad etc.)

4. The world gave us heavy metal and the church now has CHRISTIAN HEAVY METAL!

5. Historical novels have been with us for years and years but the Christians of our time just have to have their CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL NOVELS based on the lives of Biblical characters.

6. How about Bible Trivia? The terms in the title of that game ought to say enough to help us understand our subject in this study - BIBLE - TRIVIA! REALLY!

7. I walked into a Christian's home in the late 80's and noticed several Jr. Hi. age young people playing Bible Pictionary. One of the young people was exploding with excitement because she had the answer first, and she hollered at the top of her lungs, "The Blood of Christ!!!!!!" I really think that the blood of Christ should have a little more dignity than that!

8. The rock groups had their guitars, bass guitars, keyboards and now so do the churches.

9. We need to have a good evangelism program so we are out there using memorized programs that have been set up by people that are near commercial quality. Why do we need a spit and polish program when we don't need it. If we needed it, we would have first and second evangelism not Romans.

Others use questionnaires to get the people to talk to them. The use of questionnaires is not wrong, unless it is a tool to get in the door. If you are really interested in the answers to the questions, and plan on using that information, then surveys are okay. If you use it for a door opener, consider a study of ethics.

10. The world has given their employees packages of benefits and pay and termed it many things, but today we have many pastors that judge a prospective church on the pay package that they offer. Within the pay package are items such as:

salary	parsonage allowance
travel	conference expenses

vacation pay clothing allowance
medical insurance social security
retirement package moving expenses
relocation expenses
and anything else the pastor can suggest.

By the way, what is living by faith? I fear for many it is:

F inancially secure
A ffluent
I ncome rising
T ax sheltered
H ome paid for

11. Christians have condemned the costly cathedrals of the Roman church yet we are building bigger, and better, and snazzyer churches than ever.

12. We have known for centuries that the Lord holds each and everyone of us as very valuable. We know that we all have great value in God's eyes, yet we have invited the "self image" and "self worth" philosophy into our churches, and many of our youth are thriving on it.

13. We despise bigotry yet we have educational bigotry in many of our fellowships and groups. We have some looking down their noses at minimally educated people, and they in turn condemn the higher education people as over educated.

For that matter how many of the churches that you have been in have black people as members, unless the whole church is black?

14. The Roman Church had their problems with not allowing the lay people to have the Bible to read for centuries! Never will fundamentalists do that, we have said for many moons, yet we have many seminaries teaching their students, OUR PASTORS, that you cannot properly understand the Bible unless you know the original languages. Not to many steps down the road and we may have the Romanists telling us off about that one.

15. How about the teaching and preaching of the church today?

How accurate is it? I have seen men declare boldly something that is in the Old Testament that was for an age past as fact for our living, yet ignore other teaching in the Old Testament or the New Testament that declares that the principle has been set aside.

I heard a man declare boldly that the sin of the father will be visited upon the children and he gave an illustration of a father that went into adultery in June and in July his Godly teenage daughter started sleeping with her boyfriend. Now the story may be true, yet it does not prove

that the principle is for today. Indeed, the Book of Ezekiel chapter 18 seems to say that God has changed that principle!

I sat in a Sunday School class in a Baptist church and listened for half an hour about the bills that the church had. The pastor told us that we had to take offerings to pay those bills before the Lord returned, so that we wouldn't have to take offerings when the Lord was here. Proof? Yes, of course he had a proof text! I Cor. 16:2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." THAT WAS PAUL SPEAKING BY THE WAY!

How Biblical is it? I have heard many many sermons that the speaker used a bit of a verse as a spring board to go off into some topic that he wanted to cover, and never again return to the Word for direction or proof.

How honest is it? We say that we reject the principles of modern day counseling and the psychiatrists of days gone by, yet we still hear "Christian counselors" that are rerunning the old, "why do you hate your mother" (or father), Fruedian principles.

We say in some circles that we reject the accreditation as teaching institutions, yet we accept the accreditation of the organizational part of the institutions. Seems a bit illogical to most.

16. How about missions today?

Are we following Biblical principles? Or are we out there trying man's concoctions? I have been told of men that are attempting to start a churches by telemarketing. The same principles that insurance salesmen use to sell insurance!

We are seeing more and more Christians feel that we should use the world's principles.

When I was on deputation and the support wasn't coming in a Christian sat me down and told me what I was doing wrong. He mentioned that I wasn't being a good Public Relations man. He thought that the church was all wrong in sending people out on deputation. His thought was that we should introduce advertising campaigns into the church and raise money as a secular Ad Campaign might raise money.

Are we totally committed to reaching the lost? Again, when I was on deputation I sat across the table from a man that was questioning the "COST EFFECTIVENESS" of missions. If the missionary can't produce certain results then he is not being cost effective and should be brought home or sent elsewhere.

The telemarketing that I mentioned earlier is based on the same principle. If you can't raise enough interest by making so many phone calls in an area then it is not cost effective to go ahead and start a church in that area.

WHAT HAPPENED TO "SAVING THE LOST AT ANY COST!"?
WHAT HAPPENED TO "SOLD OUT FOR GOD!"?
WHAT HAPPENED TO "GIVING ALL FOR GOD'S GLORY!"?
One more question. "WHAT HAPPENED?"

17. The world has had radio for many years and believers have used secular stations to propagate the Gospel. In recent years we have "Christian Radio" that is for the purpose of _____, you tell me, cuz I don't know.

If it is for the propagation of the Gospel, why do I hear so little Gospel on it. If it is for the edification of the saints, why do I hear so much false doctrine on it?

I have people constantly telling me how great the listening is on Christian radio, yet every time I tune in on Sunday morning, I hear I'm going to hell because I sinned last Tuesday.

The real crime is that we have Christians supporting those stations! God's money is going to help propagate false doctrine and play Christian rock!

Sure I can be selective to what I listen to, but how about that lost person that tunes in looking for help and finds some false teaching to follow.

I'm not against giving to Christian programs, but do it directly to the ministry and encourage them to change to secular stations where the lost people listen. At least on secular radio the lost know selectivity is necessary.

18. I promised myself that I would not mention dress when I was finishing up these comments. I would not want to talk about dress. Yes I would want to talk about dress. In fact just a comment or two, (or three or four).

As I try to live a Godly life why would I want to use the same sort of language the world does?

As I try to live a Godly life why would I want to frequent the places that the world frequents?

As I try to live a Godly life why would I want to live by the same standard that the world lives by?

As I try to live a Godly life why would I want to educate myself as the world educates itself?

As I try to live a Godly life why would I want to look and dress like the world looks and dresses?

End commentary.

19. How about Christian performers that cost $8000 per show?

20. Maybe the Christian Publishers - you know those that really want to reach the world. Reach the world with the Bible at $34.95 a copy.

21. Might we suggest that we are not only copying the world, but in some cases we are working with the world - with the lost.

We have mission translators that turn their work over to the Roman Catholic Church. We have evangelists that turn their converts back into lost, state churches as well as to the Roman Catholic Church. We have people that work within the Roman Church.

These are all groups that evangelical and fundamental people support with God's money.

22. How do we treat the names of God? I was in a Sunday School class recently called the God squad. Cute? Yes. Honoring to God? I doubt it, on the whole.

23. We don't teach about the devil, demons, and hell today. We are helping eliminate those things from a new generations thinking. Add to that the fact that many of these same kids watch the occult etc. on television and assume that it is good viewing.

24. In the early 90's I was listening to "Christian radio" and heard a news flash. It was from Jerusalem and it was "on the spot coverage" of Christ's triumphal entry. Actually it was stated that they were covering a parade. The commentator mentioned that the parade was planned by the religious leaders, and that it had great political overtones. The blurb sounded innocent enough, however it was teaching falsehood. Christ was not political, the religious leaders did not plan it and it was not a parade. Aside from that it lowered the Lord's declaration of Himself as KING to the level of a newscast that was false coverage.

25. It wasn't bad enough to have a bunny that lays colored decorated eggs, but now we have shrink wrap, religious plastic coverings for eggs.

26. We saw a sign advertising Easter goodies in Wyoming. Chocolate bunnies, marshmallow eggs, crosses and suckers.

Do you feel that the church is making the "Holy" things common and everyday? It seems that the church has taken many things spiritual and placed them on a plain that is so common that the children of our day are going to have a hard time understanding why church, the Bible, and Christianity are of any importance at all.

Do we really know what evil is anymore? Do we really recognize the devil's ways when we are looking at them? Do we really understand the ramifications of what we are doing in the church today?

GOD FORBID THAT YOU AS A STUDENT OF GOD'S WORD GO OUT AND

PERPETUATE WHAT IS GOING ON IN MANY OF OUR CHURCHES! IF ALL YOU ARE GOING TO DO IS FURTHER WHAT THE DEVIL IS DOING IN THE CHURCH THEN DON'T GET INVOLVED IN THE MINISTRY! GOD DOES NOT NEED YOU!

HOW DARE YOU USE GOD'S MONEY, YOUR TIME TO ASSIST THE ADVERSARY!

If on the other hand you are going out into the world to use the Bible as your handbook for Christian living, for church planting, for church organization, for family building, then GO FOR IT AND MAY GOD BLESS THE DAY LIGHTS OUT OF YOU!

BOLD? HEAVY? OPINIONATED? I CERTAINLY HOPE SO! IF IT ISN'T THEN I HAVE FAILED IN WHAT I WANTED TO DO IN THIS SECTION!

If you are not awake to the Devil's work in the church in this country now, then I suspect that you are a bit on the blind side!

A related study is the study of humanism and its effect on the church. If you just read through the Humanist manifestos, you will see that the humanist thinking is having serious affects on the church.

I would like to close with a passage of Scripture:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Keep the order on that right"! It's submit to God and resist the Devil NOT submit to the Devil and resist God!

03850

WATER WITCHING

The question to be answered is this, "Is water witching part of the Occult?"

FACTS:

1. There does not seem to be any explanation for the phenomena, either logically, nor scientifically. Some suggest that it has to do with the magnetic fields, yet if this is true, why are water witchers incorrect at times. (They do not always find water.) If a law of nature is in effect when it works, then the phenomena should work at all times.

2. The Encyclopedia Americana, nor The Illustrated World Encyclopedia, nor the New Universal

Standard Encyclopedia contain an entry under the heading water witching and the Encyclopedia Americana has none under the term Dowsing. If there were solid evidence to the truth of the practice it would seem that they would discuss it.

3. The book of Job tells us in the first two chapters that the Devil can control nature within the limits that God places upon him. He is able to control specifically in the book of Job: People, 1:16,17; fire, 1:16; Wind, 1:19; man's physical diseases, 2:7.

4. Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary under water witch states, "One that dowses for water". (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) Another term used is dousing for water. It comes from douse which means to place into water. A water witcher is one that claims to be able to find water below the surface of the earth by using special powers.

The use of terms like "power", "witch", and "divining" would indicate that someone in the past - the one that first used these terms thought that there was more to the effect than natural activities.

The usage of the term "supposed" would indicate that Webster had a question in his mind as to the validity of the practice.

6. Dowsing is not only used for finding water, but minerals as well. (One author mentions that the practice started with the location of minerals in England many years ago.)

7. "It works." is usually the comment to those questioning the practice. "It works." does not make it right, proper, scientific, nor from God.

Job tells us that Satan controlled nature to the extent that God allowed. "It worked!" but it wasn't right, proper, scientific, nor from God, it was from the Devil. "It works." is no proof at all.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. There seems to be little, if any, scientific evidence to support the phenomena.

2. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. I have heard the figure of it's working 50% of the time, more than once. If it were scientific and related to the laws of nature, 100% of the time would be more appropriate.

3. If it works there is no natural explanation for it from science. (At least to this point, I have seen none offered.)

4. Most dowsers claim power to find water. Where does the power come from? If God sent it, why didn't He tell us about it. Others call it a special gift. Again, if it is from God why did He

not mention it in the Word? Indeed, why didn't he give it for the use of the Israelites in the wilderness? (Don't tell me that was what Moses was doing with his rod, either.)

5. The terms used in relation to the practice seem to be terms that normally relate to Satan rather than God. "a power", "witch", "witching", and "Divining".

6. If it works for metal ore and water, then why haven't scientists been able to:

a. Verify the process.
b. Develop the process.
c. Explain the process.

And finally if you can dowse for metals and water, then why not oil and other valuables. If all of this is possible, then why do so many scientific companies spend billions of dollars on exploration for these substances.

7. To prove with Scripture that water witching is part of the Demonic tool chest, there is no verse to quote, yet the principles of finding things that are unknowable by common channels is soundly rejected within the scriptures.

At best water witching would be classed in the area of wives tales, and at worst it could be attributed to Satan.

If there is no proof that it works, then it would seem to fit in the first category. If there is no rational explanation for it, and it works, then the later seems to be the more appropriate.

NOTES OF INTEREST:

It has been reported that the armed forces tried to witch for land mines in Viet-Nam. The validity of this is questionable since there is no documentation that I know of, but if it were true, then why did they take mine detectors and detonators to the Middle East as they did in 1991?

There is an entry in a book that attributes the process of water witching to the category of fakery. (Danny Korem & Paul Meier, M.D., "THE FAKERS", Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.) Pages 52 through 59 give logical explanation to the phenomena.

I personally reject the fakery aspect and feel that from what I have read and heard that it probably is a process by which you can find water at times. I further would hold that this is accomplished by a power, not of God, but of the Devil.

Some references that relate to the topic indirectly:

The finding of water through water witching is basically finding out information that cannot be

known by natural senses and means, or from God.

The Scripture seems to deal with this at times under the topic of divination. The following references speak to that subject. Nu. 22:7; Nu. 23:23; De. 18:10; II Ki. 17:17; Jer. 14:14; Eze. 12:24; Eze. 13:6,7,23; Eze. 21:21,22,23; Acts 16:16.

You might desire to look up the term diviners also. Ge. 44:15; I Sa. 28:8; Pr. 16:10; Mic. 3:6,11; Zech. 10:2.

FINAL DISCLAIMER:

If at any time scientific evidence is given to prove contrary to the above information I will be pleased to give it consideration.

If at any time Biblical evidence is given to prove contrary to the above information I will be pleased to give it consideration.

By the same token before you, the reader, set the thoughts set forth aside, it is your responsibility to prove with some evidence that the thoughts are incorrect. A phrase like "It works!" is not valid evidence that the process of water witching is not of the occult.

You must also deal with the thought that all information comes from the Word, the things that we can sense through the senses, those things that we can learn from scientific observation/experimentation, and those things which we can logically deduce. Water witching is not related to any of these sources other than the sense of sight in what might be observed, which is suspect to fakery, and taste, if water is found.

I would enjoy seeing rebuttals, responses and rotten tomatoes raised by these thoughts. (REMEMBER, I WANT TO SEE THE TOMATOES, NOT WEAR THEM.)

ANTHROPOLOGY

03900

INTRODUCTION

There is scientific evidence that the human soul has weight. In 1907 Dr. Duncan MacDougall placed dying patients on a very sensitive scale just before they died. At the point of death there was an immediate weight loss of from 3/8 to 1 1/2 ounces. He did this experiment on six people. Of the six bodies there were four that showed this weight loss. He also tried the experiment on fifteen dogs, and not one of them changed weight at the point of death.

So there. We do have souls and they vary in weight. I wonder if that indicates that a weight

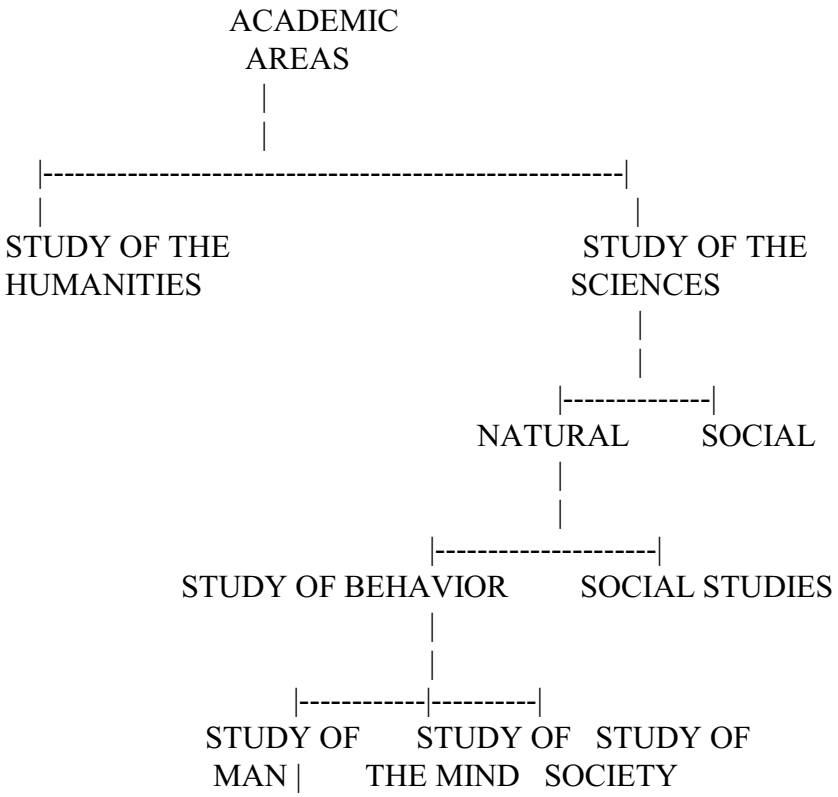
problem in this life is transferred into the next life. Ha!

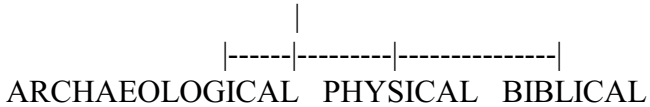
We can't use such a short experiment to definitely prove that the human being has a soul, however if you believe that the Bible is God's Word to man, you can know that there is a soul within man. Indeed, many of the religions of the world view man's makeup as containing a soul and/or spirit.

As we enter into a study of anthropology, we are going to be studying man. This section is somewhat unique, in that it is the only subject of theology which laps over into the secular world of study. Anthropology is a secular subject as well. Unsaved people are interested in the study of anthropology as well as the Christian. The secular view of man will be different to some extent because their basis will be the theory of evolution, while the Christian's basis for study is the Bible.

Secular anthropology will view man as descending from a long evolutionary cycle, while Christian anthropology's view of man comes from the creator of that man, God.

Within the secular scheme of study there are many divisions of study. I would like to show a chart which shows some of these divisions and their relation to the overall system of study.





Most of you have heard of the Alex Halley book and movie, called "ROOTS." We are all interested in our roots. We desire to know about our fathers, our grandfathers, our great grandfathers etc.

We are about to really study our roots. We are going to look into the origin of man. As I approach the doctrine of man I'm left to wonder if I have anything to say. I don't even know about myself much less about mankind. Now, the doctrine of "SIN" - that is another story. I have some knowledge of it and can speak with a little authority.

In short ANTHROPOLOGY is the study of man, or the science of man. We will get into a more detailed definition in a few moments. There are two sources or approaches to the study of man.

We can study man from the approach of human philosophy as most of the world approaches the subject, or we can look at what the Word of God tells us about man, and draw conclusions from that source.

From our Christian perspective it is most logical to look at both, and hold to what the Lord has given to us in the Word.

There is value in looking at the secular philosophical approach to anthropology. Let us take a brief look at these benefits.

1. They have some things that would help us understand the lost world. Of course we don't want to accept evolution as a belief, but we can certainly learn of the basic thought of this system so that we can talk intelligently to an evolutionist about his spiritual needs. His spiritual need does not change just because he is an evolutionist, but when we talk to him of God, there are some hurdles we must overcome.

2. There are, I'm sure, some facts that they have within their area of study that might help us understand how the world system operates. This again translates into a help when talking to the lost. It also helps us understand why the world system is the way it is. If we understand their system we won't need to become disgusted with the lost when they act the way they do.

We have already noted the main difference between the Philosophical and the Biblical approach. We will contrast these two in a few minutes, but for now let it suffice to say that:

The philosophical approach is from man and man's thinking which is not as clear as the Lord had desired it to be. Man's thinking is clouded by sin and the fall. This approach deals with only the

emotional and intellectual part of man and does not usually deal with the immaterial part of man. God has no part in man's origin, career, or destiny as they understand anthropology. To them there is no God.

The Biblical approach is based on the Word of God and is the thinking of Almighty God. This gives the approach all of the validity it needs for the Christian. This approach deals with all areas of man, both material and immaterial. It covers moral, spiritual and eternal. What is said in these areas is, by nature, truth because it is revelation from God.

There are a couple of terms that we need to think about at this point. EXTRA-BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY is the study of man based on man's experience, history and intellect. INTRA-BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY is the study of man based on what God has revealed about man in His Word.

Extra-biblical anthropology gives to us such teachings as Evolution and humanism. Both are based on man's ideas and concepts about what we are and what we can do. By the very nature of the teaching it leads to the materialism of our day. If we are only man, and can only enjoy this life, then we must assuredly enjoy it to the hilt. If I am only in this life, then I will enjoy all that I can gather together to the hilt, and not worry about others. I AM CENTRAL TO MY THINKING! Recognize any of this in the world today?

If this is true, and we know that materialism has a strong hold on the church, then we might wonder just how effected the church is with extra-biblical anthropology. Indeed, one of the last sections of this study is on humanism and its inroads into the Christian community. (Topic number d04250-d04300.)

It should be recognized that the Bible does not approach man as a textbook. You do not find a I and II Man in the table of contents of the Bible. The Bible does not lay out a systematic set of information. We need to go into the Word and glean what it says about man as we go. There is no systematic anthropology found in the scripture.

The Bible has much to say about man, and it has much to say to lost man if he will listen. His listening, however is usually the problem.

If a lost man will recognize the fact that the Scripture has some authority over them, and will follow it's precepts he may enjoy a good life here on earth, and be a moral upright being. His eternal destiny will not be affected however. He will ultimately spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

While we are thinking about the authority of the Scriptures we might make brief mention that the Scriptures are authoritative in all that they say. In what it says about science, it is correct. In what it says about man, it is correct. In what is says about medicine it is correct. The point however is that it is not a science textbook, nor is it a pre-med text book. The point is this.

When the Bible speaks on a subject It is correct and we should have complete trust in it.

We should realize that the Bible speaks on some areas relating to man that the extra-biblical system does not address. Such things as: The true origin of the universe; The true origin of man; Man's original state; Man's fall from that state; The new birth; The real cause of death; The bodily resurrection.

We need to notice that the Word of God does not change and that it is presenting the same view of man that it did when it was first written.

It should also be noted that the extra-biblical system is constantly changing it's view as to the origin of man. There are many views of the creation of the universe that have been presented through the ages. None have been proven correct and many of them are barely plausible.

This constant flux is because of the fact that the people that come up with these schemes have nothing except other men's ideas upon which to base their thinking. They have no real basis upon which to build, while the intra-biblicist has the Word of God to base his thinking on.

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY - the study of man's origin, fall and course, based upon the Biblical record.

Let us see how Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines anthropology. "1:the science of human beings; esp: the study of human beings in relation to distribution, origin, classification, and relationship of races, physical character, environmental and social relations, and culture 2: a part of Christian teaching that concerns the origin nature, and destiny of human beings....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) We are interested primarily in the number two definition. It is of interest that Webster recognizes that there is a very definite difference between the two types.

Anthropology, in short is the "science of man." We will look briefly into some of the other areas of anthropology, but for the most part will look at the origin, nature and fall of man.

DEFINITION:

"1. The science treating the physical, social, material, and cultural development of man, including his origin, evolution, distribution, customs, beliefs, folkways, etc." ("FUNK AND WAGNALLS STANDARD DESK DICTIONARY"; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Inc., 1976)

The term comes from the merging of two Greek terms: "anthros" meaning man and "logos" meaning study.

"The word "anthropologos" first appeared in the works of the Greek philosopher Aristotle and

meant 'treating of man,'". (Funk, Wilfred Litt.D.; "WORD ORIGINS AND THEIR ROMANTIC STORIES"; New York: Bell Pub., MCML, p 234)

As we have seen the study is viewed in two ways:

1. Human philosophy. This information is based on all of man's experience and thinking and reasoning. The result of this form is Evolution and Humanism.

2. Biblical perspective. This is based squarely upon the Bible, and then includes information from extra-biblical that may substantiate and enhance intra-biblical anthropology. The result is a true view of man which is based on Biblical creationism.

CONTRASTS:

INTRA-BIBLICAL	EXTRA-BIBLICAL
1. By nature, centered on the Word of God.	Excludes the Word of God completely.
2. A philosophy created by God.	A philosophy created by man.
3. Creation by God.	Evolution.
4. God centered.	Man centered.
5. Deals with original state of man.	Offers no information.
6. Deals with man's fall.	Offers no information.
7. Deals with real cause of death.	Offers no information other than, it's the course of things.
8. Deals with the new birth.	Offers no hope.
9. Deals with proper morality.	Offers "do your own thing".
10. Deals with a future life.	Offers no afterlife.
11. Gives absolutes in morals.	Demands no absolutes in morals. (Which is an absolute)
12. Correct and unchanging in	Changes with the times and

state which it was written.		the writers.
13. Man has value before God.		Man has only what value he can find for himself.
14. Deals with the creation of man.		Deals with the evolution of man.

Now, let us move to four improper theories of man's coming into existence:

1. Evolution: Most people today know what evolution is. It is the thought that man evolved from a long process of life getting better and better. The life would be some primordial gluck that decided to become alive. Life then evolved into something intelligent, then into fish, then into animal, then into man and we have been getting better every since. So why are some of us so bald if we are getting better, or is baldness the next best step forward for mankind?

2. Theistic evolution: Notice that they allow God into this one, ever so slightly. God created, and left it all to evolve with his guidance over the millions of years that it took. He allowed natural processes to bring life into existence and then evolve into man.

3. Progressive creationism: "Creationism" is included in this title to give an air of respectability to evolution. In this thought God created life, then allowed millions of years to pass between the stages of intervention by Himself. You know, those missing links that the evolution always talks about - God stepped in from time to time to give evolution the needed boost to the next level. This is why there is no link between monkey and man. Evolution got to the monkey, and God stepped in and somehow brought about man.

4. Abiogenesis or Spontaneous generation: This thought tells us that man just began to exist - no creator - no creation. Cambron mentions, "...there was no creator of man, but that man simply came into being without a cause and began to exist fulfilling the nursery rhyme, which reads: Where did you come form baby dear? Out of the nowhere, into here!" (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 155)

There is a fifth point if you are a TREKY. (A TREKY is one that enjoys the Star Trek television series.) In the Star Trek series there is what they call the Genesis Machine. NO, YOU SAY? WELL, PROBABLY NOT.

THE PROPER - BIBLICAL VIEW

Man was brought into existence by God. Gen. 1:27 shows the fact of creation, Gen. 2:7 shows the how of creation, and Matt 19:4 shows Christ giving validity to that account. Let me list a few other points concerning the creation of man:

1. He BECAME a living thing (Gen. 1:21). He wasn't living beforehand and then suddenly change form. It was a creation, not an evolution.

2. Paul states that Eve was taken from Adams side. This was a sudden action as well as supernatural, thus probably Adam's own creation was probably sudden and supernatural. (as opposed to thousands of years) I Cor. 11:8.

3. Paul states that there are different kinds of flesh. One for animal and one for man (I Cor. 15:39). Man did not come from the fish.

4. God states that man was created, then the woman was created. The theist would have to have all males up to the time of Adam, then have woman. This does not seem logical to have man only in the evolutionary process until a point in time when woman is introduced.

As we move along in our study of man, we might consider whether we can have a complete Psychology of man (psychology is the science that deals with the mind and the behavior that it causes in man) that is derived from the Bible. Anyone that has read the Bible would have to say no. The Bible is complete, and correct in what it says concerning psychology, however it is not, nor was it meant to be a psychological text book.

God did not set the Scriptures down to address man's overall psychology, but to address man's spiritual needs. The next question is this, "Can a psychologist form a practice using principles found in the Word of God?" To a point this is possible. He can use principles from the Bible if the person is a Christian. If the person is lost then the person may, or may not follow the remedy, nor will he have the Holy Spirit to assist him if, indeed he follows the remedy.

There have been men that have practiced in the following manner. They first of all find out if the person is saved. If they are Christians they proceed from a Biblical standpoint to minister to their problems (problems that are usually related to sin). If the person is not saved they are given the Gospel, and the opportunity to accept Christ. If the response is no, then the treatment is basically the usual secular psychology, with the Word used as much as possible.

Others have noted many "Biblical" principles wrapped up in the "REALITY THERAPY" of Dr. Glasser. His principles worked well in many patients, even though he was not (to my knowledge) a believer. Biblical principles can work in an unsaved person if they allow them to be applied. Indeed, the fact that some unsaved people live great moral lives, is proof that Biblical principles work, whether the lost or believers follow them.

Today one of the attacks upon the Word is leveled at the fact that not all of it is inspired. Many today now believe that the Word is inspired only in those areas where it is conveying spiritual truth. Where It touches on science, psychology, and what have you, it may contain errors. This is how believers can hold to the quasi evolutionary systems that they believe in. In the area of science (creation) the Bible has errors, so they insert their own philosophy.

How do we answer the charges that the Bible contains errors in the area of science, etc.? We need to understand that the Bible is not written as a science, psychology, or history book. It is written to reveal the answers to man's spiritual problems, and to give them a moral standard to live by. It is, however, in areas where it speaks on these subjects, without error and is true.

For example you can read secular history books and find many examples where the secular world has "found errors in the Bible" because there was no proof of the Word's statement. As the years go by archaeologists have proven over and over that the Bible is the correct version, rather than the secular history.

We, as believers, accept these things by faith, so why not share our faith in Christ and His word with the people around us. Heb. 11:3 states: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." If we accept it by faith then we should be up front and tell them that! We should also remind them that they are accepting what they hold on faith as well.

Much of science is still accepted by faith. An example of this is the flow of electrons in a wire to produce an effect such as light or sound. They do not know if it is really electrons in the wire, nor do they know if what ever is flowing, flows from negative too positive, or positive too negative. They have formed the theory that it is the flow of electrons from positive to negative, and they can demonstrate the results yet they cannot prove their theory. Probably, it is true but, they must accept it by faith. Even then they debate about the direction of current flow.

The whole matter of evolution is likewise acceptable only on the basis of faith. There is little proof for the system, and anyone that holds to its teaching must have faith in the teaching, or they could not hold to it.

Man could not have evolved from mud, because he is a personable, rational, moral and religious being. How can anyone believe that man which is personal, rational, moral and religious came from a primordial blob?

If you mentioned to someone that you believed the Genesis account of creation and they said they didn't; that it was only a fable of the Old Testament, how could you answer that person?

Take them to Matt. 19:4,5 and read the account of Christ's answer to the Pharisees, "He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" This puts them at odds with not only the Genesis account of creation, but also at odds with the Son Of God, Jesus Christ, who gave his view. Christ held that the creation account was historical and reliable. At this point let him argue with Jesus Christ! I would like to list some references that view creation as fact: Ex. 20:11; I Chr. 1:1; Ps. 8:3-6; Mk. 10:6-7; Lu. 3:38; Ro. 5:12-21; I Cor. 11:9; 15:22; 15:45; II Cor. 11:3; I Tim. 2:13-14; Jude 14.

Conclusions:

How do we make this practical? A study of man and his creation. How will you present this to a group and help them live better Christian lives with it?

1. The Extra-Biblical theories which have been set forth are truly revolutionary and breathtaking. It is wonderful that man can know so much about himself with absolutely no scientific evidence.

Intra-Biblical anthropology is a simple statement of fact by the creator of the universe about how He created. Surely He would be the one that knows how He did it.

There are some new theories which attempt to merge the two views, however man always ends up in the drivers seat of these new thoughts.

2. Man is a created being made by a very powerful God. (The ramifications of this are immense.)

3. We are created beings. Not only are we created beings, but we are responsibility to the creator. When you create a cake, it is there for you to do with as you desire. God created us, and we are here for HIS purposes, not our own.

4. We are created in His image. We have a responsibility to know what He is, so that we can become more like Him.

TRUTH FOR LIFE:

God took the time to create man and in essence ME so I must assume I have value before Him, else, why would He have bothered. If I have value before Almighty God then I have value to myself - I am worth something! I have no value aside from the creator - thus my creator should be very important to me! If I have value, that value comes from my creator, thus what is my response? I should: Submit to his Word; Serve Him; Share Him; And speak with Him.

I have often wondered if David Brainerd had realized some of these truths, if he would have had a different outlook on life. I would like to quote a short portion of his diary on the day of his commissioning as a missionary. It shows a man that had very little concept of value before God. True, his negative thoughts were generated by his honest hate of sin within himself, yet I must wonder if he felt that he had any value before His maker. "Spent much time in prayer and supplication: was examined in reference to my Christian experience, my acquaintance with divinity, and some other studies and my qualifications for the important work of evangelizing the heathen, and was made sensible of my great ignorance and unfitness for public service. I had the most abasing thoughts of myself; I felt that I was the worst wretch that ever lived: it pained my very heart, that anybody should show me any respect. Alas! me thought how badly they are deceived in me! how miserably would they be disappointed if they knew my inside! O my heart! And in the depressed condition I was forced to go and preach to a considerable assembly, before

some grave and learned ministers; but felt such a pressure from a sense of my vileness, ignorance, and unfitness to appear in public, that I was almost overcome with it; my soul was grieved for the congregation, that they should sit there to hear such a dead dog as I preach, I thought myself infinitely indebted to the people, and longed that God would reward them with the rewards of his grace. I spent much of the evening alone." (Edwards, Jonathan; "THE LIFE AND DIARY OF DAVID BRAINERD"; P 25-26

He had so much of this worthless feeling, yet today most Christian's don't have any of that feeling.

God's Workmanship by G. Campbell Morgan

"We are God's workmanship. That is where the song of hope and comfort begins. I would be frightened of the first, because when I say I am his I am not talking for effect; I am talking out of my life, deeply. Even today I say I belong to him, and I am almost ashamed because I do not feel there is anything worth his possessing in me. But wait a minute -- we are his workmanship" That means he is working on us. There is the suggestion in it of artistic beauty. We are his workmanship, not yet perfected, but in process. The figure of the potter helps me. The wheel is moving swiftly with the aid of the potter's foot on the treadle, and he gives speed or slowness as he wills to the revolving wheel. What is on the wheel? Clay. There is no beauty in it, but it is the stuff the potter wants. And humanity is just the stuff God needs and that is why he created man for an infinite purpose we have not yet begun to see. Now watch the wheel revolving! The clay is taking form and fashion as the wheel turns. Then he takes it off and puts it into the fire. Then it is taken out and he lays on the colors, puts it in the fire again, and when the potter is done the vessel is for beauty and for use." (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 472-473)

May we realize we are clay in God's hands! May we realize any value we have is in His creative and shaping hands? As He molds us - we gain value!

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WE ARE A SOCIAL PEOPLE

In this section sociology will be examined, then we will look at sociology as it relates to the believer, the pastor, and the missionary.

SOCIOLOGY EXAMINED

In college sociology, our textbook was "A SOCIOLOGY OF THE ABSURD" or something very near that. The purpose of the author was to present a model of sociology that fit the evidence that he was able to observe. I do not know if he ever became famous for his work because I do not

know what his name was. His thought went along the line that all of society is made up of different little games people play.

To illustrate his thought I will use the situation I was in as a teacher on the faculty of a Bible Institute. I was a part of the faculty, the students were a part of the student body, the men were part of the men's dorm, the women were part of the women's dorm and the married students were part of the married student's group.

Now to illustrate the games that this author believed in, we would explain the situation thusly: I as part of the faculty am expected to come every morning, and wax eloquent about the subject at hand. I am to act pious and important. I am to have all the answers to all of the questions presented. I am above you "students" and as such should be treated with respect. As long as I play the game and obey the rules, I can remain a part of the game. If I break the rules then I must be removed from the faculty student game and enter the janitor game.

The student on the other hand was expected to act as students act. The student is to be loud, unintelligent, and in general, disgusting. As a married student, you were expected to have all the answers, and you were expected to be the model students. As a married student you were expected to have other married students over and "have fun!" You were to talk about all the problems of the school and your immediate, easy remedy for those problems. You then turn your discussion to the faculty members, their problems and how you would solve their problems. You would have them join the ditch digger game, right?

Within the dorms there are certain rules to the games as well. The boys act like nuts and talk about girls. The girls act very proper and talk about boys.

As this author develops his thoughts he would state that we are all playing the game we have chosen at this point in life, and we are expected to obey the rules of that particular game.

To further illustrate, I as a faculty member was not allowed anger, I was not allowed self indulgence, I was not allowed swearing, I was not allowed fun activities, yet if I were to move out of this game into the game of janitor, I would be expected to have a different set of items as part of my game. I would not dress in a suit for work, I would not be overly friendly with the other people at work, I would clean up the messes of other people, and in general act like a janitor acts.

He believed that we choose a game and lock ourselves into it. The further application of his theory would deal with how the different games interact. Example: How does the faculty/student game interact with the Wyoming ranch worker game? How do I as a right and proper "faculty member" relate to a ranch hand when we are in two different games?

I do not believe what the man said in particular however it is a good way of looking at interpersonal relationships and beginning to understand how society works, how communities

work etc.

Sociology, as any field of study is by its very nature limited to one extent, or another. To look at our own system of study, Theology, we know the limits are the study of God, and things relating to God. We break it down into the ten different areas and go to work in that study. Within theology we have the section we are working on now, Anthropology, or the study of man. Within anthropology we will deal with a number of subjects. Sociology is at best, at the outer limits of the study of anthropology, however anthropology and sociology are loosely related.

Within "theology" today we now have many other areas being brought into the picture. Some are not really theology at all. We have books that discuss the theology of missions, and the theology of Christian Education. These are not really theology and should be renamed. We do have the different systems of theology which are valid studies (Valid, in that people study these subjects in relation to God. Some of them are, however false teaching). Liberation theology, Dominion theology, Biblical theology, Reconstruction theology, Systematic theology etc.

(Alex Inkeles, "WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY? AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DISCIPLINE AND PROFESSION," Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964, is a good introduction to the subject if you have a desire to do further study.)

Sociology: "1:the science of society, social institutions, and social relationships; specif: the systematic study of the development, structure, interaction, and collective behavior of organized groups of human beings 2: the scientific analysis of a social institution as a functioning whole and as it relates to the rest of society....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Notice that there are two concepts here that will be important to our study of sociology. a. The study of society in general and how it develops, organizes and interacts. b. The study of a society in specific and how it relates to the whole social order.

Let me illustrate the first concept: I will take just a small portion of our own history to do this. The USA has always been called the melting pot of the world. We have, from the beginning, brought in anyone that wanted to come, and we melted everyone together into one great society.

As the emigrants came to this country they found work and places to live. The fact that these peoples from many lands congregated into small pockets not only in our cities, but in our land is of interest. In New York city there are black sections, Irish sections, Chinese sections, Latin sections, white sections, etc. Within our country are communities that were started by a particular ethnic group.

We lived in a small town in Nebraska for a while that was founded by Swedes and their business community was so tightly controlled that outsiders could not come in and start a business. One

man tried to start a television repair business. Work was very slow for him, yet other shops were running two and three months behind on their service calls. The newcomer made a deal with one of the established businesses to make their service calls for them and then carry the shop jobs to their shop. The men were excited about the possibility and called some of their customers. The customers would not allow the newcomer to touch their sets. He closed up his business within a few months.

This phenomena of division within the collective is not hard to understand, and indeed it is probably normal. We like to be with people like us, don't we.

Indeed, as believers we tend to do this. Moody Monthly mentioned several years ago that they had a pole that showed that within two years of salvation over 90% of new believers had no non-christian friends. We gather together within our own little circles, because we enjoy one another and have things in common.

Now the second point of the definition. The study of a society in specific and how it relates to the whole social order. This might well relate to the idea that the CHURCH is a society within the collective social order within the USA. We could also say that the American society is a part of the collective world social order.

We divide the world into first world, second world, third world and I think we have other newer divisions as well. All of these are terms and concepts attempting to explain, study and understand the social order in which we live as a world community.

One might wonder what the difference is between Anthropology and sociology. In the first place anthropology deals with man as he came to the earth, whether from creation or evolution. We as believers deal with man as we see him revealed in the Word of God, while the lost often deal with man as he is supposedly revealed in the fossils.

Anthropology usually considers the ancient man, the primitive, while sociology deals with more recent man. Anthropology deals with the makeup of man and how he existed in the primitive state, while sociology deals with how he exists in more recent time. Anthropology deals with the fossils, and archaeological evidence while sociology deals with the history books and visible evidence.

SOCIOLOGY AND THE BELIEVER

Carl Henry calls believers in this age to a balanced view of our own country. We are trying to understand what is going on in our nation with its spiritual decline, yet we really don't know what is going on. The thought of "sociology" in a Bible Institute would horrify many people, yet how can we understand our nation, our world before God, until we understand what is going on in our nation and our world.

Henry mentions the fact that the American people are committed to a twentieth century idol - materialism - while we are boasting that there are forty million evangelicals in the country. The two facts are both true, yet a balance between the two really tells the story of America. (Carl F. H. Henry, "THE CHRISTIAN MINDSET IN A SECULAR SOCIETY," Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1984, p 9-10)

We don't understand our own nation and that lack of understanding comes from a basic lack of knowledge of what is going on in our nation. We need to understand that we may well be part of the problem.

The believer must understand that he or she is an integrated part of the world society, the free world society, the American society, the regional society (east coast, mid-west, west coast), the state society, the county society, the city society, the neighborhood society, the church society, and the family society. If we do not understand these relationships, then we understand not the ministry that God has set before us.

Within all of these different societies, we have responsibilities as part of those societies. If we are part of these societies, and if we are a part of the problem within these societies, then we are also a part of the remedy needed by these societies! Indeed, isn't that what we are all here for, to learn what God has to say to us so that we may in turn teach those societies!! IF WE ARE NOT ABOUT THIS CHRISTIAN, THEN WE ARE NOT ABOUT OUR FATHERS BUSINESS!

Before we move on, I want to warn you that what I am going to be talking about, may well sound like Secular Humanism, but I assure you that it is not. Secular Humanism has some good points to which we as Christians react negatively because we reject all of their teachings rather than realize that they might have something to say to us.

We tend to reject all that anyone says even if we disagree only with a part of their thought. How many of you support Greenpeace the environmental group? Very few, but they are trying to do something that all of society should be involved in. We reject their message quite often because they act illegally at times, and most of them look like leftovers from the 60's hippie generation.

Let's take a look at all this: Let's look at this section through the eyes of the great commission. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt 28:19-20

In light of the Lord's command we need to view society and all of its subdivisions.

World society: We are responsible to assist nations that are in need of help. If we neglect that, we neglect the teaching of the Lord in the concept of compassion and love for our neighbor. We as an individual can do little, yet we can do what we can, and that is the responsibility.

Free world society: We have a responsibility to see to it that the freedoms that we enjoy continue for ourselves, but also for everyone to which we can extend those freedoms. We should also be a part of seeing to it that others do not loose those freedoms.

If the different countries do not remain free, there normally is no Gospel witness. The early church was able to spread so easily to the known world due to the fact that there was freedom of movement and communication of the believers. They could go anywhere they wanted with their message.

American society: We are responsible to the federal government for obedience, support and participation. We as believers have not been active enough in government in past years. We have assumed that separation of church and state meant no participation in government by believers. That is wrong. Believers are to be a part of their government in more than voting and paying taxes.

We are not to be, as some of the reconstructionists are attempting to do, set up the millennial kingdom here in the USA. We are to be light and salt in whatever walk of life we enter into. If you become a government official, then be a Christian official and be light and salt in your position.

Regional society: There may not be much to do in this section other than participate in any way that you can. While living in the Northwest in the 70's the economic crunch hit the USA but it translated into fewer homes being built, which translated into less lumber being purchased which translated into disaster for Oregon which had an economy that was based almost totally on lumber. There was little I could do as a believer other than to be supportive of those that were hurting due to the layoffs etc. The church needed to be sensitive to the needs physical of those that were around them.

State society: Again we deal with the government and the part that the believer ought to be playing in it.

County society: You might have county government as well as the helping of people in need. You need to be sensitive to the lost people of that area, an area that you personally could easily evangelize yourself.

City society: There may be city government, PTA etc. that you can get involved in. You certainly have the evangelistic responsibility. You may have business or employee relationships that need to be understood.

Neighborhood society: You should be involved in peoples lives that are this near to you. Helping them, witnessing to them, being friends to them and all these are answered in being friends!

Church society: Realize that there is church government and you are responsible before God for how you respond to it. You have your gift/gifts that you should be using within the local church. You should receive the encouragement and strength that you need from this community. You also should be sharing in these areas, as well as the financial area to edify the body of believers, of which you are a part.

So often when I talk to people that have left a church, their reasons are that they are getting nothing from the church. The real question is what have they been doing for the church. If they are totally involved in the church, and working with their gifts their own needs quite often are met via their involvement. Lack of involvement can often result in lack of the church ministering to the individual.

Family society: We know that there is a government of types in the family. That structure is important for the proper functioning of the family. There is the caring for, the support of, the encouragement of, and all those things that are a part of the family society.

If you look at the Bible for ideas in society you will find that It presents the family as the basic unit from which all of the other societies develop. Abraham was the foundation for the whole of the Jewish nation and actually was to be the foundation of the whole of society. If the Jews had done their job properly, and if the Christians were doing their job correctly, then the world would be much more toward the society that God envisioned, a society of Godly people. Yes, that is idealistic to say that the world should be Godly, but that was what God had in mind when He gave Adam and Eve the command to go out and be fruitful.

It is man's self-centeredness that has brought the world to where it is today. We all are doing our own thing, rather than the Lord's thing, and many people are dieing in their lost state because of our failure!

III. SOCIOLOGY AND THE PASTOR

Just how can the concept of sociology help the pastor? Mr. Henry in his first chapter has two sentences, which to me, sum up a whole bunch of the problem with our nation, our church, and our families. "Man's lack of commitment to God means his inevitable spiritual enslavement to the world...." (P 10) "The Fact that human liberty is divorced increasingly from supernatural accountability may well become our national undoing." (P 11)

PLEASE WRITE THOSE DOWN! THEY ARE IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND OUR NATION AND OUR CHURCH AND OUR FAMILIES! If you miss this you will not understand what is going on in your church! We as believers are not committed to God. We as believers are enslaved to the world. We as believers are free to do as we please - we have our rights! We as believers reject the thought that we owe anything to God.

Understand these items and you understand why pastors are moving every 18 months to find

better paying churches. I recently picked up a financial statement in a church of about 125 and their pastor was receiving a total of over $31,000 a year. This was in Wyoming. Their pastor is new. The last one only lasted about 16 months.

Understand these items and you understand why missionaries are taking longer to raise their support than to gain their education. Understand these items and you understand why fundamental churches are dead today.

If the pastor does not understand the progression of society then he won't understand the goings on of his church. Example: Cliques. If the rich people begin to gather unto themselves and the middle class and the poor do the same, then there will be natural divisions that will occur in the church. This is not necessarily bad, but it can be very bad.

How do you overcome these growing divisions Pastor? Teaching the principle of equality within the believers. Holding area Bible studies instead of Sunday evening or Wed. evening services, and be sure there is a good mixture of rich, middle, and poor in each group.

As society changes, so changes the church today. We follow along with the changes of society very nicely. This is not a correct view to hold, but it is an observable fact that you need to realize. The truth of the Word, however holds forth a different concept. The Bible seems to show, AS THE CHURCH CHANGES, SO CHANGES THE SOCIETY! As we get our act together, we will affect the society.

That is about the exact opposite of what we see today in most fundamental churches. If a new fad or custom hits the USA, the church will soon have incorporated it into their activities.

The charismatic movement got into the "chorus" craze and the fundamentalists and evangelicals are now right in the middle of it. The world tells our women that they must be beautiful and so the church has spawned aerobics that use the music we condemn in the sanctuary. The church has brought in the color tests to develop your "true" beauty. etc.

There is another aspect to understanding society that we need to look at briefly in the context of a pastor/pastor's wife. You may not know it, but within our own country there are many subsocieties and cultures. You may move to a different part of the country to pastor a church. You may wake up the first morning in your new town to find that you don't know anything about the people that have called you to minister to them.

Don't blunder into a new church and think that you know everything about what the people need. You may not. You may run headlong into problems that you have never imagined. One example that might help you understand this. My wife and I went to North Carolina to visit her sister and husband. We noticed tobacco growing everywhere. Almost every property had little patches. We went to church on Sunday morning and found that the Christian society in which we were, saw nothing wrong with tobacco. Most of the people in the church grew it and from the smell of

the church most of them used it as well. Tobacco smoke smell was throughout the church building and as people were leaving after the services they were also lighting up.

Now, if you take a Southern Baptist Church to pastor, you may well have many transplanted southerners in your church, even if it is in Oregon. Faith and I attended a Southern Baptist Church in Hawaii and the southerners were the majority. Between Sunday School and church the outside of the church had so much smoke rolling up from the sides that you would think that the building was on fire. You will have to be careful how you deal with the problem of smoking. I am not saying don't deal with the problem, but I am saying be very careful how you attempt to deal with it. You do not want to offend, you do not want to drive away, and you do not want to look for a new church!

IIII. SOCIOLOGY AND THE MISSIONARY

I guess the classic story of the missionary that had just arrived in his new country of ministry, and his first visit with church people will suffice to illustrate the importance of understanding the society that you are going to.

A missionary had arrived, and one of the veteran workers was taking the man around to meet the people of the church. As the new arrival would enter a home he would want to talk to the people so he would say something complimentary about their home. He would pick out some item and mention, "Oh that is beautiful." or "That is very nice." When he did this, the people would give him the item. Finally after several incidents of this sort the new worker became confused. He asked the veteran missionary why the people were giving him gifts, but not giving the older worker gifts. The older man explained that the unknowing arrival had been asking for the gifts. In the society they were in, if someone complimented you on something it is your duty to give that item to them. UNDERSTAND THE SOCIETY THAT YOU MINISTER TO!

We could invest an entire book on this topic, and how we could improve the church and our personal witness, but we do not have a semester. I trust that this will suffice to interest you in getting to know the society that you are getting involved in.

One final illustration to prove to you that the society that you live in may differ greatly from the one that you want to interact with.

It is quite obvious that males and females are different in social and mental ways. Surveys have been done that prove this. Emory S. Bogardus, "SOCIOLOGY," New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954, pp 74-74 did a survey of 869 10th, 11th, 12th graders in 1950's. The students were asked to rate items of desirability in their friend of the opposite sex.

The girls desired the boy to be a good conversationalist, but the boys did not care about that point. The girls did not rate looks in their top ten, but the boys rated it number three. Differences exist!

We need to understand that all people are different, both sexes are different, and that the sexes are different in different parts of the world.

To properly minister in your future years you must UNDERSTAND THOSE THAT YOU WOULD MINISTER TO!

04000

ORIGIN OF MAN

If you like titles, you might try the following for this section, ORIGIN OF THE ORIGINALS.

The secular anthropologist has a dim view of man. They view him as only an integrated part of the natural order. He has form, and must obey the same laws of nature as the other animal life. He is like a laboratory where chemicals are processed. He takes in materials for his own use and processes them as do the other animals.

It would seem that our mothers missed the boat when they named us. My name should be S-D Laboratories. If man is nothing but one of the animals and nothing more than a part of the natural order then man is a product of nature, rather than God. We know better because of the knowledge we gain from the Word.

The two major systems of thought today, as to the origin of man are Evolution and Biblical creationism. The evolutionary side is based on speculation, conjecture and assumption and lots of the latter. Biblical creationism is based upon the Revelation of God to man. It is truth in all that it communicates and can be accepted as such!

The evolutionist offers many proofs, but no PROOF as such. They have presented many things over the years and Christianity has been kind enough to shoot all of them down. Indeed, evolution had been laid to rest in the religious circles as a false teaching, until a few years ago when Carl Sagan decided to make a bundle of money on the resurrected evolutionary theories of the past. He is a very good communicator and has been able to gain the capital to produce some very fine television shows to push his new, yet old ideas.

Within the evolutionary proponents we have two basic camps. The out and out evolutionist that holds to the Darwinian thinking and the Biblical people that want to allow for the evolutionist in Biblical circles (These are the Theistic evolutionists).

The proponents of evolution usually set forth the following items as basic to their theory.

I will just quote these. I found these comments in Hodge's Systematic Theology page 240. (Gross, Edward N., editor; "SYSTAMATIC THEOLOGY"/Abridged Edition; Grand Rapids:

Baker Book House, 1988.)

1. "First, like begets like; this is the law of heredity, according to which the offspring is like the parent through out the vegetable and animal world."

2. "Second, while in all that is essential the offspring is like the parent, it always differs more or less from its progenitor; this is the law of variation. The variations are sometimes deteriorations, sometimes indifferent, sometimes improvements, that is, such as enable the plant or animal more advantageously to exercise its functions." (I was taller than my father, yet just as bald.)

3. "Third, as plants and animals increase in a geometrical ratio, they tend to outrun enormously the means of support, and this of necessity gives rise to a continued and universal struggle for life."

4. "Fourth, we have the Law of Natural Selection. In this struggle the fittest survive; that is, those individuals which have an accidental variation of structure which renders them superior to their fellows in the struggle for existence survive and transmit that peculiarity to their offspring. This is 'natural selection';i.e., nature, without intelligence or purpose, selects the individuals best adapted to continue and to improve the race. It is by the operation of these few principles that in the course of countless ages all the diversified forms of vegetables and animals have been produced."

The theistic evolutionist holds to evolution, but sees God as the prime starter of all these processes. There are variations on this thinking as well.

God, in Genesis one and two, is very clear in what He is trying to communicate to man. He mentions very specifically just how he went about the creation of the universe, as well as man. If we do not accept Genesis one and two as truth, then that record must be held as untruth, or lies. Can you imagine telling God that He is a liar? That is what the evolutionist and Theistic evolutionists are doing. Think about that one for awhile!

Not only does the Scripture tells us very dramatically in Genesis of the creation, but the Bible also goes on to mention the creation many times more in other portions of the Word. This is very emphatic that the Lord created.

Not only do the doubters call the Lord a liar, but they also are casting insults toward Him. The next time you talk to an evolutionist you might ask him if he really wants to be part of a system that makes God out a liar.

If we leave God out of the creation then we have a lack of many things. We do not have any direction for the universe and ourselves, other than what man might dream up. We have no reason to be moral people. We are products of the goo of past ages so why should we be moral.

Indeed, this is why the movies and the television shows are going totally down hill. They have no standards. The standards have basically been lifted, and all is go.

The illegitimate birth rate is soaring and why? No standards in our society. It is strictly okay to have a baby and raise it as a single parent, so many are doing just that.

Divorce rates are terribly high. Why? No standards of marriage. Marriage is a try it, and if you like it keep it, situation in our society today.

Abortion is rampant in our country. Why? There is no standard for life. The law says that these children do not exist as life thus they have no value.

If there is no standard then every person is his own standard. I recently saw an interview of a man that had killed another man in the process of a robbery. He was convicted and put away for life. His reaction was one of total indignation. He had done nothing wrong. He had shot a gun, but the dumb person that died was at fault. He ran in front of the gun. His philosophy was that he had done no wrong, and that he had no responsibility.

That is the end result of evolution and humanism. On the other hand the Bible and creation demands much higher of man. Since we are told that we are created in His image then it is also somewhat indicated that we should act in His image as well. You might jot down I Pet 1:16; Matt 5:48 for future reference as well.

We are to be conformed to the image of Christ! We can only do that as we conform to the dictates of the Scriptures. This is where our morals will come from.

Chafer states that if we leave the Bible and God out of the origin of man that we can look to tadpoles for moral standards. If God and the Bible are left out then man is left to dream up his own theologies, and that he does. That is why we have so many cults and isms around today.

Many have realized that the Genesis one and two accounts of the creation are different, yet very similar. This is explainable as follows. Some feel that chapter one is an introduction, and that chapter two fills in the gaps of one. This is the method of some Hebrew writings. They are like the modern day speaker that tells em what he's going to say, then he tells em what he wants to say, and then he tells em what he has just said in the hope that they heard what he said.

Some suggest that one is mankind in general and that two is speaking specifically of Adam. Chafer suggests the term Cosmical in relation to it being mankind and the term physiological in relation to Adam specifically.

No matter how this similarity is explained, the final result must be that both relate to the creation of the heavens and the earth by the supreme Being, God.

Gen. 1:27 seems to speak quite specifically about the subject of creation. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Since God mentions it three times in one verse it might be indicated that God believes that He is the creator. God did it, He said it, we believe it because faith allows it (Heb 11:3).

Within man's abilities of observation, there are things which tend to confuse us. The evolutionist on the one hand says that we descend from the monkey. As we observe the monkey, we can see that we are similar. On the other hand God tells us that He created the animals, and then another order, man. We may see similarity to ourselves in the monkey, yet we know from the Word that there is a major difference. We can respond to the Creator and the monkey can only respond to his surrounding and needs.

We, as man, have many similarities with the animal world. If you have ever been to the zoo and watched the monkeys you can certainly see some remarkable similarities. We went to the Colorado Springs Zoo years ago and I was especially taken by one large monkey that was sitting on a shelf in the top of his cage all slouched down like I do to watch TV. He wasn't watching TV, but he was sure observing the foolish creatures that were passing by him. His actions, and facial expressions made me feel like he was about to get up and come over to me for a long conversation.

Man may have many similarities however we have one very prominent and distinct dissimilarity. MAN HAS A SPIRITUAL NATURE AND THERE IS NO ANIMAL THAT HAS THIS! WE ARE FORMED IN THE DIVINE IMAGE!

Genesis does not allow for an evolution for Adam. He was created complete and mature. The fact that Adam was created mature is indicated by the following: 1. No pacifier, formula or diapers are mentioned. 2. He was told to tend the garden. This would require mature motor skills to operate in such a manner. 3. He spoke with God, thus he had speech skills. By the way how do you suppose he felt the moment that he became conscious? Did God create him with memories? Did Adam have a knowledge of God built in? Did he come with completed memory banks concerning gardening and family life?

God created Adam as an adult, and as a complete being in all respects. There were no recalls on the defective model!

One question that has come to many minds is, "When did God create?" There are many theories and ideas. Mr. Usher has a system of dating that appears in some Bibles, but most feel that he is probably quite a way off.

We don't really know when creation took place. There is a feeling that is fairly general today that creation would have been four to 6,000 years before Christ.

Usher used the genealogies of the Old Testament to figure out his dating system. Part of the

problem of using the genealogies in the Old Testament is that there may be several generations between names of which we are not aware. There is indication, according to those that study genealogies that the term begat in the Old Testament may well refer to decent of families rather than a direct offspring.

Even in the time of the prophets there is some guess work involved in assembling a chronology and set of dates. Some of the kings dates are given in different ways and authorities differ some on dates even in that period.

There is no real way of dating the creation. Indeed, I see little value in knowing, for the evolutionist would not believe it even if we could prove that it was Feb. 29th 5500 B.C.

When it comes to creation there are some that believe there was a long period of time between creation and the time of the Patriarchs, because of the vast number of cultures and civilizations that we have in history. This is not necessarily so. If we remember at the Tower of Babel, things were a bit disturbed. The nations would have come from the language problem which God created. The cultures also would have come from the people scattering and beginning again.

It is easy to see that man of all cultures and civilizations are descended from one source, and that source Noah, or ultimately Adam. In fact in the late 80's scientists decided that all of mankind was descended from a woman they called EVE! This common ancestry of man is called the unity of man.

Pardington has a section on the unity of man that I would like to adapt for you (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 140-141). He views the unity of the race from four aspects:

From History: History seems to indicate that there was a common ancestry for all races, centered in Central Asia.

From Language: There is evidence that all major languages come from one original language. The lesser languages could certainly flow from that one original language as well.

From Psychology: There is a commonness to all races in the mind games that we play. We all have a concept of right and wrong, though it varies from race to race. The mental capacities are similar to all races, at the same level of maturation. Many of the myths of the races indicate a common origin as well.

From Physiology: Man, no matter the race has a similar physiology. The heart rate is similar, any race can mate with any other, and the average temperature is similar. All races are susceptible to all diseases.

The Bible tells us what happened and we can by faith accept it. Man on the other hand, in his

lost state, does not want to accept anything that the Bible has to say, so usually allows himself to create new and better theories that are based on very little evidence, truth or knowledge.

I trust that if you have any doubts in the area of the creation, that you will simply accept, by faith, the Scriptural account. I have always said, that it would take more faith to hold to evolution, that it does to accept creationism.

04050

MATERIAL MAN

I would like to look at some introductory information before we move into the makeup of material man. Before we look at man, we need to consider his creation.

There are many theories of the creation, indeed most civilizations seem to have their own view of the creation. They vary from a struggle between earth and water producing creation, to the struggle of good and evil producing creation. One account even involves a cow. One of the oriental theories of creation involved a being diving into the waters and bringing forth a blob of mud and producing things. A look at an encyclopedia will produce some of these accounts.

Creation according to the Scripture was an act of God. It is a simple statement of what He did. God did not attempt to prove His involvement in creation, He just stated the facts as they are. I will list a few texts that relate to the creation. (Gen. 1:1ff; Matt. 19:4; Rom. 5:12-19; I Cor. 15:45-49; I Tim. 2:13.)

The when of creation is another question. Many believe that there is need of millions of years between now and the original creation.

The philologist [one who studies literature or language] believes that it takes ages to develop languages into the forms that we have and would call for more time. They reject the thought however, that Adam communicated with God immediately in the garden. They also reject the Genesis account of the languages stemming from the tower of Babel. (Gen. 11)

Polygenism holds that each distinct species of man came about from separate creations. I suspicion that the Arian nation movement would believe in this. Some of them believe that they were a creation of God that was separate from all other races, and that they were the superior "God blessed" nation.

Pre-adamitism holds that man existed before Adam. Adam was the head of only a specific group of peoples. This allows for the giants of David's time and of Moses time.

Bishop Ussher set down and worked through the Old Testament genealogies and arrived at a

dating system for the Old Testament. His system appeared in the margin of many Bibles in the past. His dating system is not widely held today. Chafer deals quite well with the information concerning Bishop Ussher's dating. (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. II)

Many feel that there should be several thousand years added to the date of Bishop Ussher. The extra one to three thousand years set forth by some today allows for some of the scientific facts and is not detrimental to the Biblical records.

It doesn't really matter how old the earth is as long as it's only a few thousand years. The problem arises when it is asked that the creative act be set millions of years in the past.

There are some scientists which demand millions of years for the formation of parts of the earth however they forget that Adam was created a mature man - with age. Is it not also likely that God would create a mature earth? That is, an earth that appears to have age. This would include the fossils etc.

The theory of evolution was laid to rest many years ago by Biblical scholars. Mr. Carl Sagan decided to make some dollars and dug up all the old ideas and brushed them off, made them presentable, and now we are covering the same territory. Many good books on the subject are available.

Why didn't God specify the year in which He created Adam? He gives great detail in other areas of history - Ezra and Nehemiah kept good records - the genealogies of the patriarchs and prior men of God. Why not "In the beginning, in the year of Adam 6031 BC, in the 7th month, and the 2nd day, God created."? Well, maybe we should make that the 1st month and 1st day. Why didn't God let us in on the date? We don't really know.

If both Evolution and Creationism have to be accepted by faith then why not accept by faith, the Word of a God that promises to do wonderful things for you, rather than to accept by faith the word of a theory that is going to make you the knee jerk response of nature?

How do we use this in everyday life? Almighty God was DIRECTLY involved in making mankind. If God was interested enough to create man then He must have a very high level of interest in mankind.

God's interest is illustrated by Allan Knight Chalmers. "There is a striking word picture in Middleton Murry's 'Jesus Man of Genius'. It pictures the lonely God at the end of a long corridor behind a great curtain waiting for man to come near enough so that God could speak to him. In beautiful prose the author makes you feel the awful tension of man's footsteps sounding hollowly on the bare floor of the echoing corridor as man dares a little further toward the deepening gloom of the coridor's end. Time and again God's aching heart longed for man to pass the curtain that the Word might be spoken, but always there was fear before the end and the sound of retreating

footsteps until Jesus came. He, daring to pass the veil, let the lonely heart of God find rest." (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 318)

A God so vitally interested in mankind that He created, that He sent His only Son - THAT IS A GOD THAT IS WORTH COMMUNICATING WITH!!!

I have to wonder if the Lord isn't still in this straight of waiting and waiting for his children to come to talk? He removed the fear, for we can go boldly before Him, yet many so seldom do. Heb. 4:16, "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace. . . ." Prayer is so rich - free - yet we fail to do it. It is free, it causes no rash, it has no calories, it won't tarnish or rust, it causes no stains, and yet we won't meet with God.

One final line of thinking. In Gen. 2:8 it mentions "man whom he had formed." God formed man. No one would argue that the birds are considerably less impressive than man, as life forms go. (Matt 6:26 agrees that man is more important. God tells us the birds are fed by Him. Matt. 10:31 states we are "of more value than many sparrows." Verse 28 tells us not to fear those that do ill to us. God knows when a sparrow falls, 10:29.) If God is interested in the birds, then He must have a much greater interest in man. God must care for man greatly - He cares more for us than sparrows, yet feeds and keeps track of the birds. We have a great value before Him.

We have heard of self-worth, of self-image etc. Our only value is not in what we see in us, or what others see in us, but in the value that we have before God. Many today are in trouble because they look to others for value, when they ought to be looking to their creator.

At the same time God the Son was helping in the creation of man He knew, He one day would have to go through the agony of the cross for Adam and his seed. That is love, to create the cause of your future agony! God the Father knew of the cost to Himself in giving His son for a race of sinners.

One must know that the purposes of God in creating man were of supreme importance - else why submit to the cost involved? Then to top it off He has to seek and save the lost, because man turned against Him. Even after He has saved them, He must then use the tools of conviction, chastisement etc. to keep the believer on an even walk with Him. Why does He do it? LOVE!

MATERIAL MAN EXAMINED

Man's body houses his soul and spirit while alive. When his body dies and is planted in the ground it becomes the seed for his glorified - eternal body. No, I can't explain it, but we need to consider some of the possible questions related to man's material make up.

Gen. 2:7 tells us, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Man was created from the dust of

the earth; there was something missing. God completed the work by breathing in the breath of life.

When God breathed in the breath of life was the life for an endless existence? From all indications there was some idea in God's mind of Adam continuing on indefinitely. This is not the same as the eternal life that is provided now.

The life Adam had would have continued on with, had he not sinned, would have resulted in his not having to go through death. We are not told the details of what his existence would have been like had he not sinned. We since the fall, must go through death to come to eternal life (unless the Lord comes first).

Our existence seems to show that God had a purpose in creating man. That purpose is seen in the fact that we are unique from the animals in a number of ways. Speech, soul and spirit. We must however, by His creative act depend upon His creation for continued life. We must consume of the fruit of the dust of the earth to live. ("In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:19)

I read a story some time ago about a parent that had explained this passage to a little child. A few days later the child hollered at the parent and said, "Hey Mom. There is a pile of dust under my bed. I'm not sure if they are coming or going."

WE WILL RETURN TO THE EARTH FROM WHICH WE CAME. You can accumulate all the cash and homes and toys that you want, but you are still going to return to dust.

Chafer mentions that there is a unity between the body and soul - that there is no sense of distinction between the two. Can we agree with that? True the soul is linked to the body, in that the soul is basically contained in the brain, a physical part of the body. I know what he is saying and I'm not sure that I disagree, however I believe that there may be a small sense of a division between the soul and body as people age.

I have read of old people that tell that they are 20 year olds trapped in a worn out body that won't function any more. I have the same sensation at times. I look in the mirror some mornings and can't believe that old man in the mirror is I. I'm still about 20 years old and going fine on the inside, yet the outside is slowing down. I find that my eyes will not see as well as I remember them working. I find that my fingers are not as good at working with small pieces as they used to. My mind knows how the fingers should function, but the fingers will not function as my mind instructs. I feel that as we age, there may be a sense of division between the soul and body. Indeed, for the believer there seems to be an anticipation of a final division so that the soul can function as it desires without the limitations of the body. Eternity will be great.

Man's body and soul are separable by death, yet we must rejoice in the fact that they will be

reunited one day with some minor changes. The new body will be a much improved model that won't wear out! II Cor. 4:16 may sum up what I've been trying to say. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The outward is perishing while the inward is continuing!

Adam's material body seems to have been subject to death on the long term basis, otherwise there would have been no need for the tree of life. The tree of life will be in the eternal state as well, which brings some to think that the glorified body will be similar to Adams pre-fall body. (Rev. 22:2 mentions the tree of life in the eternal state.) We will look at this a little later in this section.

By the nature of our bodies they are constantly rejuvenating. They add new cells as the old are lost. There is some indication that this process of rejuvenation is slowed and hindered by the ageing process.

THE FACT WE MUST FACE IS THAT DEATH IS ALWAYS THE WINNER IN THE CONFLICT in this fallen state of man. The glory is that every person's body will be raised one day. Both the lost and the saved have eternal existence from the point of conception. (Jn 5:26-29; Acts 24:15.)

We are told a little about the believers glorified body but we are not told of the lost persons eternal condition. We know that they will be in torment and much of that sort of thing, but not much of the physical make up of things. It may be that the lost person's eternal body will be similar in nature to the glorified body of the believer. We do not know.

The old body as we have mentioned is a seed for the new body. As the grain of seed goes into the soil to rot and spring forth in new life, so our body is planted and rots to spring forth one day unto new form.

A question that often arises in this context is this, "Is it wrong for a believer to be cremated?" There are some that believe that it is, and that the Old Testament shows this to be true. They base this on the idea that destruction and judgment in the Old Testament are often by fire.

The problem with this is the fact that believers have died in house fires. Believers have been dismembered with limbs left in foreign countries etc. Sailors are buried at sea and their bodies are completely assimilated by the ocean. If cremation is wrong then there are many that are in trouble with their Lord because of circumstances beyond their control. (Those being burned to death in house fires, etc.)

God can bring forth ALL bodies no matter where they are, no matter how badly they have decayed, or no matter how they were buried.

MATERIAL MAN AND REDEMPTION

The body soul and spirit are all involved in the wonderful redemption that God has provided for us! I Cor. 15:42 and following mentions the following contrast in relation to our bodies.

sown in corruption	raised in incorruption
sown in dishonor	raised in glory
sown in weakness	raised in power
sown a natural body	raised a spiritual body

Sown as Paul uses it has to do with burial, yet is better than the term bury for bury has a finality to it that sown does not have. Sown has the idea carried with it of new life coming forth, while buried seems to have the idea of finality.

Another term that the New Testament mentions in relation to death is sleep. This again shows an idea of something that is non permanent. The sleeping, awaken. When believers die they are not permanently out of business! We will again have existence, indeed we never cease to exist, only change plains of existence.

The rapture is the changing point for the believer. If he is dead the Lord will resurrect his body and unite body, soul and spirit. If the believer is alive then they will be changed. The how of that change is unknown to us. Whether there is just an instant change of the body or whether the person dies and is instantly changed is not clear. I personally would opt for just an instant change, and not passing through death.

Chafer seems to hold to this view as well, as he mentions that the living at the rapture will have immortality. He is very specific that only those living at the rapture will have this quality.

There are a couple of terms for us to consider in relation to man and sin.

MEDIATE SIN is the idea that we receive the sin nature from Adam through generation, or at birth. This speaks of the sin nature that we have when we are conceived. It is that natural bent toward sin and wrong.

IMMEDIATE when used in relation to sin is that we all were placed under the curse of death when Adam sinned. We were in his loins. Heb 7:9-10 may help you with this idea. We were under the curse of death, but we will die at a later time.

INTERMEDIATE BODY: Chafer presents a doctrine that might be fun for you to toy around with. He mentions that God will provide us after death with an intermediate body. This body will serve us until our soul and spirit are united with our bodies.

I am not sure that the text he uses to prove this, really proves this, but it might make for a good study for you some evening when you don't have anything to do. I have some things that I would want answered before accepting this teaching. He suggests II Cor. 5:1-8.

Some thoughts that relate:

1. If, when we die God gives us a temporary body to dwell in in the heavenlies, why wouldn't God just resurrect the old one instead of creating a temporary one. There needs to be an act of God either way, so why create a temporary one now and then resurrect one later and dispose of the temporary? This does not seem to be the action of a logical God.

2. There is no reason for us to need a temporary body in particular. Chafer mentions that we will be uncomfortable as disembodied spirits and will desire a body. I cannot speak to the comfort or discomfort of a disembodied spirt, as yet, but since we are spirit beings in the afterlife, the need for a body - material - seems illogical. (I will mention that the spirits that Christ cast out of the demonic possessed man, sought embodiment in the swine, thus possibly indicating that spirits seek embodiment.)

3. What will happen to all those intermediate bodies that are no longer needed?

4. In relation to his proof text: It would be easier to interpret the passage along the lines that we are in this life, naked in comparison to our future heavenly body. Or this may mean that we will never be naked once the heavenly is put on, as Lenski mentions. This groaning would be concerning our strong desire for our heavenly body. To say that we are groaning over the possibility of being naked, or to say that there is an intermediate body, is to read much into the text!

Lenski views the nakedness as mentioned previously, and sees the body as the earthly and the glorified body as the heavenly. He mentions "heavenly life" in reference to the building from God. (Lenski, R.C.H.; "THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS"; Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, pp 1000ff)

5. If there is an intermediate body, when Paul is speaking of the physical body being the seed for the heavenly, was he speaking of the heavenly intermediate, or the heavenly glorified? The intermediate body idea seems to be a cumbersome doctrine to hold.

6. God is a spirit and needs no body. Why would we "have" to have a body?

In Volume two, page 145 Chafer states that man is "Related in two directions - to substance and to spirit existence." He mentions this in the context of creation. God formed the body of material items, then breathed in the spiritual part of man. Indeed, we are a combination being.

Q. What practical thought can we give to this thought that we are literally both physical and spiritual beings, at this point in our existence?

1. We might consider whether a person can be drawn to one side to the exclusion of the other side. Yes, would have to be the answer. Someone that has allowed alcohol to become a habit is

in essence giving himself over to following after the substance side of himself. There will be little if any thought to the spiritual. It normally is that time when the alcoholic gives his mind to the spiritual needs, which he will finally do something about the physical.

2. On the other hand, can a person give themselves over to the spiritual to the exclusion of the substance? Yes. It is not uncommon for ministers and missionaries to give themselves over to the spiritual life and endeavor, so as to refuse themselves relaxation and a time of healing of body and mind.

We might add at this point, that both saved and lost are thusly related to both physical and spiritual. The lost are not as concerned with the spiritual, yet it often comes up in their lives.

By way of practical application you might consider how you approach different situations of life in your ministry. At particular times the believer, as well as the nonbeliever, is totally occupied in one realm or the other. This is not wrong necessarily as we will see, however dwelling in one area too long can be detrimental.

Consider the person in the hospital with a kidney stone. Terrible pain - in a hospital you are reduced to the substance side of existence. Literally, if you have pain and are in the hospital, about all you are concerned with is the physical aspects of getting out of the place. The emphasis is totally upon physical.

As you approach a person in the hospital how do you want to minister to him. What approach might you want to use to be of benefit to him?

Spiritual things may or may not be of interest at the moment. Be tuned in on what the person is talking about. They will probably let you know if they want to get into spiritual things. Bring them up if you can, but do not push.

A short psalm or thought, and a word of prayer before you leave may be all the spiritual they can stand. Others may want to really fellowship. Be alert to their needs at the present. (If it is a non-believer feel free to push as much as you can, especially if they are in bad shape. It might be your last chance to share Christ with them.)

When we lived in Salem, Oregon, my wife had a friend whose husband had been sick for a long time. He had had surgery and was not expected to live. He asked for me to come for a visit. When I got there, he asked me to pray for him. He was in much pain, but wanted spiritual. I might add that he did not want me hanging around either. After the prayer, he said something to the effect, "Thanks for coming." It was evident from his situation and condition that he did not want to talk about the weather. Others I know of that are in pain aren't all that interested in the spiritual.

How about super saint - the person that spends 26 hours every day doing the Lords work and

never takes a break. Again - go softly for you treadeth on thin ice. Any suggestion of slacking off may be taken as "unspiritual." Possibly a good way would be to try and involve the person in some non-spiritual activities, and encourage further involvement. Again - do not get pushy unless you think the problem is serious to health or family.

If you are his leader then consider taking part of his work load away. He may have to work like a horse to keep up with what you have allowed him to take on. A pastor must be careful not to overwork those that are willing to work.

A Biblical thought that suggests that we should not be totally engrossed in spiritual things could be found in the Sabbath of the Old Testament. The person was to work the week and rest on the Sabbath. God set aside a day for resting because He knew it was necessary for man! Just how that relates to the pastor that teaches or preaches three services on Sunday, I am not sure. This is probably why so many pastors take Mondays off.

We have many books out on the subject of "Burnout" and it is a very real problem among Christian leaders. Many have devoted themselves to things of the Lord for so long with no rest, that they usually find that one day the need for rest is overwhelming to the point of them not being able to function properly!

I must warn also that this is not licence to be lazy either!

Volume two of Chafer, page 145-146 states: "With its incomparable, sublime simplicity, the Word of God declares that God formed man's body from the dust of the ground."

He lists the elements as follows:

calcium	carbon	chlorine	fluorine
hydrogen	iodine	iron	magnesium
manganese	nitrogen	oxygen	phosphorus
potassium	silicon	sodium	sulphur

If you consider this listing alone, not to think of the intricacies of the eye, ear or nervous system, you must wonder how something so complex and complicated can be so simply stated! Yet with the dust of the earth God CREATED ADAM!

On page 148-149 Chafer mentions concerning the body of Adam and Eve: "It became a dying, death-doomed body. The fact that, as it was originally created, it possessed vital organs and was self-sustained as the body is now sustained, indicates that, apart from such protection and support as God may have provided, the original or unfallen body was capable of death. Death was not then inevitable, though it was possible. God imposed the sentence of death...."

Q. I believe this to be true but can we but a Biblical basis to it for Dr. Chafer? Gen. 2:16,17

"And the Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." All trees but one were available.

After the fall God was concerned that Adam and Eve would eat of the tree of life. Read Gen. 3:22-24. It seems that the tree of life had something to do with continuing life.

Theissen mentions, "Man, it is implied, was created mortal, but had the privilege of attaining immortality by means of the tree of life." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 257)

Rev. 22:2 in telling of the New Jerusalem states: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bore twelve kinds of fruits...." Rev 22:14 adds some insight for us as well: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life...." There is a close relationship between the child of God and that tree of life.

I feel that we can be assured that Dr. Chafers statement is backed by the texts in Genesis while the Revelation texts indicate that the tree of life may well have to do with the continuing of life in eternity in some way. (There is no need for the believer to have right to it unless it is a part of eternal things.)

Let us consider for a moment our coming glorified body. What qualities will that body have? Since the only information we have concerning a resurrected body is the body of Christ after His resurrection, we need to view what is recorded concerning this. (Phil 3:20,21 tell us that our comparison is correct.) I will just list some topics with references for your continued study.

1. Touchable: Matt. 28:9; Luke 24:39ff; Jo. 20:17.
2. Seeable: Matt. 28:10
3. Mobile: He left the grave and went places.
4. Hearable: Matt. 28:9,10
5. Changeable: Mk. 16:12; Luke 24:13ff
6. Disappearable: Luke 24:31
7. Feedable: Luke 24:42,43
8. Transportable: Jo. 20:19
9. Recognizable: They knew who it was. Also Jo. 20:27ff.

How do we make this doctrine useful for everyday life?

1. As we age, we begin to see the body going down hill. We see the hair loss - the weakening eyes - the lack of ambition - the longer periods of time in bed - etc. God is planning a body that is not plagued by such frailties! We will have an incorruptible body one day to replace this mass of chemicals that is failing us.

2. To the older person this can be a blessing. To the younger it can be a call to patience with the older folks - they are slow in movement - a pain in the neck - but one day so is all of mankind, including the young person.

3. There is hope for the physically handicapped as well. He created me as He wanted me to be, so I should be satisfied with me. Within this context, I might add to the Christian disabled, there is no reason for you to get involved with the self-pity and my rights thinking of the disabled organizations of our day. The disabled and handicapped need to be helped as much as we can, yet their self pity seems to be a bit much.

My father was paralyzed from the waist down from the age of 21 and never once went looking for his rights, nor pity. He functioned as best he could. He did most everything that he wanted to do. He did not wait for people to make ramps, widen doors etc. He just went on with his life, had two children, raised them and enjoyed the life God had given him to the fullest. No, he did not go skiing, but I would guess he would have if he had wanted to.

4. Our body is made by Him for His use, not our own. We should be caring for our bodies.

04100

IMMATERIAL MAN

The body, soul and spirit of man are generated at the moment of conception. The body being man's environmental, or world consciousness, is the container of the soul which is man's self consciousness (intellect, emotion, and reason), and the spirit, being man's God consciousness.

BODY - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS
SOUL - SELF CONSCIOUSNESS
SPIRIT - GOD CONSCIOUSNESS

The Bible tells us that man was made in God's image. In what way are we made in God's image? Are we physically similar to God? No. Is our soul similar to God? Quite possibly. He has intellect, emotion and reason as we do. Is our spirit similar to God? I assume that all spirit beings are similar in some ways.

On the other hand "in the image of God" has some distinct limitations that are apparent. Our spirit being, will not fill the entire universe, nor is our intellect as God's, nor are our emotions as deep as His. We are in His image, yet limited by our finiteness. In our fallen state we are not holy, righteous nor can we have a good understanding of God. God however through redemption allows a certain amount of these things to the believer. (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10)

As a side note to holiness we might consider a question that Chafer raises. Can a person have a

habit of holiness before he knows the principle of holiness? Not really. The habit is a consequence of the principle. For example would any of you begin studying for several hours a day if you didn't know why you were doing it or what study was. Probably not.

We should not condemn people for not living holy lives until we know for sure they have the principle in their mind. Indeed, is this not where the lost are today. They do not have the principle of God's holiness so they are not apt to enter into the habit, or life of holiness.

We should understand also that redemption is not a process of God trying to salvage something that Adam's sin destroyed. Redemption is a process of restoration. He is desirous of bringing us to a state that would be the same as Adam's pre-fall condition. This of course is dependant on the righteousness of Christ.

The unsaved man still has the image of his creator. Chafer suggests Gen. 5:1-3 as proof of this. "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth." Adam was in the image of God and Seth was in the image of Adam.

Gen. 9:6 also suggests this thought. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." James 3:9 also is a foundation for this thought. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God."

God's view of the sacredness of life is also carried in these verses. We are created in God's image and this image is not lost. Lost man is in His creator's image.

There are some differences, however now that the fall has come to pass. Our moral likeness is somewhat soiled and lowered, and the lost man's mind is somewhat clouded by sin.

We are encouraged to follow the example of Christ in the New Testament and this will tend to bring us toward the image that God desires for us in this life.

There are three basic theories as to where the immaterial part of man came from.

1. PRE-EXISTENCE: This thought would come from Hinduism in the past, and Theosophy in our own time. I believe that Origin also held to this thought. (Chafer has a good section on this, page 174.) The doctrine of reincarnation is the basis of this thought. Reincarnation tells us that the immaterial part of man is recyclable. As we die, we are freed to reenter into another body to continue on in this life.

The immaterial part of man has pre-existence in this view. It can enter the body of the child at

any time in it's development according to some reincarnationists.

My question is this. Why would anyone that lived this life through once want to go around for a second time? The previous life usually relates to your next life. If you are a really bad person in a life then you usually come back as a bug or some very lowly person. This is why the people of India can walk by a beggar without feeling sorrow or pity. The beggar was probably a murderer in another life. To be caught in a cycle of existence like this would be very depressing to me.

Some older theologians surmised with this theory that in a previous life all of us sinned and that is where the sin nature came from.

The objections to this view are: a. The philosophy totally ignores the Word of God and all that it says on the subject. b. The philosophy totally ignores original sin. c. It ignores the need of proof for validity. They do not have proof.

2. CREATION THEORY: This theory would come from the Eastern Orthodox church of ages past, and I suspect even today. The theory tells us that the parents create the body of the child and that God creates the soul and spirit directly and immediately for each birth. Their thinking is as follows: a. The body is from earth, but the soul is from God, thus the soul can't come from the parent. b. The soul is not material so how could physical parents produce it. c. If Christ is like man and He is, then if the soul and spirit came from the parents, Christ would have a sin nature.

The people holding to this view mention that there are verses that speak of God creating the soul. There are also verses that state He creates bodies, however neither is literal. In the sense that He created all of mankind in Adam and Eve would be true, and He did create souls and bodies in this way.

A couple of things to think about concerning the Creation theory. If man is fallen at birth, and if God creates the soul and spirit, then, God is creating souls and spirits in the fallen state and they are destined for Hell. This is not a concept that is consistent with the Word. This would place God in the position of creating beings for destruction. Also, it must be then assumed that they did not fall in Adam. This contradicts the clear teaching of the Word.

3. TRADUCIAN THEORY: Most of the western church holds to this concept. The body soul and spirit are generated by the parents at each individual conception.

In the creation of Adam and Eve there was all that was needed for all of mankind present and potential, for production of body, soul, and spirit.

There is one main objection to this thought and that is this: If this is true then Christ would have had a sinful nature. That is a big problem, however there are some answers for this. Some answer this by saying that the sin comes through the male, thus no problem. Others state that the soul of Christ was sanctified by the fact of the conception by the Holy Spirit. Others state that

the nature He took from Mary was sanctified before the union with Himself. The Roman Catholics go a step further and say Mary was perfect, and that she gave Him the pure nature. This, however, only puts the problem of a perfect being at the feet of Mary's parents. Mary's soul would have to be perfect to produce a perfect child.

It seems easiest to assume that the fallen nature is transmitted via the father. This was the reason for the virgin birth. With no earthly father involved, there was no possibility of transmission of a sin nature.

If you desire to hold to the traducian theory, it is important to make the distinction of the sin nature coming from the father.

Let's consider Christ's perfect nature for a moment: a. If the traducian theory is correct, in that the entire being is created by the parents, plural, then He would have received the fallen nature. The key is the fact that Christ was a product of God and woman, not man and woman, thus there was no sin nature.

The fact that the sin nature comes from the male is indicated in the Word. Adam chose to sin - he turned against an express command of God while Eve was deceived. We all sinned in "Adam" not in "Adam and Eve". (I Cor. 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;") Thus it must be concluded that the sin nature is transferred to the child via the man side of the union. Why else is there a need for the virgin birth of Christ. No other answer really fits the facts that we have available from Scripture. In Gen. 3:7 both Adam and Eve's eyes opened at the same time to nakedness. This indicates Adam's sin was the clincher, not Eves.

How can you trace the I Cor. 15:22 concept of "we all fell in Adam", if the soul and spirit are created at the point of birth? You can't. Luke 1:41 shows John the Baptist responding to Mary's presence while he was in the womb. "the babe leaped in her womb;" Excuse me if I feel it a bit ridiculous for a mass of flesh and bone responding to something supernatural. Logic would demand that there was some spirit consciousness present that was responding!

Heb 7:9,10 mention the fact that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek because he was in the loins of his father. It takes more than flesh and bones to do this. A body does not pay tithes. A complete being does.

A result of the creation concept is abortion. That mass is not a person until it is outside the mother's body. Logically inferior, thus we can get rid of it with no moral problems. The traducian thought relegates a fetus, of any age, to being a spiritual and physical being fully present and growing, or if you will, in the aging process.

God's creating was finished on the sixth day and it was good. There is no indication that he continues to create each time a baby is brought into the world.

One author suggested that Mary was a surrogate mother. The entire being of Christ was created by God and raised in Mary. To state that the entire being of Christ was placed within Mary for incubation, is to deny the Lord's humanity.

Conclusions concerning our being created in God's image:

1. "Thus, also, G.F. Oehler declares man bears the divine image in view of the facts that (a) human nature is distinguished from that of the beast, for there was no mate for man among lower forms of creation, and man may kill the beast but not the being which is made in the image of God. (b) Man is set over nature as a free personality, since he is designed for communion with God, and is appointed to exercise divine authority in the affairs of earth. . . ." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, p 170)

2. The following verses indicate some of the areas of similarity between God and the creatures of His image. Matt 5:48; Luke 6:36; I Pet. 1:15,16.

3. Heb. 1:1-3 shows Christ to be the express image of God. Rom. 8:29 shows that we are to be conformed to the image of Christ. Mentally and spiritually we are under reformation, so to speak, to become as Adam was before the fall in these areas.

4. God took the time and effort to create man in His own image. Based on this truth, we are not to kill, nor slander another man. How about the thousands of unborn fetuses that are being destroyed every year by abortion. How about the man that pulls out in front of you from the stop sign? "You dumby" isn't quite the terminology to use, is it.

Every man is cared for, by our creator -- we ought to have a care and love for those people as well. They are created in OUR GOD'S IMAGE even if he rejects our God!

Another question: Is salvation a restoration to the pre-fall condition? Not exactly. We as Christians are not as Adam and Eve were before the fall. Proof: If I ask you all to take your clothes off in a crowd could you do it without knowing that you were naked? No. We are in the post-fallen state. We are partially restored, but we are being conformed to the image of Christ not the image of pre-fall Adam (Rom. 8:29). We have a fallen body as well, for it is dieing (Phil 3:21).

Most theology books raise the question, Are soul, spirit, heart, flesh and mind separate things? They are similar yet separate.

Illustration: My soul can know that something is wrong, my heart may tell me not to do it, but my flesh may go for it anyway. They are separate in their activities.

We have a couple more terms to consider: DICHOTOMIST AND TRICHOTOMIST.

DICHOTOMISTS think that there are two parts to man. There is the material part which is the body, and the immaterial which is the soul and spirit.

TRICHOTOMISTS feel that there are three parts to man. The body, soul and spirit.

Do you see a semantic problem at this point? The dichotomist is speaking material/immaterial while the trichotomist is speaking body/soul/spirit. They are comparing potatoes with Corvettes. The immaterial part is of course the soul and spirit. Naturally when speaking material/immaterial there are two. When you speak of body, soul and spirit there are three.

Most trichotomists would see that the immaterial part was made up of soul and spirit, yet within the one immaterial there are two parts. The dichotomists also deal with the soul and spirit as two items.

There are three texts which the trichotomist presents.

I Cor. 15:44, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

I Thess. 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our lord Jesus Christ."

Heb. 4:12, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a descerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

I am not sure that I Cor. 15:44 relates to the study.

In Thessalonians it is a simple statement that Paul is trusting that all three would be preserved. Indeed, it probably is an emphasis to say, I trust, that you will be wholly preserved. It does state that there are three items!

The construction of the Hebrew's text shows that the two are separate items. The contrast of joints and marrow would indicate soul and spirit are two items. This still does not say that the two are not parts of the immaterial man. They are different, but both immaterial.

To sum up this confusion may we say that when talking about material/immaterial we are dichotomists. When we are talking about body/soul/spirit we are trichotomists.

I HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT! If you are a trichotomist then you believe that there are two parts of man - material and immaterial thus you are a dichotomist. If you are a dichotomist then you believe that there are three parts to man - body, soul and spirit, thus you are a trichotomist. HA!

ON THE SERIOUS SIDE!

There are two parts of man - material and immaterial. There are three main aspects to man - body, soul and spirit. The soul and spirt are in the immaterial part of man.

Let's think about the body, soul and spirit for a few moments. What is the body? It is chemicals. It is conscious to it's environment. It is a vehicle for our soul and spirit. It is in a process of decay. It is our contact with other believers.

What is the soul? It is our self consciousness. It is our memories. It is our ego. It is our emotions. It is our reasoning. It has been put this way:

INTELLECT THE SOUL KNOWING
SENSIBILITY THE SOUL FEELING
WILL THE SOUL CHOOSING
CONSCIENCE THE SOUL JUDGING
MEMORY THE SOUL REFLECTING

We might illustrate this. A student knows via his intellect that it is wrong to bribe a teacher, especially with M&M's. He feels through his sensibility that he should not, but knows that he needs to, to get his grade up. He uses his will to choose to bribe the teacher and determine whether to get a package of plain, peanut or almond M&M's. He goes to the store and picks up a bag of M&M's and bribes the teacher. Naturally, immediately he feels bad because his conscience has said, "Hey you perverse person that was wrong." He sets all of this out of his mind for the day and goes on with his studies. The next day his memory brings what he has done to mind, and he feels bad again, so gives the teacher another bag of M&M's to make amends.

When speaking of the conscience we need to realize that the lost and the saved have a different type of conscience. I will list these for your further study.

THE LOST Defiled Titus 1:15
Evil Heb. 10:22
Convicting Jn 8:9
Seared I Tim 4:2

THE SAVED Purged Heb. 10:1,2
Good I Pet. 3:16
Witnesses Rom. 9:1
Wounded I Cor. 8:12

We might make mention here that the mind has two directions of flow. It can serve the Spirit or it can serve the flesh. It is the will that determines which.

To recap:

THE SOUL SELF CONSCIOUSNESS
THE BODY WORLD CONSCIOUSNESS
THE SPIRIT GOD CONSCIOUSNESS

The body is the flesh and bone that moves and ultimately dies returning to the ground from which it came.

The soul is the part of man that thinks, remembers, feels and decides.

The spirit is the part of us that allows us to be conscious of God. Through it we can respond to our creator.

INTELLECT is the capacity to think. Eph. 1:17-18 states, "...the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;". The term for understanding is "kardia" or heart. Paul seems to think that understandings seat is in the heart which is usually accepted as the seat of the emotions as well.

The term heart is used 600 times in the Old Testament and 120 times in the New Testament. Anyone for a research paper?

SENSIBILITY is an ".....awareness of and responsiveness toward something....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) In short, if we can see someone and respond to them we have the quality of sensibility.

WILL is defined by Chafer as follows: "Will is the soul's power to choose between motives and to direct its subsequent activity according to the motive thus chosen...." (Vol. II, p 193)

We have mentioned flesh and should probably look at the term briefly.

1. It can relate to the material part of man. The meat and skin.

2. It can relate to the human relationships and classifications. Both the meat and the immaterial part of man.

3. It can relate to the immaterial part of man. Only the moral and ethical meaning involved.

The body, as in the meat, is not ethically good or bad. The immaterial aspect of the flesh is bad. It opposes God and all right things of life. A related term is "carnal" which describes a believer that is living in, or is dominated by the flesh.

Victory can be had over the flesh. A couple of verses for your future reference on this are Rom.

8:2-4 and Gal. 5:16-17. We won't spend time on this right now.

APPLICATION:

The soul of man consists of the intellect, man's knowing; Sensibility, man's feeling; will, man's choosing; conscience, man's judging. These make up life for man.

1. The soul is quite intricate in its make up. God has given man all the facilities by which to respond to God in a positive manner.

Anyone choosing to reject Christ when he hears the Gospel certainly condemns himself.

Intellect is knowing of the Savior.

Sensibility is feeling the need of a Savior - feeling the heaviness of sin.

Will is making the choice to accept Him as Savior.

Conscience, if the person is saved, it becomes your guide to the Christian walk; if the person is lost, it becomes seared.

2. How does the knowledge gained in this study apply to James 1:14-15? "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Intellect: Soul knowing - temptation
Sensibility: Soul feeling - lust
Will: Soul making a choice - sin
Conscience: Soul judging

Note that the way to holiness is the same as to sin. The difference hinges on your decision of the will. It is just as easy to be holy as it is to sin.

3. Ps. 62:5-8 mentions, "My soul, wait thou only upon God;" The Psalmist seems to be addressing his soul. "Wait" ONLY upon God.

Your intellect - only thinking of God.
Your sensibility - feeling and sensing only God.
Your will - only deciding toward God.
Your conscience - always clear before God.

WOW! "My expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be Moved."

If your soul is centered on God you will not be moved!

The intellect and sensibility, however both need to be upon God, else Mr. Will may stray!

4. I am responsible for all my actions.

5. I am body soul and spirit, and need to control all of them.

6. The immaterial man comes from God and only He can satisfy the spiritual hunger within. We are very complex beings, and only the Word can help us understand ourselves.

I trust that this section will be the stepping stone to the readers further study in this area. It should be a beginning point in understanding yourself and your relationship to your Creator.

04150

MAN IN INNOCENCE

THE BEFORE, or the state of innocence.

INTRODUCTION: We have some friends that had two little boys. The oldest was out of diapers awhile and the younger was in training pants. The youngest had wet his pants and mom was doing her thing to try and train him. "Why did you wet your pants?" "No mom, he did it," referring to his older brother!" WE ARE ALWAYS INNOCENT AREN'T WE FOLKS!

THE STATE OF INNOCENCE-THE ENVIRONMENT:

Since we all know that the environment that we are raised in molds and shapes our thinking, and since we know that a poor environment tends to bring about wrong actions, decisions and attitudes in man, we can thus assume that the wrong actions of Adam were caused by the terrible conditions of the environment that God placed him in - namely, the garden of Eden. NO!

It is true that environment tends to bring about wrong behavior in lost man. In fact some judges operate on the principle that the environment can make a person into a criminal, thus the crime is not wrong. None of this relates to Adam, however for we know that the Garden was good and that the behavior of Adam was out of his own desire to go against what God had told him.

By the way, I recently saw the front page of a tabloid which declared that the Garden of Eden had been found. It was south of Denver, CO in case you want to see it. The paper also mentioned that they had found the remains of Adam and Eve. Amazing what man is doing these days! Sarcasm intended!

What do we know of Adam before the fall:

ADAM'S ENVIRONMENT: New heaven, new earth, and new wife. The garden was full of fruit trees. All trees were for their food except one. Result of eating from the one would result in knowing good and evil. Nakedness didn't bother Adam and Eve. Had dominion over creatures. He was created in God's image. God blessed them (Gen. 1:28). Told to multiply and fill the earth (1:28). Told to subdue the earth (1:28). All of creation including man and woman were viewed as good in God's mind (1:3). Adam was to till and keep the garden (2:1). He had no sin. Evidently he had not been tempted. He had the possibility of continuing on in that state indefinitely. Obedience was the key. NOT A BAD ENVIRONMENT!

God set Adam in the perfect environment and things went sour. Adam chose to disobey, and was no longer innocent!

God was somewhat specific when He told Adam about the prohibitions. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." I suppose that God could have made it plainer, but I'm not sure how.

So why is man that way? If you tell them not to do something they have to do it just because it was forbidden. How come and why for? Even Christians do it. The state says 55 mph and many Christians have to do 60 mph.

God tells us lying is wrong, yet many Christians lie on a regular basis. They call it stretching the truth, or just not giving all the information but it is lying.

I think that mostly the answer is that man is self-centered to the end. We want to do what WE want to do! Along with self-centeredness there are many side effects that manifest themselves. I have to be right. I want to look good to others. I want to be a big name. I want ..... - you fill in the blank. All stem from our total self-centeredness - God can cure this if we allow Him the possibility.

God told Adam what He wanted and expected, but Adam went his own direction. God makes His will plain to all believers for their lives, but I fear many are going their own directions instead.

When it comes to God's will in general - the things that the Word tells us concerning right and wrong - we as humans usually concentrate on the CAN'T DO'S INSTEAD OF THE CAN DO'S!

While teaching in a Bible Institute, it was very evident to me that the don'ts of the student handbook were the prime emphasis of dislike, conversation, and gripping. There were worlds of freedoms allowed the students, yet the don'ts were the supreme threat to their SELF!

It again, is the way of man. Even in economic things when we are short of cash, we dwell on

what we can't do. I can't go to town to pick up that new pair of shoes that I NEED! You could dwell on the fact that there are many things that are fun around town that you can do.

There are negative aspects to the will of God as it is presented in the Word, yet on the whole His will is positive for His children.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADAM:

God told Adam to tend the garden. That indicates WORK and that should be plugged into your memory banks. God expected man to work EVEN WHEN MAN WAS IN THE STATE OF INNOCENCE! Work is not a dirty word unless you are a gardener! We are to work in this life.

Chafer mentions that moral qualities can be active and passive. Adams moral qualities were not active before the fall. He had not needed to use them until the temptation. The fall called his moral qualities into question and into the activity. Our own moral qualities are passive when we are not faced with temptations, but they become active quickly.

Adam was mature so that he was without excuse in what he did. God held him responsible for his activity. God transmitted His will to Adam verbally while He transmits it to us through the Word.

Both Adam and we have the same situation. God told us things not to do and things we could do. It is our own choice between the two that gets us into trouble.

Some hold that the story of the fall is only a myth, while others see a realty mixed with allegory. We of course hold that this is an actual account of an actual event in the life of a real, literal man named Adam.

We might make brief mention of allegorical interpretation at this point. We will look at it in more detail in Eschatology. It is a "Symbolic representation of the truth" according to the Dictionary of Religious terms. (Kaufman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company; 1967)

It is similar to a dump truck full of dirt. The truck would be the vehicle, or carrier of the real load, the dirt. The verses in the Bible are the vehicle, or story, or myth, that carry a deeper truth than the story presents. In short, you read a verse and throw it away when you find out what the real truth was.

The problem with this method of interpretation is that Allegorical interpretation can have as many "truths" as you have interpreters.

So, how do we know that this account of Adam and the fall are not just myths and fables?

a. The rest of scripture treats the occurrence as fact and true. Matt. 19:4-5; Ex. 20:11; I Chr. 1:1; Ps. 8:3-6; Mk. 10:6-7; Lu. 3:38; Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 11:9; 15:21-22; 15:45-47; I Tim. 2:13-14; Jude. 14.

b. The Genesis account reads as if it is an account of history. There is no indication that it is a collection of myths or stories.

c. The Jews held to the account as being literal. II Esdras 3:4-7; 7:48; Wisdom 2:24; 10:1; Ecclesiasticus 17:1.

d. Christ held it as literal and true. Matt. 19:4-5, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning, made them male and female; And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh?" Christ quoted Gen. 2:24 and this would show that he held that the creation account was a real occurrence.

e. It would cause some real problems with some of Paul's theology if there was no real literal Adam and Eve! See Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:21-22; I Cor. 15:45-47; I Tim. 2:9ff.

f. Archaeologists have recovered two seals that depict the temptation scene. They were discovered in the 1930's near Nineveh. Even history seems to bear out the Genesis account.

THE TEMPTATION OF ADAM AND EVE:

The temptation is not contradictory to what we know from the Scriptures that we have concerning Satan. It is well within his method of operation.

It was undoubtedly aimed at thwarting God's plan. All through Scripture it can be seen that the Devil is constantly striving to trip the Lord up. Naturally it is the Devil that keeps getting tripped up!

The thought of someone acting independently from God and God's desires is not new with Adam. The Devil had a good hand at it before Adam even considered it.

One is left to ponder the question of why did Adam decide to sin? Some suggestions might come to mind.

a. Covetousness. Not hardly. He had the run of the garden, that is unless he wanted to kick God the owner out, and build condos. No, there were no camaros, stereos, tvs, vcrs etc., so doubt that covetousness was involved.

b. Sexual immorality. Hardly. He had the only woman on earth!

c. Repudiation of God. Repudiation is to refuse to have dealings with someone, or the rejection of someone or something due to a belief that the person or truth is untrue. I don't think that Adam had in mind refusing God or rejecting Him, only disobeying Him.

A rejection of what God wanted him to do is the simplest explanation. The Devil tried to be like God we are told in Isa. 14:14, "...like the most high....". He talked Eve into the same concept. "...ye shall be as God...." Gen. 3:5

It kind of reminds me of a little kid that has done something wrong and knows that he will be caught. He naturally tries to entice someone else into the same trouble. Misery loves company!

There were three forms of death involved in the sin of Adam and his punishment.

a. SPIRITUAL IMMEDIATE
b. PHYSICAL BECAME MORTAL AND DIEING
c. ETERNAL AT ONCE SUBJECT TO IT WHEN THEY DIED

We won't cover these in any detail, because they come up later on in our study.

We might notice that the subject of the fruit did not bother Adam and Eve until the Devil came around. Might we dare apply this to the subject of regulations? Usually rules don't bother people until they are tempted to break them. Oft times in my early college days I noticed that there were no problems until someone began to complain about something. Then others would begin to think about it and the commiseration usually lead to trouble.

Keep the devil away and don't listen, be it he in person, or be it he in the tongue of someone that is disgruntled.

The devil wanted to be more than he was, or to be more than God. In a very real sense this is the sin of covetousness. He wanted more than he had. As we view our lives may we be careful not to fall into this trap of desiring to be someone we aren't, or to be better than someone else.

God made you according to the specifications that He wanted, so that you could serve Him as only YOU can serve Him. You may run into someone that is a much better preacher than you are. You may run into someone that is a much better singer than you are. You may run into someone that has more hair than you do. You may run into someone that has _____ than you do.

REMEMBER THAT GOD MADE YOU THE WAY HE WANTED YOU! He does not want you to preach like the other person! He does not want you to sing like the other person! He does not want you to have more hair than you have!

Think of the glory that would be Satan's now had he left well enough alone!

APPLICATION:

God set Adam and Eve in the perfect environment, yet they sinned. Now, as you live life and you find yourself in different situations, don't assume that you will not sin. You will if your will finds the proper conditions in your being. Watch your situations. Keep them as safe as is possible. Don't allow yourself to enter into situations that give rise to improper thoughts and/or acts.

As we view God's don'ts we need to realize that His will is positive even though there are negatives with in it. His will is positive and we have no need to fear it.

It is Satan that tempts, but it is we who must choose to sin. He does not have the capacity to force us to sin. He can only set up the situation where we want to sin.

May we appreciate the Spirit's work within us to teach us and instruct us on the ways of god? He is that which every believer has, that allows them the freedom to say no to sin.

04200

MAN'S FALL

Man was placed in the garden to serve God and to fellowship with God. He was given the run of things, with only one exception. Do not eat of the fruit of the tree of life.

He decided that this was an option rather than a command, and ate of the forbidden fruit. There was a drastic change in his relationship with God and we call that change of relationship the fall of man.

Before we move on, I might mention that there is an appendix that you might find of interest. I have toyed with the question of where the Garden of Eden was for many years. I think I mentioned in a previous section that the tabloids feel that it is south of Denver, Colorado, but I believe that there may be some evidence that might strongly indicate that it was in the area of Jerusalem. I have included this study for your interest and thought.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SATAN AND MAN AFTER THE FALL

UNDER HIS BLINDING: II Cor. 4:3-4, "But if our gospel be hidden it is hidden to them that are lost, in whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Lost man has no power or understanding to come to God. God is a stranger to lost man. Satan has no desire for the lost person to learn of God nor for him to understand God.

UNDER HIS CONTROL AND LIFE STYLE: Eph. 2:1-2, "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins; In which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience;" The normal life style of the lost is patterned after Satan's ways and means. Lost man seldom desires to live morally, nor properly, though there are those exceptions that desire to come to God under the power of their own works.

UNDER HIS POWER: Col 1:13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;" The verse shows the power of darkness which is the lost man's plight, yet gives the hope of something far better!

UNDER HIS WICKEDNESS: I Jn 5:19, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." This should help us understand why the lost are the way they are. They are in wickedness, so they will NATURALLY lie to you about the quality of the product that they desire to sell you. They will NATURALLY try to beat you at the stop signs. Understand them, and they should anger you less.

The condition of lost or fallen man is often termed the Total Depravity of man. It is the thought that man is totally corrupt and that he can do nothing to reach God.

Theissen mentions of total depravity, "By depravity we mean man's want of original righteousness and of holy affections toward God, and also the corruption of his moral nature and his bias toward evil."

He continues, "...it does mean, that every sinner is totally destitute of that love to God which is the fundamental requirement of the law...; that he is supremely given to a preference of himself to God (II Tim. 3:4); that he has an aversion to God which on occasion becomes active enmity to Him (Rom. 8:7); that his every faculty is disordered and corrupted (Eph. 4:18); that he has no thought, feeling, or deed of which God can fully approve (Rom. 7:18)." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, pp, 267-268)

Now that is a real statement of a condition that is not desirable, yet is the state of all lost people. Is it any wonder that they try to cheat us? Indeed, it is a wonder that the world is as it is, and not much worse in the area of morals. I personally feel that the decline of the Church in this country is the direct cause of the increase in moral problems in the lost people. We, the Church have not been the restraint that we ought to be.

God placed before Adam and Eve a simple moral test. In this test was the potential for complete obedience, or complete depravity. This test was composed of two parts. The command not to eat the fruit in Gen. 2:17, and the temptation by Satan in Gen. 3:1.

God placed this test before Adam and Eve so that they could have the choice between good and

evil, and to give them moral experience (James 1:12; I Pet 1:6-7). God does not create beings that must follow Him blindly, but beings that have the moral choice to follow or reject. He gave this choice to the angelic host, and some followed while others rejected.

The Devil used several tactics in his temptation:

1. He planted a question (Gen. 3:1). He asked Eve if God said, "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

2. He denied God's word (3:4). "Ye shall not surely die;" This might relate to the fact that he is called the father of lies in John 8:44.

3. He attributed evil motives to God (3:5). He indicated that God was covering up something, to keep them from being like God.

4. He promised personal benefit will come with their disobedience (3:5). They would be as God.

They bought the same lie and deception as the fallen angels. He placed himself as knowing as God knows, and proceeded to tell them that they could be like their Creator. What a falsehood. How can a created being be as the creator. How can a Ford car become the same as Henry Ford? Impossible.

He used different avenues to approach them in the temptation. He appealed to the aesthetic, or beauty of things. He also touched their intellect by promising things that were desirable.

There was nothing magical in the fruit, nor were there powers in the juices to give them the knowledge of good and evil. They knew of good and evil when they ate. It was the act of disobedience, rather than the fruit itself.

There were a number of consequences that came with the fall. Man was condemned by his own conscience. He hid in shame and guilt. Not unlike a small child that knows that they have done wrong. Even some of the animal world reacts to the simple, disobedience/penalty/hide activity. Our little dog began leaving food on the carpet. We began forcing him to eat it. He became very stubborn about eating the SINGLE piece of food. After a few rounds of this confrontation, he would leave the piece on the carpet and go to the bathroom, where we put him for punishment. He knew he had done wrong - he knew we would punish him - so why not get the punishment over with. We as believers, when we sin often attempt to hide from God by failing to have devotions, or quit going to church, etc.

God set penalties for all that were concerned. The serpent was to crawl on the belly and eat dust (3:14,15). Satan was to fall by the seed of the woman (3:15). The woman was to have pain in travail, and she was to be subject to her husband (3:16). The man was to find that the environment would be against him (3:17-19). The man and woman together were to suffer from

spiritual and physical death, while being expelled from the garden. Mankind to come also was to suffer, not that they did anything wrong, but that they sinned in Adam. All of mankind would have sinned had we all been in the garden. Mankind
is guilty before God (Rom. 5:12,18), and he is totally depraved (Ps. 5:9; Rom. 5:190.

Sin resulted in three types of death. MY HOW SIN MULTIPLIES! There came upon man physical, spiritual and eternal death in one act of disobedience. Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul and spirit from God. Eternal death is the separation of the soul and spirit from God eternally. Indeed, it is more than just separation. It involves eternal torment as well!

This eternal separation and torment are also called the second death in Rev. 20:14; 21:8.

Some might wonder what the difference is between spiritual death and eternal death? The basic difference is the length of time. The spiritual death is in this life (a period of years), while eternal death is for all of eternity. The spiritual death becomes eternal death at the point of physical death. There is little difference between spiritual and eternal, for spiritual becomes eternal. The distinction is that spiritual death may be overcome in this life via salvation, while eternal death is permanent and cannot be overcome in the next life. Spiritual death would portray the person's condition in this life while eternal death would picture his condition in the next life.

The difference is in Adam and Eve. They at the point of sin suffered three deaths. Physical in that they began to die, spiritual in that they became dead spiritually, and eternal, in that, at that point they were facing eternity without God.

What is physical death to the body? A slow process of disintegration that begins at conception. Everything is downhill from that point on. We tend to think of aging as beginning at the point of birth, but actually we are dying from the moment of conception. It is all part of the maturing, and aging process.

Part of the post-fall condition is the conflict between what God wants and what man wants. I Jn. 2:16 shows an overview of the life of man in his natural habitat so to speak.

Chafer relates the Genesis text to John's exposition on evil. This is a very good comparison. Take time to relate Gen. 2:15-17 to the three points of I Jn 2:16.

LUST OF THE FLESH would cover such things as physical appetites and desires that we allow to rule our lives. This is a real problem to the believer in this day. We are bombarded by sex and its by-products on a daily basis. A number of years ago the family and I were driving in the mountains west of Denver. We had been gone from the city for most of the day. We were just coming down out of the foothills and a huge billboard of a young woman in a skimpy bathing suit was right in front of us. It dawned on me that we had gone all day with nothing of this sort to deal with. I was shocked to realize how much of this sort of thing we saw every day.

How can we combat this sort of thing? Avoid sources of enticing pictures and thoughts. If you watch some of the television today you will be constantly exposed to it. Shut it off. Keep your mind on spiritual things and pursuits. Have other believers over for fellowship. Do I dare suggest you have lost people over for witnessing?

Believers have been hardened to the trash and sleese that has been given to us on the Television screen. I talk with believers that allow Satan to fill their minds with this slime on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis. How can you fill your mind with sex, immorality, lying, cheating and the like several hours a day and expect to overcome the effect in a couple of hours in church on Sunday? You are asking the impossible.

LUST OF THE EYE would cover all that we see that we covet and desire. This may lead to lust of the flesh in some areas. We are constantly confronted with this as well. If you go to the mall to walk around you can find all sorts of things that "I WANT!"

While shopping with my wife, I spotted a real neat portable stereo. I called her over by saying that I wanted her to see something I needed. As she inspected the stereo she commented, "You need!" I said, Yes, I NEED it to satisfy my coveteousness!"

PRIDE OF LIFE would relate to the thought of being proud of our way of life, or who we are, or what we are. I believe that Chafer refers this to an unholy love of pre-eminence. That sums it up well. We desire to be at the pentacle of focus, all eyes upon us, and what we are. This is not a good attitude to say the least.

We might see this in many ways in our lives. In being proud of whose church we go to, in being proud of our education. In being proud of what school we went to. In who designed our clothes (Halston, Calvin Klien etc.).

How do we as Christian leaders live our lives so that these things are not a hindrance to our lives and testimonies? Beware of our off time activities. Don't do anything that will endanger our testimony. Attempt to be satisfied with what God has given us. He promises to provide our needs - not our wants (Matt. 6:33). Control all of lifes situations so that you are never placed in a position where lust can take root in your life as action. Be aware that you may be lonely in this type of life.

We met a woman in Nebraska that was trying her best to live by faith and as she was doing it she was observing that no body in the church was living the way she was. Indeed, the church tended to not associate with her because of her frugality in life style. Her living by faith extended into all areas of her life and she was very frustrated that no one else was living as the scripture commands us. BE SURE YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE AS UNTO THE LORD AND DON'T SWEAT THE OTHER GUYS!

The walk in these three areas, is typical of mankind's natural bent toward evil and away from

God.

It is of interest that Humanism is perpetuating these thoughts in the philosophy that it teaches. Humanism tells us that man is all there is, and what man can do is all that can be done. We as man can make our own way - we can do as we feel we want to do. There is no authority except that which you are to yourself. If you desire a woman it is okay. If you desire to steal it is okay. You can do no wrong because you make the rules.

The ultimate to this thought is that each one has whatever rights he determines himself to have.

NATURALLY GOD HAS NO PLACE IN THIS SYSTEM OF THOUGHT WHICH BY THE WAY IS ACTUALLY A RELIGION IN ALL SENSES OF THE WORD.

James 1:14-15, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Let's chart that and consider it.

INTELLECT	the soul knowing	TEMPTATION
SENSIBILITY	the soul feeling	LUST
WILL	the soul choosing	SIN
CONSCIENCE	the soul judging	GUILT
MEMORY	the soul reflecting	SORROW

That could just as easily be a chart that looks like this:

INTELLECT	the soul knowing	TEMPTATION
SENSIBILITY	the soul feeling	LUST
WILL	the soul choosing	PROPER ACTION
CONSCIENCE	the soul judging	PEACE
MEMORY	the soul reflecting	JOY

This is the same process that all of mankind has gone through in their sin. Adam was tempted - he desired - he sinned. The way to holiness is the same for that to sin. The will is the determinate factor.

Adam and Eve become sinners by sinning, while we become sinners by conception, but we all go through the same process of look, desire, lust, and action.

Some feel that man, in his lost state can present some holiness, however the total depravity of man contradicts that thought. The lost man has no hope of finding help for himself and is totally reliant upon the Lord to intervene. He is not depraved because he thinks so, but because God

says so. It is the estimation of God that total depravity is based on. I'm sure that our estimation of ourselves would not be that low!

We need to understand that spiritual death is universal in man. Ps. 51:5, "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (See also Rom. 3:9-18; Mk 7:15, 20-23)

All death will come to a final end during the end times. Rev. 21:4 mentions, "...there shall be no more death....". I Cor. 15:26 also mentions something about death being no more.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. The total depravity of man does not surprise us, but do we understand and live as if we do. Lost man is totally depraved. He can act no other way than he does, so we shouldn't get upset with him when he acts the way he does. Lost man is naturally going to be obnoxious and filthy by nature. This should move us to compassion not anger. This should move us to witness not reviling. This should move us to concern not contempt.

2. I Tim. 5:6 mentions of a widow, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth...." The widow in question is living in pleasures. We as believers are alive - SO HOW COME SOME CHRISTIANS CAN LIVE AS IF THEY ARE DEAD? When we continue to sin our conscience becomes dull and we go further into sin. We don't know sin quite as well as we should. There is the possibility that many "Christians" are not really Christians.

I believe that many put on a spiritual front so that they can operate in the "church" realm, and not be seen as an outsider.

When in Bible college a preacher preached a plain old salvation message and received a very large shock. An invitation was given and over 1/2 of the student body came forward for salvation. One was a senior and the student body president. They had put on a facade as children, and had never exercised a personal faith in Christ.

3. Can you imagine for a moment what Adam and Eve went through when they sinned and realized what was up? When I was eight or ten, I was somewhat into shoplifting. Only little things that I wanted - YOU KNOW THE LUST OF THE EYE! - I picked up candy and little rings - one had a compass on top and a secret compartment underneath. One day I decided to lift a fat book. They were about two inches thick, and four by five in size. I hadn't contemplated the size of my pockets opening, nor its relative size to the book. As I struggled to get that fat thing into my tiny pocket the saleslady called my name. I KNEW SOMETHING WAS UP! I HAD HAD IT!!! She didn't turn me in, but I did not steal again. Yes, I put the book back VERY quickly.

When working in retail sales, my wife recounted to me the story of two teenage girls that had been caught shoplifting. They were being very flip about the whole thing. They were joking and

laughing and having a fun time, until the police officer mentioned that she had called their parents to come and get them. The serious side of life reared its ugly head quickly.

4. The fall required God to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness. He killed animals for skins to cover them. He also provided the sacrifice needed when Abraham went to offer Isaac. It is neat that He sent Christ to be our sacrifice. He set the requirements, and then He sent the required sacrifice!

5. Adam's bent toward evil is evident in his posterity. Cain killed and there have been murderers, thieves, and immoral people ever since. The positive of this is that Adam through Seth also produced a posterity via following God's ways and means toward salvation.

6. We need to remember that we are no different than any other lost person except that the grace of God moved someone across our path to share the Gospel with us. We should be sensitive to the Lord's leading in witnessing. We may be the instruments through which God will lead others to Him.

7. One further step in looking at total depravity would be in the idea of pride. The New Testament is not really for the person being proud. Let's look at depravity and pride for a moment.

Pride is something that we are to have in our work. Pride is something that we have in relation to our children. RIGHT? Pride is an over high opinion of oneself and letting everyone know it.

The Old Testament mentions a little about pride. Let me share a few of those with you. Prov. 11:2 mentions that wisdom is the result of no pride. Prov. 13:10 tells us that pride brings contention. Prov. 16:18 tells us that pride goes before destruction. Prov. 29:23 mentions that pride will bring a man low.

The New Testament mentions pride only three times. Mk 7:21-23 - It is from within and is very evil. It is listed with murder. These are defiled men in the text. I Tim. 3:6 tells us that pride is not a trait of a mature Christian. I Jn 2:16 lists pride of life with the lust of the flesh and of the eye. Pride of life may come into our personal lives, or in our church lives.

Personal life: In who we are - heritage - family etc. In what we are - educated - job - position etc. In what we have. In what we know. In what we are not - I'm not poor etc. In what we have not.

Church life: In accomplishments of individuals. In accomplishments of the church. In positions in the church. In giving. In dress and appearance. In most trouble. In dictatorships. In non-involvement of members.

Total Depravity explains all this. MAN CAN'T LOVE GOD. MAN LOVES SELF MORE

THAN GOD. MAN KEEPS AWAY FROM GOD. MAN IS CORRUPT. MAN CAN'T PLEASE GOD. In short, he is absolutely no good. We can do nothing good of ourselves. We are clay - dirt - and as such, no good to God. (Some references to consider, Isa. 64:6; Jer. 17:99; Rom. 3:23.)

If there is nothing good about man then he should not be proud. Pride is inconsistent with our nature logically, yet is a very intertwined part of our beings.

I think if you realize that pride is at the root of most of our problems with other people we might be able to begin to deal with our interpersonal relationships and win.

I would like to close with a quote.

AN ORGANIZATION OF SINNERS

"The church is not an organization of good people, it is an organization of sinners. It is the only organization in human society that takes sinners into its membership just because they are sinners. It is the only organization that keeps on saying week after week, year after year, age after age, 'We have done those things that we ought not to have done and left undone those things that we ought to have done.' No other organized body bears it its group consciousness the weight not only of its own members sins but the sins of the whole social order. This is the glory of the church, its uniqueness in human society, that it lives perpetually on the vitality and realism of its own repentance, its contrition, and its plea for God's help and forgiveness. Let us not claim moral virtue for church members or for the church. Let us rather glory in the fact that the church is a society of sinners, who claim no virtue, but humbly rest their broken and burdened lives upon the grace which God has eternally revealed in Christ Jesus." Charles Clayton Morrison. (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 170-171)

04250

HUMANISM

I recently heard of a man that had held up a store. In the commission of the crime, he shot a man that died shortly after the incident. The robber was convicted of whatever the charges were in the death of the man, and was imprisoned. When the man was interviewed, he said he was innocent. He had done nothing wrong except rob the store. (The court had eye witnesses which lead to his conviction.)

Guess why the man felt he was innocent. He admitted he had shot the man - "But, I didn't make him die. That wasn't my fault. He stepped in front of my gun and died." (Ruff quote)

This man was able to reach his conclusion based on the claims of humanism. There is no wrong, if I don't think that it's wrong. I can do no wrong. I have no responsibility for what I do. I am my own ethics - whatever is right for me is right.

I would like to share some quotes from "Focus On Missions" a paper put out by the Fellowship of Missions, May 1984.

"Top Offenses in the public schools in 1940.
1. talking
2. Chewing gum
3. Making noise
4. Running in the halls
5. Getting out of turn in line
6. Wearing improper clothing
7. Not putting paper in wastebaskets

Offenses in the public schools in 1982

1. Rape
2. Robbery
3. Assault
4. Burglary
5. Arson
6. Bombings
7. Murder
8. Suicide
9. Absenteeism"

In recent news reports we know that students are carrying hand guns to their classes. Some schools have installed metal detectors to screen out the weapons before the students are allowed into school.

Some comments from humanists:

"Fundamental Bible-believing people do not have the right to indoctrinate their children in their faith. We are preparing them for the year 2000, when America will be a part of a one-world global society."

"I am convinced that the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public-school classroom by teachers that correctly perceive their role as proselyters of a new faith [speaking of humanism]."

"Dr. Paul Brandwon, who is a child psychologist, says, 'Any child who believes in God is

mentally ill.' Dr. Pierce of Harvard University says, 'Every child in America who enters school at the age of five is mentally ill, because he comes to school with an allegiance to our elected officials, toward our founding fathers, toward our institutions, toward the preservation of this form of government that we have - patriotism, nationalism, and sovereignty. All that proves that children are sick because a truly well individual is one who has rejected all of those things, and is truly the international child of the future."

Might we now wonder just what George Bush's new world order was? I think that we may well know. A world society may come to pass, but the last time the world came together, they turned against God - TOWER OF BABEL.

"It's OK to lie. It's OK to steal. It's OK to have premarital sex. It's OK to cheat, or to kill if these things are part of your value system, and you have clarified these values for yourself. The important thing is not what values you choose, but that you have chosen them yourself freely and without coercion of parents, spouse, priest, friends, ministers or social pressure of any kind."

Need we wonder why the gangs in our cities feel that there is nothing wrong with what they are doing? No.

Let us consider humanism in this section. I would like to go through their manifestoes point by point and make comments. The quotes are all from their manifestoes.

HUMANIST MANIFESTO I: (1933)

As you read this document it is clear that they are replacing old outdated religion with the new "HUMANIST RELIGION".

As we go through these points keep our country and society in mind and see if you see signs of Humanism around us.

1. Humanism is Atheistic:

The universe is "self-existing and not created". I recently read that all of Wheaton's scientific faculty were theistic evolutionists.

2. Humanism is Evolutionary: Man "has emerged as the result of a continuous process" - a part of nature.

3. Humanism is Mortalistic: The "dualism of mind and body must be rejected." Only one unit exists. The mind and body is one item that is going to die. Serve it well.

4. Man's religious culture and civilization emerge from man's "interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage." This is true for the unsaved, but we have the Bible to

shape our culture and civilization. Their system is all downward according to Romans one for the unsaved.

5. Realities may be found only by "means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs." Religion must be based on findings of the "scientific spirit and method." No. True religion must be based on the Bible. Natural laws can be found by the scientific method, but moral laws come form God.

6. "Theism, Deism, Modernism," and other thoughts are in the past. They are outdated. This is false advertising. Christianity would be included in their "other thoughts," and my Bible tells me it is eternal as is our God. Already we can see they reject God, the Bible, and thing's spiritual.

How can we deal with a humanist? Ask that the Holy Spirit to work in their heart. Philosophically - show them that there is the possibility of a supreme creator. Explain that the Word is God's message to man. Explain the Gospel, including hell.

7. Religion should grow from "actions, purpose, and experience which are humanly significant." No. Religion is set within the Scriptures.

They say that "Nothing human is alien to the religious."

Religion ". . .includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation - all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living." Is there a sense in which we've blown this? The Denver Art Museum, years ago, had a lot of religious art, but it was all depicting Roman Catholic theology. We probably should appreciate what is being done in some of our Christian schools in the area of the arts, rather than condemning them for their efforts.

"The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained." There may be a hint of truth in what they say, if I understand what they say. Christianity has substituted separation from the world for the separation from worldly practices. We have no art, we have no science, we have little philosophy. We have eliminated those things from our existence. Art is not bad, nor immoral as such. Indeed, we use art in our literature and books, so why have we separated ourselves from the idea of religious art.

The problem for the humanist is that they relegate all of these things as an end to bring man to the highest point that he can climb. God says that man can reach much higher plains than just this life.

8. The "development and fulfillment" of man's personality in this life is of prime importance. In a sense this is true for Christians if God is doing the developing and fulfilling. Many of these points are good points, with God left out.

9. Where religious people gain fulfillment in worship and prayer the Humanist finds fulfillment

in a "heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well being." In a sense this is what Christians gain from worship, prayer, and seeing to one another's well being.

It is of interest that the liberals and the Mormons are fully into this aspect of humanism. They concentrate on the physical needs of people. It might be added that one of the darts of criticism thrown toward Christians, is that they are not meeting the physical needs of people, and those throwing the darts are correct. We have for too long blinded ourselves to the physical in deference to the spiritual.

10. There will be no more "religious emotions and attitudes" associated with the supernatural. (because there is no supernatural.) They think as the Russians thought about religion. Declare it nonexistent and it won't exist.

11. "We assume that Humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking." Man will face any crises of life in "terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability." This is why people can feel so indifferent to death. It is part of the natural order, so must be taken in stride. No big deal.

This is why abortion is so popular, and it is why the killing of the elderly is coming to our society.

12. To increase joy in living the Humanist will "aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life." The Christian does the same except that he does it for the satisfaction of God.

13. All religious institutions must be reorganized as soon as possible to help in the fulfillment of life and the enhancement of "human life." Indeed, this is being done; the world council of churches is going down the humanistic trail.

We see in this point that the humanist is gearing all of life toward life, and not God. God is non-existent, thus must be programed out of our thinking.

14. "A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of Humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world." Sounds like the world economic system. "SWIFT" is an international banking organization of one thousand banks that make their transactions electronically. The control of the individual by electronic numbers is quickly coming to us.

Socialism and communism do not work, yet the American people want more and more social programs. We are speeding toward socialism, while the communist countries are fleeing from it.

They have rejected humanism, because it does not work, while we desire it because we are in the middle of its promises, and have not yet reached its inadequacies.

15. Humanism will

"affirm life rather than DENY IT;" (SOMEWHAT STRANGE IN that they hold to abortion!)

"seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from it;"

"endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few."

From these goals the flow of Humanism will progress. Have you heard this in religious circles lately? Reverend Ike, and several others are preaching a get rich theology, where all you have to do is ask and you will be rich. God is a great big Santa Claus.

"The quest for the good life is still the central task for mankind." This probably in one sentence, sums up all that God is combating in the world system today. The good life. The good life as Madison Avenue portrays it. God tells us that we can have the good life by walking with Him through trials and troubles, while the humanist tells us the good life requires no trials and troubles.

This manifesto was signed by John Dewey [father of the modern public school system philosophy], R. Lester Mondale [father of Walter Mondale the politician], and others.

In short: A communistic society that can eat drink and be merry for they only die.

Humanist Manifesto II:

They shoot themselves in the foot, so to speak, in the opening statements of this document.

"The future is however, filled with dangers. In learning to apply the scientific method to nature and human life, we have opened the door to ecological damage, overpopulation, dehumanizing institutions, totalitarian repression, and nuclear and biochemical disaster. Faced with apocalyptic prophesies and doomsday scenarios, many flee in despair from reason and embrace irrational cults and theologies of withdrawal and retreat." Everything isn't peaches and cream - somebody left some of the pits in!

Yet, they stated in their 1933 document, "Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method." Much of what they describe comes from some of the people that they have been educating for so many years with the thought of modern education produced by one of their proponents, John Dewey.

In the next paragraph they state, "We need to extend the uses of scientific method,"

Following along with point number fourteen of the Humanist Manifesto I they state, "The ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the potential for growth in each human personality - not for the favored few, but for all of humankind. Only a shared world and global measures will suffice."

It is stated that many religions etc. claim heritage in the Humanist camp yet they are not truly Humanist. However the H.M.II states that "Humanism is an ethical process through which we all can move, above and beyond the divisive particulars, heroic personalities, dogmatic creeds, and ritual customs of past religions or their mere negation." They say that other isms cannot be humanist, yet all of us, no matter what ism we belong to can be humanist. (listed were: types of Humanism - "scientific, ethical, democratic, religious, and Marxist". Those claiming to be heirs of Humanism - "Free thought, Theism, Agnosticism, Skepticism, Deism, Rationalism, Ethical culture, and Liberal Religion...") I might add the "God is dead" issue comes from humanist thought.

In short we all can work toward the goals of Humanism in our own way, but that we will all get there one day through cooperation in areas of commonality. How can you work separately, commonly?

RELIGION:

1. NO GOD - MAN SAVES MANKIND

This point seems to restate much that was stated in H.M.I. "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves." This is also the thought of communism - only communism will save man. Again, I might make mention of the fact that communism did not save man. The Russian people would declare this openly.

2. "Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices." "There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture."

This contradicts the history of all civilizations that believed in some sort of afterlife.

They view religions as obstacles to human progress. Other ideologies including governmental systems such as capitalism and communism also hinder human progress. Throw out religion, government, and economics so we can spread the money around. Everything will be great. Once all is given equally there will be no more problems. Again, I mention communism and the total collapse of the system that did not work. I am sure that the humanist would say that communism is not humanism, yet the points of each system are very similar.

ETHICS:

3. Moral values come from experience. "Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures. Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of Humanism. We strive for the good life here and now."

No moral standard, they say. No ethical standard, they say. And now we can know where our present world came from. No morals and no ethics have been the result in the United States in the 90's.

4. "The controlled use of scientific methods, which have transformed the natural and social sciences since the renaissance, must be extended further in the solution of human problems."

(Didn't we see somewhere that the scientific method caused trouble? "In learning to apply the scientific method to nature and human life, we have opened the door to ecological damage, overpopulation, dehumanizing institutions, totalitarian repression, and nuclear and biochemical disaster.")

"As science pushes back the boundary of the known, one's sense of wonder is continually renewed, and art, poetry, and music find their places, along with religion and ethics." They have stated that religion was passing away - are art and poetry and music to pass away also? What do art, poetry, and music have to do with science? Can we say that what is going on in current popular music is an improvement on the past?

THE INDIVIDUAL:

5. "We reject all religious ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize personality. We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility."

"The possibilities of individual freedom of choice exist in human life and should be increased." Indeed, there is free choice and they practice it when they reject God.

Every single individual is free to do as they please. This can only be if we eliminate not only morals, and ethics, but all laws, governments, committees, schools and anything else that might limit the individual. Can you envision such a social structure. Indeed, is not the legislation of no limits or controls a limit or control?

6. "In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized."

"Moral education for children and adults is an important way of developing awareness and sexual maturity."

SOUND LIKE SEX EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS? By the way it is called "community action" in California. The use of anatomically correct models of sexual organs in the public schools is putting sexuality on the completely human - physical level, and is eliminating any possible meaning to sex in the emotional/love realm.

No wonder the teenage pregnancy rates are up. No wonder the age of sexual activity is down. It's just a biological function to be engaged in when we want to. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE HORRIFIED AT WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS!

DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY:

How can you have a democracy if you are redistributing wealth - causing all to live on the same income - and how is it governed? Surely they wouldn't want to tax people and cramp their personality.

7. "To enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of civil liberties in all societies. This includes freedom of speech and the press, political democracy, the legal right of opposition to governmental policies fair judicial process, religious liberty, freedom of association, and artistic, scientific, and cultural freedom. It also includes a recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide."

The American humanist cries for much of what he already has in this country. Most of these items are guaranteed in our Constitution, yet we can't have the restraints of government. They seem illogical at times. You cannot guarantee the things they desire without governmental control.

The cry for democracy is also seen in that statement - a democracy is a governmental system. They do not want government, so how can they want democracy?

8. "We are committed to an open and democratic society. We must extend participatory democracy in its true sense to the economy, the school, the family, the workplace, and the voluntary associations." To have this completed they must eliminate all Christians, Muslims, Buddhists etc. Open, requires only humanists in society. Sounds like Hitler's Arian world! I have to wonder what will happen when they mix humanism with Arianism.

Have we not seen this today? Demanding democracy in the home, in the school, in the work place, etc. Unions have tried in the work place and seem to be failing. People feel the company has no right to run it the way they want to. If a strike is called the company is not allowed to hire replacements. "MY RIGHTS" The unions fail to understand that in a democracy, the company extends rights to the worker as the company sees fit, not as the employee sees fit. If they want

democracy, they will have to find a way to function without the free enterprise aspect of it. They will need to have a democracy that controls all aspects of life, which sounds like communism, which is what humanism is.

9. "The separation of church and state and the separation of ideology and state are imperatives." Yet, the humanism ideology will become the state and that is okay. Again, their logic escapes me.

How can you have separation of church and state if they don't believe in the church, nor any religious institution?

How do you separate ideology from the state. The state is made up of people that certainly have some sort of ideology!

LOGIC PLEASE!

Some today demand separation of Church and state? They say that the constitution demands it. No, it doesn't. Indeed, the founders of our country instituted prayer in the governmental sessions, had Bibles printed with government funds, and founded the country on spiritual principles. We in later years have had a judicial system that has given us separation of church and state.

10. Economic systems should be evaluated by "whether or not they increase economic well-being for all individuals and groups, minimize poverty and hardship, increase the sum of human satisfaction, and enhance the quality of life." "We need to democratize the economy and judge it by its responsiveness to human needs testing results in terms of the common good."

Have you heard this on the news in recent years? We need to decrease military spending so that we can help the poor. We need to cut the space program and worry about the problems on earth. Yes, the media has attempted to move this into American thinking.

By the way if the riches of the world are distributed evenly as they desire, how can poverty and hardship exist?

11. They view a national minimum guaranteed annual income as necessary to help the poor, sick, etc.

"We believe in the right to universal education."

This study is continued in topic number d04300. There you find how humanism has filtered into the church and Christian family.

04300

WORLD COMMUNITY:

12. One world government and law:

"We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government." Have we seen anyone doing this lately? Jessie Jackson has done it several times, going to different places as an individual. In the 90's there was an entertainment ban imposed on the resort "Sun City" in South Africa, to oppose Apartheid.

It is reported that some public schools are no teaching a global citizenship instead of American citizenship.

13. World peace: Through decreased military spending, negotiation, and compromise. "It is a planetary imperative to reduce the level of military expenditures and turn these savings to peaceful and people-oriented uses." The one world government requires us to abandon force for "negotiation and compromise".

This again, sounds very much like the Bush administration. It occurs to me that the humanist system is putting Bush down for doing what they want to do.

The main premise of this point is not at all wrong. To negotiate and compromise into world peace would be great. Indeed, we have seen it work at times. The problem is that God tells us that wars will always be with us. How can we intelligently know that war will come and decrease our defenses? The American public has been sold a dangerous attitude when it comes to military spending and peace. The only peace that will come is with the Lord in the Millennial kingdom.

14. Save the earth: Radical change in the environmental attitude of the world would be needed to conserve the earth.

They are correct in their attempt to save the earth. We are poisoning ourselves, and enjoying the benefits of the poison. We as believers should be interested in the environmental issues. We believe that we are stewards of what God has given us, yet we do little about the creation that He has given.

Totally committing your life to environmentalism is not needed, yet recycling a can or two wouldn't hurt.

15. Human rights through redistribution of wealth: "It is the moral obligation of the developed nations to - provide - through an international authority that safe guards human rights - massive technical, agricultural, medical, and economic assistance, including birth control techniques, to the developing portions of the globe. World poverty must cease. Hence extreme disproportions in health, income, and economic growth should be reduced on a worldwide basis."

In the area of health and physical suffering the world needs help, yet many of the societies that function far below our American poverty level, find that they are happy. The humanist desires that the world population have the same opportunity as the Americans, to have it all - all the things and toys that they want. Things and toys are not the producer of happiness. Indeed, Americans are finding that they do not bring happiness. Why should the world be forced into materialism just to make the humanist feel good.

16. Develop technology. "We would resist any moves to censor basic scientific research on moral, political, or social grounds." They would encourage the scientific community to try clones. Raise clones for transplanting organs. Genetic engineering? Go for it no matter the outcome. We have unleashed bacteria that eat oil, in the ocean. Do we really know what long term effects that will have?

I really wonder what effect their free scientific research will do to the environment that they want to clean up and keep pure.

17. Remove all international barriers to international travel, culture, and science. All of Europe is doing this. Indeed, the common market is doing much of what humanism wants. We are now seeing interest on the part of the ex-communist block in economic union. They are talking of an organization of their own, yet one must wonder if merger with The Common Market isn't in the future.

HUMANITY AS A WHOLE:

In closing. The world cannot wait for governments to come together on their own. "Destructive ideological differences among Communism, Capitalism, Socialism, Conservatism, Liberalism, and Radicalism should be overcome."

"Humanism thus interpreted is a moral force that has time on its side. We believe that humankind has the potential intelligence, good will, and cooperative skill to implement this commitment in the decades ahead."

How do you react to that statement? True, they have time, potential intelligence, good will and cooperation however the last coming together of man to one purpose ended in trouble. Read the account of Babel.

"These affirmations are not a final credo or dogma but an expression of a living and growing

faith."

Some of the people signing H.M.II were:

Isaac Asimov, science fiction writer (wrote for Playboy)

Edd Doerr, Americans United for Separation of Church and State

Bette Chambers, President of American Humanist Association

Alan F. Guttmacher, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Paul Kurtz, Editor of "The Humanist"

Lester Mondale, former President, Fellowship of Religious Humanists and brother of Walter Mondale

B. F. Skinner, Harvard prof.

Norman Fleishman, Executive Vice Pres., Planned Parenthood World Population

Betty Friedan, founder, National Organization of Women

Now we need to use the above information to help ourselves, our churches and our country to realize how much humanism has already affected us.

Robert Schuller, one of the television church leaders: "the new reformation will return our focus to the sacred right of every person to self-esteem" (Robert Schuller, "SELF-ESTEEM: THE NEW REFORMATION"; p. 36-38) Sound familiar?

How does humanism affect us? Ourselves, our local churches, our universal church, our mission boards, our families, our society, our schools, our business, our labor, our government.

How does humanism affect us? Let us look and see.

Ourselves:

1. I am to be satisfied. My wife doesn't do enough for me. The church hasn't really ministered to me. (This is where most of our work on renewal has been, and the church is still ineffective in our global work.) My husband never pays attention to me. I want more pay!

2. "I want" THE I WANT ME TO BE COMFORTABLE SYNDROME.

Count up. How many stereos do you own? How many televisions do you own? How many cars do you own? How many clothes do you own? Now, how many of these items are really needed?

How many of your personal belongings could you put out at a garage sale and still allow you to live relatively comfortable? Yes, I think most of us have had a case or two of the I WANTS.

I'm not pointing the finger at anyone. Only trying to open all of us to the possibility that we as Christians are wide open to the "I want me to be comfortable syndrome".

When our three children were still at home, I counted up the number of stereos in our home. Now mind you there was a real good reason for purchasing every single one of them!

There was the one in the living room, there was the one at my desk, there was the one in the car, there was the one in Tim's room, there was the one in Stan's room, there was the one in Laurie's room, there was the two in the storage area awaiting the garage sale, and then there are the small portable earphone type stereos of which we had five. Boy are we fixed for sound! Everyone of them was a present, on sale, or needed! At the Derickson home over the years the "I want to be comfortable syndrome" has had its inroads from time to time.

How about at your home?

I overheard two older men at a garage sale that they were having. One of the men asked the other, "Remember how bad we needed these things when we bought them?".

Our local churches:

Self-oriented:

1. We dwell on self-esteem. Christ is to be pre-eminent in our lives not ourselves. it is not "what I want in life," it is "what he wants for my life" that counts.

2. We dwell on how I relate to the church. It is very seldom that I hear that someone is coming to church here because he wants to help build the church up for the Lord. It is usually something like "the church really ministers to me." or "the pastor really helps me understand the bible." These are not wrong, but they are not all that "church" is about.

3. We dwell on how the church ministers to me. If the church does not minister to the person the person usually will find one that will.

4. We dwell on having a pleasant building or plant to worship in. If we weren't so self centered wouldn't we expand our financial blessings, so that others could be included in the family of God rather than concentrate on buildings?

5. Because we are giving to self, we have less to give to God. Offerings are down, money is short, expanding missions giving is hard, and there is no money for projects and ministries that come along within the church.

One of the churches we attended, refused to increase a veteran missionary's support by $50 a month to get him back to the field, yet a month later raised commitments in about five minutes, to give $600-700 per month for a youth pastor for about fifteen kids.

6. We have poor attitudes toward divorce and remarriage. Divorce and remarriage is a direct result of "My Rights" and humanism.

7. Church discipline has no meaning: If each person is an authority unto themselfves then there is no one that can tell him he is doing wrong.

I knew a church that had two couples involved in immorality. It was six months before one of the innocent husbands convinced his erring wife that she had done wrong. By the way the pastor initiated no church discipline, the erring parties were never rebuked, and the pastor shortly after, went on to head up a mission organization. Need we wonder why the church is impotent today?

If there is nothing wrong with what goes on with two consenting adults then affairs are the person's business, and no problem.

A Christian man in the Midwest, when confronted by his pastor about the alcohol from his home that had caused a serious accident via one of his children, stated, "You have no right telling me what to do in my home! Get out!"

8. Leaders and teachers are spending too much time in books and seminars by people that are bordering on humanism in their thinking. More time should be spent in the Word and practical study.

We hear so much teaching on the raising of families and marriage yet some of these people aren't able to keep their own marriages together.

The humanist tells us the child has rights - let him try what he wants so he can mold himself. This translates into a teen that has molded himself to do what he wants. This translates into a church member that is going to do as he pleases. This translates into a lack of missionaries and pastors. YES! WE DO HAVE PROBLEMS IN THE CHURCH THAT ARE CAUSED BY HUMANISM.

The Catholic Church, which is a form of humanism, has a tremendous shortage of priests. They say it is because of celibacy - I have rights - I want - I won't give up my right to sex for God. This is the attitude of many of the young and old alike in the Roman Church.

9. The stress on enjoying ourselves - good lighting, padded pews, great equipment, maybe a gym, etc.

I have heard this same story in two places when people were discussing the need of a church building. One was a church with a building and the other was a church that was considering their first building. The same reason for the need of a building was given - "It's so much trouble carrying hymnals in from the car and setting up for Sunday School, in our rented building. This was the main reason for keeping the building in one case and building one in the other case. The church without a building was only paying part of the utilities and were sharing a building with another church. They really had no need of a building except for the inconvenience. The building they were considering was to cost over a million dollars.

Really! A million dollars so they don't have to carry hymnals! HOW CAN WE CARRY THE CROSS OF CHRIST WHEN WE CAN'T EVEN CARRY HYMNALS? Do you realize a million dollars invested properly would create a fund that would fund five missionaries, or pastors and those that followed them fully, until the Lord comes?

10. Probably the biggest problem and I only place it here for convenience sake as it affects all of our areas - family, church, universal church, and society.

Sin! There is nothing that is wrong anymore it seems we have rationalized most sin away in one way or another. Most things are relegated to the gray areas these days. If you can do it with a clear conscience then it is okay for you. There are a few definites yet, but we see even divorce as becoming accepted in churches. One of the main line denominations reportedly has a divorce service in their Ministers Manual now.

Many Christians allow things in their home, via the television, that they would never have dreamed of allowing ten years ago in light of "well the kids need something to watch."

11. We dwell on the body (of Christ) at times to the exclusion of the lost.

Our universal church:

1. A bloated fleshly mass that is comfortable - so comfortable that we can't send ministers of the gospel out full time. I'm not speaking of missionaries only. I'm sure we would be shocked at the number of pastors in this country, right now, which are working outside their churches to support their ministries. Many other pastor's wives work to help their husband have time for their ministry.

At least the humanist is trying to change all of man. The church primarily is only trying to improve itself. We are letting the world go to hell while we continually build ourselves up and make ourselves comfortable.

2. Pastors that are turning down $30,000 plus a fancy parsonage as not enough. I was recently told of a man that had been turning down churches offering $40,000 pay packages, so that he would be able to accept one offering a $50,000 pay package when it came along.

3. Churches of 125 members with two missionaries on their budget.

4. Million dollar building programs. One report mentioned that churches spent over one billion dollars on buildings in one year in this country.

Our mission boards:

I see in missionaries, something which bothers me greatly, and I believe it stems from humanistic thought in the church and possibly in the workers as well. I see a cold view toward support and supporters. When retirement age comes - you owe me - you shouldn't drop my support when I retire. The thought that this is Gods provision seems to be way in the background. It is a business to keep your support. This is in part the problem of the church in their spastic and oftentimes, sudden ending support. It is also in part due to the worker looking to the church for support rather than to the Lord.

You write supporters at least every other month, you go see them as often as you can, you send them small Christmas presents, you send prayer letters to report your progress, etc. These things are great so don't take me wrong, but some view this as "have to" to keep their support, and this is not right!

Some talk I hear concerning support sounds like a farmer talking about so many potatoes that he is going to take to market.

Some missionaries chose the church they go to while on furlough based on which church they think they might receive support from. Some attend two churches regularly in the hopes of gaining support from both. (One in the morning and one in the evening.)

I was told once by a pastor of a pioneer work that I was the only missionary that had ever contacted him. "We are too small to bother with," he told me.

It has been said that there is little money out there so you can be sure the flashiest person will get it. Is that anyway to finance missions?

Humanistic thought dictates how we approach the lost. In the past God was almost universally held to by the world. It just depended on how they viewed God, or in which god they believed. Today many reject any and all concepts of god. These people must see that there is a God, and then we can introduce them to the God of the Bible.

The lack of commitment of Christians is making recruitment very difficult. We are going to

retire many more workers in the next ten years than we recruit. The search for a fulfilled life is not to be found in the underpaid position of missionary. The fun life style certainly isn't in the South American jungle! Etc.

When it takes as long to raise support as it does to gain your education, recruits are going to go a different direction.

Our families:

Dr. Kienel the executive director of Christian Schools International in a short article shared some thoughts about the humanization of the Christian home. He mentioned "disrespect for authority"/"decline in discipline at home and at school"/"decline in academics"/"self centeredness"/"total academic freedoms"/"total sexual freedom." Any of that ring a bell with you?

Dare we ask how much television has affected ourselves and our families with this thinking? The screen is pumping their thinking into our families at nearly every show in some way or another -- even if only the commercials!!!

Our society:

Schools: It is obvious. We have covered this already.

Business: From Beneficial National Bank, Wilmington, Delaware. "Dear Mr. Derickson: Only those who 'have arrived' will receive this particular offer, Mr. Derickson. . .and rightly so. You see, at Beneficial, we've created the prestigious preferred credit program with successful professionals like you in mind. . .proven individuals who have already achieved a station in life far above many people, and most of your peers." WOW! What a dose of humanistic thought to get me to borrow from them.

Labor: We have already mentioned the problems of labor.

Government: Governor Richard Lamm of Colorado once said that terminally ill old people ought to just die and get out of the way. He likened the dieing as humus for the other plants to grow on. He felt that keeping terminally ill patients alive was ruining the countries economy.

How do we combat the effects of humanism?

On ourselves?
On our local churches?
On our universal church?
On our mission boards?
On our families?

On our society?

Ourselves:

1. Take time to know humanism and it's god - Satan. realize what it is, and commit yourself to avoiding it's teachings.

2. Commit yourself to holding to the Word only, and not trying to apply humanistic thinking to it.

3. Ask God to show you any areas where you need to change your life.

Our local churches:

1. The board should be educated about the subject. They should consider motives, methods, and programs of the church to see what influences of humanism have crept in. All new programs should also be reviewed in light of this problem.

2. Inform all people in the church of the problems of humanism - from adult to child. This should be done with a strong eye to the Biblical absolutes that humanism tries to destroy.

3. Be sure that new staff members are knowledgeable of the problems as well.

What areas should we consider and evaluate?

Music: Does it bring glory to God or the performer?

Education: Are we using proper materials and teaching proper concepts.

Worship: Is it centered on making us feel good, or is it centered on God?

Church government: Is our church government Scriptural or do we accept a lot of tradition?

Youth Program: Are we teaching the Bible, or some feel good about yourself material?

Discipline: Is it properly administered? To all people?

Our universal church:

1. As you meet other Christians challenge them with what you have learned - challenge them to do their part at their own church.

2. Leaders: See to it that the schools and seminaries are teaching a proper view of things in all subjects such as theology, philosophy and psychology. If they aren't, don't send them money or

students.

Our leaders should be educating Christians through magazine articles, books, and teaching.

3. Is not the overemphasis on "Jesus" in our music and in some of our movements a "Humanizing" of Christ? Keeping Him on our level - Someone we can identify with as a man, and not be convicted because we don't see Him as God, and pure, and holy? Just a question.

Our mission boards:

1. This is similar to the items mentioned for the board of the local churches. Education of the people.

2. They might even want to change some of their procedures. Possibly their fund raising is a bit out of line. If so, they should change it.

Our families:

1. I am not a proponent of Christian schools usually, but this is one very good way of cutting the amount of humanism that your family is submitted to. Most of what your child learns of humanism comes from the public school system. The rest from the media.

2. Be on the alert to what they see and read, and help them to understand the Scriptural precepts involved.

3. Limiting television will help, to be sure.

Our society:

We need to be helping govern. The public schools are going to keep pumping out humanistic centered people. We need to have our own spokespeople. Help govern. Help run public schools. Get behind politicians you can support, even work for them if you have time.

I won't go into the detail of a study I did once, but let it suffice to say if you compare humanism to Hitler's program and to the Roman Catholic Church, I'm sure that you will find many similarities.

What does it boil down to then?

Be knowledgeable, be sure you aren't a sermon for humanism, share the knowledge you have, be challenged to labor harder for the Lord, serve and give of yourself, and watch for signs of wrong thinking in your family. Correct it as soon as you can

Be assured, the one world government and economy won't come until God is ready for it. The humanist movement can't get ahead of God, yet it can affect our families and churches, as well as our own effectiveness.

Think about something for me for a moment. Is not all of sin tied to satisfying self? Is not all of humanism tied to satisfying self?

I REST MY CASE!

04350

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

I would like to trace some different topics backward through the Bible to see what we might see about the Garden of Eden and its possible location. We will deal with a number of topics and show their relationship to one another.

THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE: Take a few moments to read Ezek. 43:1-9. Wow! Let's turn to another text in Ezekiel and read a few verses. Ezek. 11:22-23.

The context of this passage shows the Lord has been completely disgusted with the children of Israel and is removing His special presence from His temple area. "Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city."

We see from these two texts that the Lord was in the temple in the time of the prophets, but that He left due to their sin. We also notice that He will one day return to the temple that will be built in the time of the Millennial Kingdom.

The old temple was on the site of a rock. Indeed, today the Arabs have a mosque on this very site. It is called the Dome of the Rock. Most expositors agree that this will be the site of the future Millennial temple. Indeed, Jews of our own day state that this is the location where they will build the temple of God one day, for it is the site of the old temples.

Well, we have looked at Jerusalem and the temple site in the future and in our present day, so let's take a look at this site in its past.

HEROD'S TEMPLE: In the time of Christ there was a large temple on this site which was built by Herod. This temple was destroyed by the Roman armies in 70 A.D. when they destroyed Jerusalem. The temple burned, and they found that the heat had melted gold and that the gold had run down into the cracks between the rocks. The next logical solution to greed was to tear

the temple apart rock by rock to get the gold.

The only part of this temple that is left in our own day is what is called the wailing wall. It is a small portion of the foundation of the old temple where orthodox Jews pray.

Let's consider the Mt. of Olives for a moment or two. Baker's Bible Atlas gives a good description of this mountain. "Paralleling the eastern elevation of Jerusalem, separated from it by the Kidron Valley, is the mile long ridge of limestone hills known as the Mount of Olives, or Olivet (elevation about 2,680 feet)." (Pheiffer, Charles F.; "BAKER'S BIBLE ATLAS"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961)

Let us look at some items of interest relating to this mountain:

a. Christ prayed there: Lu 31:37, "And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of olives."

b. Christ taught of the end times there: Matt. 24:3, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

By the way the context of this was a statement by the Lord that is of interest. They had just left the temple and Christ speaks to them.

"And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt 24:2

Sound familiar? That is what happened in AD 70.

c. The Triumphal entry began on the Mt. of Olives: Mk 11:1. Christ sent the disciples, from the Mt. of Olives, to get the donkey and then marched into Jerusalem from there.

d. He ascended from there: Acts 1:11-12 "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet...."

e. He will return in like manner and I would assume to the same place: Acts 1:11. Indeed, Zech. 14:4 states this as fact. "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." (Ezek. 43:1-7 speaks of the return to the city as well.)

f. The Glory of the Lord departed from the Mount of Olives: Ezek. 11:22ff

It seems that this temple area has some importance to God.

EZRA'S TEMPLE: Prior to Christ's time there was a smaller temple that had been constructed by some of the Jews that returned from captivity in Babylon.

This return was under Ezra and the temple is mentioned in Ezra 6:13-22. Verse 16 mentions, "And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy,"

Since this was a rebuilding of the temple, we must assume that it was on the site of the previous temple that had been destroyed when the people were taken into captivity. The purpose of this return and rebuilding was to restore Jerusalem, their city. This by the way was the site of the Herodian temple of Christ's time as well.

SOLOMONS TEMPLE: This temple was of great splendor. The site of this temple was on the site of David's sacrifice after the sin of numbering the people. II Sam 24:18 mentions, "And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

The account mentions that David purchased this floor and made the offerings. The temple site that Solomon chose is seen in II Chron. 3:1, "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite."

We see from this text that Solomon's temple was built on the site where David offered, however a third title is given to this particular place. Mount Moriah.

What significance is there to the term Mount Moriah?

If you have a cross reference in your Bible, it will send you to Gen. 22:2 where Abraham is told to offer Isaac. "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

Since the writer of Chronicles names the temple site as Mount Moriah, there must have been basis for thinking that it was where Abraham offered Isaac.

Notice the phrase the mountain "...which I will tell thee of." There was a special place that the Lord wanted Abraham to meet him with his offering. It is also of interest that the priest that came out to meet with Abraham after Abraham had saved Lot from the armies was from Salem. Melchizedek was the king and priest of Salem. Salem, by the way is Jerusalem.

Do you begin to feel that the temple site in Jerusalem and the city of Jerusalem are of some importance to the Lord our God? Might we take one step further backward and see what we can discover?

CAIN AND ABEL'S TEMPLE: Cain and Abel offered sacrifices according to Genesis four. Gen. 4:3-4, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:"

We don't want to get into the offerings and problems, but we do want to notice one thing from the verse. Both "brought". What does that indicate? They "brought: this term would indicate that they brought it to a specific place. Since God was showing Moses the history of man, it would seem that the Lord was trying to indicate that the sons of Adam brought their offerings to God.

The $64,000 question is just where did they bring the offerings. Well, since the text does not tell us might we make a sanctified guess that it was to the same place that Adam and Eve probably took their sacrifices. Since there were only four people on earth I must assume that there was only the First Baptist church. They wouldn't have had time to split and start the Bible church yet.

The next question is the same as the last, Just where did they bring the offerings? I am sure in my own mind that the Lord told Adam and Eve where to bring the sacrifices. He doesn't just let us make up our own minds about such things.

Can you think of where Adam and Eve would take their sacrifices? Where is the last place that they saw the Lord? Turn to Gen. 3:22-24, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

What do you make of all that? Do you see anything in that text that rings a bell with other Old Testament items?

Cherubim - where do we know them to be? Over the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle.

The sword of flame - could that be similar to the pillar of fire and smoke that was over the tabernacle when the Jews were wandering in the wilderness.

There is some interest in the word "place". It can, and is translated dwell in other texts in the Old Testament. The verse would then read "so he drove out the man; and he dwelled at the east of

Eden...."

It is likely in my mind that when Adam and Eve sacrificed, they did it at the entrance to the garden where the Cheribium were. If they taught their sons to sacrifice, then it is logical that they would bring their sacrifices to the same location.

God was quite possibly dwelling at the entrance to the Garden of Eden where he had placed His Cheribium! If you look at Isa. 6, and Ezek. 1, you will find that the Cheribium are a part of the throne scene of God.

So, what conclusions might we draw? The garden of Eden was in the area of Jerusalem and the gate quite possibly was at the site of Mt. Moriah, the site of Ornan's threshing floor, the site of Solomon's temple, the site of Ezra's temple, the site of Herod's temple, the site of the Dome of the Rock, and the site of the coming Millennial temple. Does that grab your interest just a little bit?

By the way the cheribim in the Holy of Holies were at the east end of the area, which faced east. The entrances to the temples were on the east and here we see that the cherubim were on the east of Eden.

A couple of texts that might be of interest to you now:

Ps. 48:1-2 "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."

Zion was another name for Jerusalem. Zechariah eight tells of the restoration of Jerusalem. It also shows the great love that God has for this city. Zech. 8:1-3 "Again the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain."

Ps. 87 mentions the importance of the city to God as well. "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah."

And one last reference, Isa 51:3, "For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found in it, thankgiving, and the voice of melody."

One last thing that may add to the information that we have drawn together.

Turn to Gen. 2:8-14, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every three that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is Bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates."

One river that divides into four rivers. The Euphrates is named and is probably the one that we know of today which is to the northeast of Israel. The Hiddekel is thought to be by most the Tigris also of which we know.

The other two rivers are unknown to us. I would like to notice however, that one of these is related to Ethiopia which has always been viewed as being south of Egypt. The only river related to that area would be the Nile, or the Red Sea. Or might we wonder if the one is the Nile and the other is the Red Sea?

If we were allowed to wonder about that, might we know what the first river is then? The only possible is the Mediterranean Sea, and guess what is at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea! A rift that is over 10,000 feet deep! In places it is 12,960 ft below sea level.

Since most agree that after the flood, there were some tremendous upheavals and down drafts. Might we assume that possibly the Mediterranean was one of the down drafts as was the Dead Sea. Indeed, if you look at maps that show the lay of the land the rift goes to the northeast corner of the sea and it is possible that the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan river and the dead sea were a part of one of the rivers.

Unger holds that the garden was in the Tigris Euphrates valley and that the other two rivers were canals between the Tigris and Euphrates. He does not speak to the question that he leaves - what the first river was.

Unger mentions, "Shifting river beds and accumulation of enormous deposits of river silt make the task of locating the site of the Pishon or the Gihon virtually impossible. But the other two rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, are well known." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. P 406)

Baker's Bible Atlas interestingly enough places the land of Havilah on the south east coast of the Red Sea!

If our thought is correct, it certainly fits with the Scripture. Pishon is related to Havilah which is

the Red Sea and Gihon is related to Ethiopia which would be the Nile!

You might ask if there are any authorities that agree with my thinking? No, to this date I have found none. I will read a comment from Baker that backs up a belief in much of what I have said.

To quote Baker's Bible Atlas, "The temple Mount, the location of Araunah's Treshing-floor purchased by David and later used by Solomon as the site of the Temple, appears to have been north of the original Zion. It is traditionally associated with the place where Abraham offered Isaac -- Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:2; II Chron. 3:1), Although the land of Moriah in the patriarchal record appears to have been a remote spot, removed from human activity. The Moriah of David's day is the central portion of the eastern hill, and the term Zion, initially used of the Jebusite fortress to the south, came to be applied to the Temple Mount as well (cf. Ps. 55:1; Jer. 31:6). Once the site of Solomon's Temple and the Temple built by the jews who returned from Babylon, the Temple Mount is now the location of the Dome of the Rock, a beautiful octogonal structure built late in the seventh century to serve as a mosque." (Pheiffer, Charles F.; "BAKER'S BIBLE ATLAS"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961, p 150)

This is something that I have been thinking about and teaching as serious THEORY for some time. I have worked on it since in the 70's and have added to it as I have found references that might relate.

I trust that others might build upon this study as time goes forward. There is to me, a large amount of information that indicates that the entrance to the garden was at the site of the temples. Notice I used the term "indicates." We want to realize that the Bible does not state this clearly. This is only a logical conclusion based on the information available to us.

APPLICATION:

1. The pillar of smoke and flame was Christ Himself. He was over the tabernacle, and at the gate to the garden of Eden. Can we say that Christ was always the access to God the Father? I think that we can!

The last phrase of Gen. 3:24 is of interest to us in this context. "...sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." One commentary translates the verse as follows: "And He (God) dwelt at the east of the Garden of Eden between the Cherubim, as a Shikinah (a fire tongue or fire-sword) to keep open the way to the tree of life." (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Indeed, Christ is the only way that we can ever see the tree of life that will be in the eternal state according to Rev. 22:2, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

2. Christ is the Angel of the Lord, and the Angel of the Lord is the pillar of fire/smoke over the tabernacle. Ex. 13:21, "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."

There are a number of references to the pillar leading the Israelites. The pillar also came down so God could communicate with Moses at the door of the tabernacle.

As a side note to the idea of a pillar in relation to meeting with God, Jacob after the vision of the ladder and the angels, took the rock that he had used as a pillow and "...set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." (Gen. 28:18) Then in 28:22 mentions, "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." This was at Bethel. (Bethel was a little way north of Jerusalem.)

3. If this has been a profitable study and we see that it may well be true, then are there any questions of Scripture that are unanswerable if we have the time to seek all through Scripture for information that relates to the question?

I have very few questions raised about scripture that I cannot find an answer to, if I take time to do the proper study. A few are still bothering me, and I am boiling those on the back burner until the rest of the information that I suspect is there is brought to my mind.

I trust that the study is of value and interest to you. We should come away from it with a feeling that our God is very definitely interested in meeting with man. We, in the New Testament age have easy and free access to His throne. We should enjoy that privilege to the utmost.

HAMARIOLOGY

04400

INTRODUCTION TO HAMARTIOLOGY

Hamartiology is a theological term used for the doctrine of sin.
It comes from a Greek word, hamartanein which relates to the archer that has sent an arrow on its way, but the arrow misses the target. In simple terms it is doing what is wrong or not doing what is right. Someone has suggested tragic flaw. I don't know how theological TRAGIC FLAW is, but it sums up the thought of sin quite well. Not only is sin a flaw, but it is a tragic flaw in that it detracts from what we were when God created Adam!

There are two approaches to the study of sin:

1. EXEGETICAL: This is the study of the Scripture and setting down a conclusion of what sin is.

2. SPECULATIVE: This is the study of man, philosophy and experience and setting down a conclusion of what sin is based on the observations.

Within the speculative area of study we have some systems of thought of which you should be aware.

HUMANISM: Nothing is sin unless it is wrong for you. No sin - if it's okay for me, I will do it, but if it's wrong for you, don't do it. The idea current in our society, "If it feels good, do it" is a result of this philosophy.

ASCETICISM: This teaching believes that everything enjoyable is sin. If it feels good then experience tells us it will become a habit, thus sin, and thus enjoyable things are sinful. This led to the self abuse and self denial of some of the Roman Catholic groups in the pre-reformation days.

It may tend to affect Fundamentalist thinking in some of the do and don't lists that are formed. By following a list we will avoid all sin. This is not wrong, for God Himself has lists - the ten commandments for one - but it is really hard to list all the sins that are listed in the Bible. The problem comes when the list contains things which God does not prohibit. The fundamentalists of the 1950's were very harsh will people that did not conform to their thought of conservative dress. God does not spell out the requirements of dress in the Word, except in some instances. Within all that God says about dress, there is a wide latitude of what is okay.

Now a practical application of this thought for students would run along this line of thinking. I like tests, so I will habitually like to take tests thus tests are sin and I should avoid them. WRONG!

MAN IS BASICALLY GOOD: We by experience see that man is basically good and since we are created in God's image then man must be good. Thus, sin is not a problem except for those that are, say, murderers and fornicators. Some of the Holiness movement set forth this thought, in that they can be perfect in this life - without sin - because the everyday wrongs that they find themselves in are only errors, not sin. The sin of this life is murder, adultery etc.

Question. Do you see a link between any of the speculative systems and what we have seen in the Church in recent years labeled, "GRAY AREAS?"

Is there not a very clear teaching in the Word about many things and then other areas where it is personal choice. We need to be very careful what we call a gray area. Many gray areas that I have heard about, are gray only because the person speaking has not consulted the whole council of God.

Chafer mentions that when we minimize the doctrine of sin we impoverish redemption. This is quite true and can be seen in some of the ologies of the liberal camp. The Theology of Hope

makes redemption and the gospel, the topic of mere "hoping" that something will come to pass to help man's state. The thought of sin is down played by many of the theologies of our day.

Many of the things that God clearly displays as wrong in the Word are held by liberal people to be only different life styles, as in the field of homosexuality, or women's rights, or in the field of abortion.

I believe that as your view of sin lowers so lowers your view of salvation, of Christ's work in salvation, and of God's love in sending Christ.

I like how one of my students once related to this thought. "If we lower our view low enough we will have no need of redemption. This translates to no need of God." One is left to wonder if this is what happened in Sweden. They entered the area of free love, etc. many years ago. They as a society allowed most anything that the individual wanted to do. Today they have no god. Many do not even know if god exists.

When we emphasis the virtue, or goodness of man, we basically put sin into the background, and call God's Word into question. We cannot hide the fact of sin - indeed, much of mankind displays the fact of sin on a daily, if not an hourly basis.

Some might suggest that sin is so awful and terrible that there is nothing anyone can do. WRONG! Christ did all that was needed and all we have to do is accept it.

God and all that He is, remains HOLY no matter what man might say. He is pure, and true holiness. Evil on the other hand is unholiness - pure and simple! Evil is centered in the god of this world, the Devil. All moral values derive themselves from God and His Word. Immoral values derive themselves from evil, unholiness, and Satan.

WITHOUT THE WORD OF GOD WE WOULD NOT KNOW THE TRUE HOLINESS AND THE TRUE EVIL OF OUR WORLD.

GOD/GOOD	SATAN/EVIL
GOD	SATAN
HOLINESS	EVILNESS
PERFECT HOLINESS	COMPLETE EVIL
PERFECT LOVE SENT CHRIST	COMPLETE HATE OPPOSES CHRIST
ULTIMATE TOTAL VICTORY	ULTIMATE TOTAL DEFEAT

God's Word teaches that man is totally depraved. Even Christians at times do not react well to God's estimation of man. Many Christians even see that there is good in lost man. These Christians are not looking to the Word for their estimation of man, but probably are looking to

man's philosophy.

Sin is viewed in relation to God's standard. If God's standard is rejected then what becomes the standard? Let us consider this question for a few moments. There are systems of right and wrong that have and do exist. Let us consider them.

1. The customs of the culture. If the natives kill and eat human flesh and have common wives then it is okay.

2. What you can get away with must be okay. If it was wrong then God would stop me from doing it. This is the attitude of most criminals in the 90's. They can get away with it so it must be okay. Even if they are caught, the punishment is so light, if indeed there is one, that crime can't be very wrong.

3. What the judicial system allows must be okay. If some people get away with murder then it must be okay.

4. Ultimately Satan's standard will take over - complete evil. We have a couple of examples in recent history. Hitler, the Manson killings and the Jim Jones cult suicide.

These systems do not disprove sin. They only prove that man left without a standard will define his own standard and live by it. The standard that man selects is always considerably lower than the standard of God.

Chafer mentions three major demonstrations of the terribleness of sin. These are worth consideration at this point. Many believers today do not see sin as something terrible.

THE SIN OF SATAN: When Lucifer turned against God other angels also turned their back on their creator. They all are condemned to the Lake of Fire. That has application, oft times, when we sin, we take others with us, or at least cause others to be tempted. Matt. 25:41, II Pet. 2:4, Rev. 20:10.

THE SIN OF ADAM AND EVE: From this we have all human suffering and ultimate eternal torment for all who reject Christ. You should remember, however that you would have done the same thing Adam did, had you been there! Don't give Adam a bad rap!

THE FACT THAT CHRIST BECAME SIN: II Cor. 5:21 tells us, "For he hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

These examples of evil show the costliness of sin not only to man himself, but to God as well. He had to send His Son to the cross because of it all! Even if Adam and Eve had had no children after the fall, Christ would have been made sin to satisfy the problem.

Some wonder where did sin come from? Did God create sin - He created Satan? Did Satan create sin? Did Adam and Eve create sin?

We dare not suggest that God created, nor caused sin. This would not be consistent with His character or nature. We can say that God in his foreknowledge allowed, and still allows many things to happen. He allows the lost to sin, He allows the lost to condemn themselves to hell, and He allows Christians to sin. None of these items are A SURPRISE PARTY FOR GOD! He knew full well what would happen and laid plans from the foundation of the world to bring mankind to the end that He desires. Within that plan is a lot of room for man's free will to mess up his own life!

Some items that you must remember:

1. God is completely holy and perfect. Prior to the creation evil did not exist.

2. God created Angels - WAS THERE EVIL IMMEDIATELY? No, but the possibility was allowed in the creation.

3. Lucifer sinned, and from that point on evil was present. Lucifer was to blame, not God.

It might be asked if prior to Satans sin, was there evil?

Chafer mentions, "Evil may refer to that which, though latent or not expressed, is ever conceivable as the opposite of that which is good." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, p 228)
There was no outward manifestation of evil before the fall of Satan, however after the creation of angels the latent possibility existed because God chose to allow it.

In Lucifer, was the possibility of evil, but the evil did not bear fruit till he resolved to rebel. Before the first sin, evil was latent. During the first sin, evil became active. After the first sin the evil was latent and ready for action.

Since we know that evil was allowed for, and that sin was a latent possibility before Satan's fall, is there a difference between evil and sin, or are they the same?

Evil is the latent opposition to good, while sin is the active action against God. EVIL is the "possible" that is against God - the character difference between God and others. SIN is the act, or outworking of evil against God.

Yes, there is a difference. Evil carries no penalty in and of itself, yet sin does carry a penalty with it.

Isa 45:7 has brought some interest to some people. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make

peace, and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things." From this some would attempt to build the thought that evil proceeds from God. Not so!

1. The New King James Version as well as the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version give the verse a completely different light. The NKJV translates the word calamity rather than evil.

2. The term "create" is "bara" and it is translated create at times. It at this point however, does not convey the thought of the text to translate it create. (create = Strong's 1254, "cut down" seems to be the thought of the word. It is translated create, as a yield of grain is created when the stocks are cut down. Cutting down to make peace - opposite is calamity. Create light - darkness is opposite.)

Leupold mentions of this verse and the way the King James translates it, "... the Hebrew would allow for such a translation. But it is not the morally good and the morally evil that are being attributed to Yahweh, but things good and bad are said to lie totally in his power, as far as their physical aspects and consequences are concerned." (Leupold, H.C.; "EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH"; Vol. I & II; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968, p 122)

God allows and controls evil, but He did not create it.

It would seem that the thought of God being holy and good, would require that the opposite be automatically true and present. Evil is the natural result of the Holiness of God.

God allows sin. Since He did not create it and since He doesn't stop it, then it is required that He has allowed it.

Let us consider why God might have allowed evil to continue:

GOD IS PROVING MAN'S REBELLION: Since Satan is at the focal point of Job's problems one must wonder if there isn't a divine defense going on. God proving to Satan that something is true. Possibly He desires to prove to the angelic host that man will fail and reject God in all situations of life - all dispensations have ended in judgment except Grace and we are told that it will also end in judgment. (The warring between the principalities and powers etc. may relate to this thought, Eph. 6:12)

GOD HAS A PURPOSE THAT WE ARE NOT TOLD OF: God has a purpose that is completely foreign to us and we have no information on it. The world progresses as He has decreed it, in His perfection, holiness, and desire. By faith we trust in His perfection, justice and holiness. All is, and progresses as He planned it.

GOD GAVE HIS CREATURES A FREE WILL: Since free will exists, there must be a possibility of choices. Evil was needed to allow this choice. God is in business of seeking a

people for Himself; those that by free choice, chose God over Satan and good over evil. Since the choice between good and evil necessitates evil's presence - God allows it to continue.

GOD DESIRED MAN TO LEARN OF HIM: To know the holiness of God, we must observe it in relation to its opposite, evil. Thus evil must be allowed as a part of our teaching situation.

GOD DESIRED TO DEMONSTRATE HIS HATRED FOR EVIL: This is one of Chafer's suggested reasons for God allowing evil. God will in judgment demonstrate His hate for evil. There is some truth to this point, however He could have done that centuries ago - there is no need for evil to continue.

GOD DESIRED TO DEMONSTRATE HIS GRACE: The angels had not seen His grace in action. Sin and evil brought the need of Christ and His work, thus a demonstration of God's grace was given.

Chafer suggests that evil is allowed for the instruction of angels. Angels are viewing the situation and are learning from what they observe. There is a problem in this line of thinking. This makes man a pawn in an angelic school of higher learning, and we see God allowing man to suffer for the education of other beings. I don't believe that this is a reason for God allowing evil, but rather it is a side effect, or benefit to man's bent toward evil.

APPLICATION:

1. Chafer makes a statement that bears repeating. "GOD IS HIMSELF THE STANDARD OF HOLINESS AND HIS CHARACTER IS THAT WHICH DETERMINES THE SINFULNESS OF SIN." (SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, p 228) You might contemplate that sometime and just jot down your reactions to it. You may find that you are in the process of gathering sermon material and ideas.

2. We need in our lives to learn to know God's view of sin. My wife hates bugs. When one violates her airspace there is little that controls her, or the volume of her voice! Take something that you hate, then try to imagine how a PERFECTLY HOLY GOD must react to sin.

3. We need to learn to know the effect of sin on man. It is not just a little sin now and then, it is a life style, it is a part of the lost man's being. Sin's effect is complete and destructive. We tend to see sin as a little error that we need not be overly concerned with. Confess it and it's gone. True, it is gone, yet its effect may remain.

4. We need to learn to know sin so that we can avoid it! Joseph, when Potaphor's wife grabbed his cloak knew sin, and he knew how to avoid it. HE RAN! HE DIDN'T STAND AROUND DISCUSSING WITH HIMSELF IF THIS WAS SIN OR NOT. HE ALREADY KNEW, SO HE RAN!

5. We need to be realistic in our view of Holy - Gray Area - Sin. We like to label some things as gray areas. We don't know if it is wrong or right. If we follow this color coding, holiness would be pure white, and sin would be black. What we view as gray today is usually gray because we don't want to view it as black. They call that denial in the mind sciences. God's Word often is interpreted gray when it is really black. If we were to gain God's view of sin, we would see it as black more often than gray.

To illustrate our difficulty in perception, think of the graying of immorality. When it comes to proper relations between men and women it is hard to see God's view, in light of one's own fleshly views. Immorality at one time was pure, unadulterated black, but in our society today, even Christians have grayed the matter.

6. A good study for your future would be to look over Ezek. 28:11-17 and Isa. 14:12-17 and list the traits of Satan. You can learn much from knowing your adversary.

7. Some verses that relate, and that may be a blessing to you. Ps. 103:12; Isa. 38:17; Jer. 50:20; Mic. 7:19; Col. 2:13; Heb. 10:17; I Jn. 11:7.

I would like to include a chart that I received from one of my theology professors, Mr. Harvey Stranske. I think that if you consider it and study it, you will increase your appreciation for holiness, and your hate for sin.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

CONSEQUENCE OF SIN	LOSS INVOLVED	RESULTANT STATE
Defilement	Holiness II Cor. 7:1	Impurity
Disorderliness	Spiritual discernment I Cor. 2:13-14	Abnormal desires
Paralysis	Power	Weakness
Bondage	Freedom	Slavery
Misery	Peace	Sorrow
Guilt	Righteousness	Children of wrath
Death	Life	Separation and alienation

04450

PERSONAL SIN

PERSONAL SIN - or should I say your sin? I don't sin - RIGHT? WRONG! We all, regrettably, sin.

We want to study the sin of man as he as a person relates to what he is doing - not your, or my personal sin - even though we are studying just that.

We need to understand that sin always has an effect. That effect may become visible to others, or may just become a part of our inner life. Let us consider the personal sin's of some people and consider the effects of that sin.

a. Adam	Death, sin nature etc.
b. Cain	Abel died
c. Acan	Israel defeated
d. Hitler	Nations disturbed - many died
e. A pastor	Reflects on the church - may hurt the family
f. Parishioner	May reflect on the church - may affect the family

What is meant by "personal sin"? Sin committed by a person. Simple isn't it!

When we confess our personal sin, is that all that is in view? Personal sin quite often is the fruit of a larger root of trouble. If you find you are confessing more and more, you should probably think deeper and find out why you are sinning more and more. Obviously you aren't as close to the Lord as you should be. Why?

THE ORIGIN OF SIN

There are some theories of the origin of sin that we need to mention.

Theory of necessity: This theory would suggest that because of man's being created "inferior," he by necessity of that inferiority, will sin. God has no authority over the situation. He only created man and the inferior being sinned.

Hodge quotes Leibnitz, "these are the two points to be established. First, sin is unavoidable; and secondly, that it is not due to the agency of God. It is unavoidable, because it arises out of the necessary limitation of the creature. The creature cannot be absolutely perfect." (Hodge, Charles; Gross, Edward N. Ed.; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, p 134-135)

Theory of the Manichaean philosophy of duality: A man by the name of Mani was born around AD 215. He believed in two deities - one good guy and one bad guy. He divided everything into this dualism.

GOOD DEITY	BAD DEITY
LIGHT	DARK
SOUL	BODY
GOOD	EVIL

There is definitely no foundation for this theory in the Scriptures.

Theory that God is the author of sin: Since He is a holy God, this line of thinking is undesirable, and illogical.

Theory of sin arising from misuse of moral freedom: The sin of Adam arose out of his free choice. He was free to do as he pleased and he abused that freedom. Likewise Satan abused his freedom to choose.

In short, man was given free choice in his living. He chose to abuse that freedom and thus sinned. God did not author it, nor did He create it - He only allowed it.

Do Christians ever misuse their moral freedoms? Obviously. We all sin. We all misuse what God has allowed us. WE ARE FREE TO LIE, OR TELL THE TRUTH. WE ARE FREE TO CHEAT, OR NOT TO CHEAT. WE ARE FREE TO SPEED, OR NOT TO SPEED. WE ARE FREE TO COMMIT ADULTERY, OR NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

Why do we as Christians misuse our moral freedoms at times? Did the devil make me do it? Do we do it because we want to?

Some might suggest that we can't, not sin, due to the old nature. We will consider the old nature in further studies, but let is suffice at this point to say that God has provided all that is needed for us NOT TO SIN. We do not have to sin, we do it because we choose to. We do it because we mentally make a choice to disobey.

Andy Rooney on one of his commentaries gave a perfect report on this in 1987. He related how the criminal isn't at fault - that the environment is the cause of all the troubles. He spent quite a length of time passing the buck - no one is responsible for anything in our society today. He ended with - some won't like what I've said today but that's all right - it's not my fault - the devil made me do it! (A ruff quote.)

When we sin, at times we are in times of great pressure. It may be very hard to say no, but that is just what God asks that we do. SAY NO TO THE TEMPTATION!

When in television repair work I made a change in circuitry on a television set at the customers request. I had missed one wire that I could not see - The mistake ruined the picture tube. I told the boss of my goof. He said call the customer and tell him that we were hung up on parts and that it would be a few days. That way we could get a new picture tube and put it in and not tell the customer what had happened. I had just cost my boss $150 and he asked me to lie to a customer. BELIEVE ME I WAS TEMPTED TO TELL THAT LITTLE SMALL ITSE BITSE TEENY WEENY ALMOST NOT A LIE, LIE.

I with much fear ask the boss if it might not be better to tell the customer the truth - that I had goofed and that we wanted to make it right. He agreed, so I called the customer. The customer was very appreciative of our honesty.

God is not the author of sin, nor is He the creator of sin. He allowed sin to come along, and He now allows sin to continue. He will, however see to it that sin stops, and that evil is finally and eternally contained in the lake of fire!

Chafer goes on to suggest three distinct beginnings of sin. I will list them for your further thought. Eternal anticipation in the foreknowledge of God. Its concrete enactment in heaven by an unfallen angel. Its concrete enactment on earth by an unfallen human being.

He also goes on to state that God foreknew sin and that by the creation of angels and men He allowed the possibility of it to come into existence. This is a valid concept, based on Rev. 13:8. The verse mentions, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." To plan from the foundation of the world for redemption, God had to have had foreknowledge of the need for redemption, thus He had to have foreknown evil and sin.

Does sin hurt God? Certainly. It is a disregard for His rights to rule and expect obedience. It is the breaking of His law, which is an afront to Him. It also caused damage to His property, the creation.

If Satan sinned first, and set his own fate, what was Satan's purpose in tempting Adam and Eve? Along with the fact that he was rejecting God and His authority over him, he was attempting to begin to set up his "world system." He could not do this until Adam and Eve fell, for he desired to control the world, and God told Adam that he would have dominion over it.

Chafer mentions three major proofs of the awful sinfulness of PERSONAL sin. More to the point these show the awful penalty for that sinfulness.

a. ANGELIC PROOF: Jude six mentions the fallen angels and their wait for final judgment. This judgment speaks to the sin of their past. Rev. 12:9 mentions that the fallen angelic host was cast out with the Devil due to their sin.

b. HUMAN PROOF: Rom. 5:12 depicts Adams sin being passed on to all of mankind. His one personal sin had far reaching ramifications for everyone. Rom. 5:19 is the good news - Christ will set things right. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

c. DIVINE PROOF: God's estimation is that sin is terrible. It caused man's fall, and caused the death of His Son. Rom. 5:15,19 mention that by one we are dead and that one being Adam, and by one we are made alive and that one being Christ. The result of Adam's one sin was the total depravity of all of mankind. The reason for that one sin was to be independent of God, or to act independently. His sin was an act of the will, as is every single one of our own sins. We consider and chose to do those things that we ought not do.

By allowing the Spirit to control our lives we need not consider these wrong things for we will be considering God's "right" things.

We talk of the sin nature, that nature of man that moves him toward evil. It is always evil, whether it is active or not. It is always sinful. It is by nature sinful.

Any personal sin affects God in two ways. It is a sin against Him personally, and it is a sin against His commands. It is bad enough that we disobey what He says, but to cause offense to Him personally is much worse.

When I was a teenager, I received a traffic ticket or two. Breaking the law was breaking my father's wishes, for he was the County Treasurer, and he had to keep a good image before the community. When I broke the speed limit, I knew I was going against what he wanted. When I was caught, I still wasn't too concerned about the fact that I had broken his wishes. When he found out about what I had done - THAT WAS VERY HURTFUL TO ME, FOR I KNEW THAT I HAD HURT HIM DEEPLY.

May we consider our own personal sin? Breaking that little tenny weenny speed limit doesn't bother you, EXCEPT THAT IT BOTHERS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER!

Sin always has a price. That price costs us, and it costs God. The price of salvation and forgiveness was very great for God. It was the price of sending His Son to the cross. The price had to be met, because if God had overlooked sin, He would have been disregarding His own holy character.

Sin must be dealt with! HE COULD NOT OVERLOOK IT OR SWEEP IT UNDER THE CARPET.

Sin will be judged according to His holy character. No matter how small, no matter how innocent, no matter how insignificant the sin, it will be set beside His Holy Character for comparison, and if it does not compare, AND NOT ONE WILL, it will be judged.

Judgment in reference to the lost: They will receive a variety of punishment, yet it is all torment, and separation for eternity from God based on their life.

Judgment in reference to the saved: They will receive, or not receive reward, based on their life and works. Sin will not be an issue for the redeemed, for Christ has cared for all of our sins. There is the possibility that we will be held accountable for those sins that we have not confessed. In the person that has not been walking with the Lord, there would be a large backlog of sin that would need to be considered. Just how this is cared for we aren't told.

APPLICATION

1. God uses the term, "I will" in relation to his promises to man in the Scripture. It should be of significance to us to consider the statements of Lucifer when he decided to take a dive into sin. (Isa 14:12ff)

"I will ascend into heaven."
"I will exalt my throne above the stars of God"
"I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation"
"I will ascend above the heights of the clouds"
"I will be like the most high"

Are there any areas of your own life in which the "I will's" are coming from your direction rather than God's? I trust that the only "I will"s" that are in your life are those you read in God's promises to you, and your response to them!

2. Do you see the minimizing of sin in our own day? HOW? Do you hear things like: We all sin. We all have our problems. If you feel it is okay then you can do it. Well if he does it now and then, it must be okay.

The ease of I Jn. 1:9 tends to minimize our view of sin! The context of this verse is five chapters of HOLY living! When you tumble into one sin then I Jn. 1:9 is an easy step back to the Lord. In a society that does not consider HOLY LIVING as a high priority, we need to get serious before looking to the promise of I Jn. 1:9

With our lowered view of sin it is not surprising that we see Christian business men living by the ethics of the world in their businesses.

We need God's view of sin! When we sin we are an afront to God! WE BECOME TOTALLY UNLIKE HIM! How does that relate to our being conformed to the image of Christ? In essence when we sin we are shaking our fist in His face and telling Him to get lost!

It is only grace that moves Him to continue to put up with our ungodly cycle of, sin - I Jn 1:9 - sin - I Jn 1:9 - sin - I Jn 1:9 - sin.

3. I trust that you will consider your own lifestyle of HOLINESS VS. SIN, and go before the Lord to see if there are any changes that you need to make.

4. Consider the terms that the Word uses for sin, and see if you don't obtain a better picture of what it really is. Trespass, transgression, evil, defeat, ignorance, lawlessness, disobedience, ungodliness, unrighteousness.

5. I read something once concerning sin, and I would like to adapt the thought for our conclusion. Concerning sin:

We call it an accident - He calls it an abomination.
We call it a blunder - He calls it blindness.
We call it a chance - He calls it a choice.
We call it a defect - He calls it a disease.
We call it an error - He calls it enmity.
We call it fascination - He calls it fatality.
We call it luxury - He calls it leprosy.
We call it liberty - He calls it lawlessness.
We call it a trifle - He calls it tragedy.
We call it a mistake - He calls it madness.
We call it a weakness - He calls it willfulness.

SIN IS SIN NO MATTER WHAT WE CALL IT! WE MUST GO BY HIS DEFINITION, NOT OUR'S, OR THE WORLD'S.

04500

THE NATURE OF SIN AND FORGIVENESS

My father was a very hard worker. He never drank more than one or two drinks in a day, and that very infrequently. He smoked once or twice a month. He did good things for people every chance he was given. He belonged to a service club that did nice things for people. Was he a Christian? You don't know do you.

A friend I knew many years ago drank heavily frequently. He led the church choir. He was a very big business man. He prayed in prayer meeting. He didn't mind lying in his business. He wasn't above shady business practices. Was he a Christian? You don't know do you.

So, just how can we possibly judge a person to determine whether they are a believer or not? Some suggestions of the past.

1. The law: The law was given for us to follow and if we don't then we are not believers.

The law is a set of regulations. This has nothing to do with a persons spiritual state, eternally speaking. The obedience to the law, may or may not give hint to the person's real spiritual state. A lost person can attempt to keep the law, just as well as the saved person.

2. Works: Works may or may not give indication of a persons state eternally. A truly born again person should automatically desire to walk according to all that he knows. On the other hand a lost person can do many things that appear to be good works yet be lost.

Then there is the question of the born again person that does not know any of the Word, who is living in adultery and drunkenness. The outward appearance would indicate that he is not a believer, yet inwardly he is.

3. Life: If a person lives a good life then surely we can say that he is saved! Not necessarily. A lost person that has a good high moral value can lead a very "good" life.

We cannot know from the outward what is true.

There are things like, following the teachings of Scripture, works, and good living that will be indicators of a heavenly eternal destination, but not always. NORMALLY OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME THIS wills PROVE OUT.

On the other hand good Christians at times take a wrong turn and end up in drastic sin. That does not mean that they are not born again. When we were in the northwest, a pastor fell into sexual problems with one of the church women. A one time slip into sin. Even with this sin his salvation is sure, and he will continue with the Lord. Continuing in the ministry was out of the question, but he is eternally secure. He was forgiven as soon as he sought forgiveness.

The conscience is one method that may be an indicator of a person's salvation. This is an inward indicator that only the person can know. A person that hurts in his inner being when he does wrong is probably a believer. A lost person will sin but normally not have the inner hurt. They may have guilt etc. but they will not be pained knowing they have wronged God.

The question of sinless perfection has been argued for many years. There are those that suggest that this is to be the state of the believer. They oft times redefine sin slightly, so that the small - normal - insignificant sins aren't really sin, but only mistakes. Sin is relegated to the bigger items of killing, adultery, rape, etc.

Sinless perfection? For a time. Maybe even a long time. However, they cannot be sinless to the point of perfection. We cannot from a point in our lives cease to sin. We always seem to find a good rationalization every now and then to fall into trouble.

Having said this, we need to understand that holiness is the standard set before us. We should be very close to being sinless. In Luke where he mentions the parents of John the Baptist we see in Chapter one verse six that, "...they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." NOT SINLESSLY PERFECT! But they were living a very clean and pure life.

First John is quite plain that the believer is not one that is into sin on a regular basis. His thought is that the believer is basically without sin, but if he does fall now and then, I Jn. 1:9 is there for his use.

I Jn. 1:10 is plain that we cannot be without sin. "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." thus, sinless perfection is not a possibility.

One final passage to show how sinless we should be is II Peter. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (2 Peter 1:3)

Notice that He has given us ".....all things that pertain unto life and godliness....." In salvation or eternal life, he has provided all things that are required. In godliness he has provided all things that are required. We have everything that we need to say no to sin on a continual basis. THAT PUTS THE MONKEY ON OUR OWN BACK, NOT THE DEVIL OR THE OLD NATURE. WE SIN BECAUSE WE MAKE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO DO SO.

Another question that you can think about is this. If man and creation were here, but God did not exist, would there be sin? No, for we have sinned, or missed the mark of God. If there is no God then there is no mark to aim for - no standard set to which we must measure ourselves.

Let us move now, from sin and sinlessness to forgiveness. Indeed, the existence of forgiveness, requires that the possibility of sin exist. If there were no sin, there would be no need for forgiveness.

WHAT IS DIVINE FORGIVENESS?

Vine mentions, "to bestow a favour unconditionally,"

FORGIVE is a translation of two words both of which have the idea of sending away. It may be similar to when a faculty member of a school dismisses class. He is sending the students out, or away. Release is also a word that carries the idea. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Ps. 103:12

We need to remember that God does not forgive because He is a big softy. He is Holy and His judgment is sure and proper. He can only forgive when the proper situation is arrived at. Christ's work on the cross allows God to forgive all sin based on the offering of the perfect sacrifice.

In the Old Testament times the animal sacrifice was a covering, looking forward to the perfect sacrifice which would take away the sin. The saint of that age was not righteous in their standing before God. God just could not see their sin, due to the sacrifice covering their sin. They could not be regenerated, nor any of those things that are related to salvation in this age. How could they? The perfect sacrifice had not been offered yet.

The saint, when dead was carried to a holding area for saints called sheol. The lost dead were in the same area, yet in a different compartment. Luke sixteen describes sheol nicely.

When Christ had offered Himself, then the Old Testament saints could be in the Lord's presence, so they were taken with Christ to the heavenly scene of God.

We might add at this point that the sin of the Old Testament saint was much more understandable, because they had not been given "all things that pertain unto life and godliness. . . ." They did not have the new nature, they did not have the Holy Spirit within, so how could they live up to the righteous standard that we will be held to? They could not. That is why David could be the apple of God's eye, even though he had sinned so deeply. That is why the patriarchs were considered godly men, even though some of them lived in adultery with their multiple wives.

Today we look back to the perfect sacrifice of the Lord. The sacrifice of Jesus was large enough for every single sin of all of mankind both past, present, and future. It is sufficient for any amount and any depth that might come to man!

That is the divine side. Man's side is to sin as little as possible!

Thus, divine forgiveness is that act of God whereby He eliminates our wrongdoing, via the death of Christ. He wipes the slate clean and the sins are completely gone. Not covered, as in the Old Testament, but gone - as the chorus ending goes, G-O-N-E- GONE!

WHAT THEN IS HUMAN FORGIVENESS?

Is it forgive and forget? A relative of mine, in the early 60's, pulled a tax trick on me that cost us $300. The incident came up via his mother a few years ago that I didn't like him and that as a Christian I should have forgiven him. I had - in the early 60's. I hadn't remembered the incident for many years, until she brought it up. I had forgiven, yet memory is there for life. If you remember, and remember and remember to the point of dwelling, I would question the forgiveness. If you don't think about it, and consider it, and mull it over, then the forgiveness is probably complete.

Forgive and forget? No. We can forgive but not forget. We will remember as long as we have life. Our memory banks aren't as easily wiped clean as a computers.

When we forgive, there needs to be a change of heart from wrong feelings to right feelings. The memory tends to erase the bad part of the situation over a few years leaving only a recollection of the situation. When the person remembers with all those hateful feelings, then there has been no forgiveness.

Forgiving requires that we not have bad, or vengeful feelings toward the other party or parties. If there are bad feelings then there probably is no proper forgiveness. I have wondered if there is any true, real forgiveness in the Jewish community over the German holocaust. I realize that forgiveness would be terribly difficult in that situation, however it is the trait of the godly person. In an interview of the son of a man that had been convicted of being a German war criminal the son related the scene in the court room when his father was sentenced to death. He stated that the entire crowd gave a standing ovation, and was singing and chanting in joy. One young Jewish man came up to the son and pointed his finger at the son, saying, "And you should be the one to kill him."

Joy over a man, a being created in the image of God, is not right. In this case it would seem that the hate of one generation had passed to the next. The young Jew, it would seem, was suffering because of the former generations hate and lack of forgiveness.

Christ forgave his murderers before He even died.

We know that there is divine forgiveness for the sin of man. The old phrase, "How bad is it." comes to mind when I consider sin. Yes, man sins, but just how bad is it. Let us consider the sinfulness of man.

THE SINFULNESS OF MAN

Since Christ died for the entire world, and since His death cared for all sin then we might deduce that sin is universal in man. This thought is specifically taught in scripture as well. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one;" (Rom. 3:10). This is a quote from Ps. 14:1-3, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (This same thought is seen in Ps. 53:1-3.)

Rom. 3:9 mentions that, ". . .they are all under sin;" Gal. 3:22 tells us, "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin," Eccl. 7:20 seems to be fairly plain on the subject as well, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

I think that from these texts we might deduce that universally speaking, man is a sinful being.

TERMS RELATING TO SIN:

TRANSGRESSION: The basic meaning of the terms used is to go over, or go above, or go aside, according to Vine (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co). We might say it is being outside God's boundaries. The idea seems to be a deliberate act of stepping out of bounds. One of our kids was quite stubborn when very small. We once told her not to hit at her mother. She looked mom square in the eye and hit her again. That was a deliberate stepping out of bounds.

It seems to have the idea of overstepping the boundaries. You're violating my airspace might be part of the idea.

When I am trying to do something with the computer and it won't do what I want it to do, I at times give up and turn it off. I deliberately step out of its bounds.

INIQUITY: Vine uses "lawlessness" and "wickedness" to define iniquity. Unger suggests "without law". Something completely wrong. When the power goes off while I am on the computer there is total catastrophe. THINGS ARE COMPLETELY WRONG!!!!

ERROR: (What my computer says if I do things wrong.) That which ignores, or goes away from God. Vine indicates that this is not a direct leaving of the path, but possibly more like driving down the road, loosing your attentiveness, and wandering off onto the shoulder.

I mentioned that ERROR is what my computer tells me at times. At times, I am typing away and decide to do something and just poke a wrong key, creating all kinds of problems. I wonder off into trouble. At times when at the computer, I go to sleep while typing into the Word Processor. When I wake up, I find garbage on the screen. I keep typing, though completely unconscious. I wonder out of the boundaries.

SIN: Missing the mark. This Greek term is used in classical Greek of a spear missing the target. The target is set - the law, or God's command, and we don't live up to them. We have missed the mark. It may be by choice, or by not watching what we are doing, or by omission.

When I find that there is something that I need to do on the computer and I don't know how, I go to the computer book that has all the answers. I read the book and think that I understand what it says to do. I then go to the computer and do something the opposite of what the book told me to do. Not wise! I miss the mark set.

WICKEDNESS: This seems to be a state rather than an action. A sinner is wicked. That state may well be an active state, a continuing state. The term is also translated "bad". Because I turn my back on the computer book I am in a state of not being able to do the task I desire to do.

EVIL: Something wrong, or against God. Again this is not an action. It describes the character of a person if he is sinning. It is also the source of sin.

I am going to shift the illustration from myself to the computer. When it goes into what is called a lockup, or crash, it is completely useless. You can poke keys, you can get frustrated, you can try all sorts of things, but nothing will help. Evil is very similar. The only way to get out of a lock up is to shut down the power and start over. Evil is complete. The only remedy is to start over and that is what God does with us. He gives the lost a new nature!

UNBELIEF: One idea of the term is that of not believing what God states. Another idea is the thought of disobedience. Certainly unbelief will bring a person to disobedience. The gentiles have opportunity with God because of the "unbelief" of the Jewish people.

Remember when I go to the book and read the instructions, and go back to the computer. If I don't believe the book and its instructions I will do my own thing and ignore the instructions.

All computer books tell you to save your material often, just in case of power failures, power troubles, kids hitting the wrong switch etc., yet many computer operators do not save often. Why? Because they don't believe that anything will ever happen to them. When the administration building was being remodeled at the school where I taught, one of the workmen flipped a breaker to see what lights would go out. Yes, it was my office, and I hadn't backed up my information for several hours. Unbelief can cost.

DISOBEDIENCE: Disobedience is the willingness to be led in ways of truth. It has the idea that if we don't believe, then we will not do as truth dictates, and as a result, become disobedient. This is the state of not following those instructions in the computer book.

LAWLESSNESS: Being without the law. This assumes that you have the law available to you, and you have not taken it - you have decided not to follow it.

Lawless would be the situation in which I refused to read the manual on the computer, and was trying to get it to do something. I would be lawless and the computer would be completely unresponsive.

The illustrations are really inadequate, yet they serve to help us understand the uselessness of a person involved in sin. The computer is a device which demands that you do according to ITS RULES AND NOT YOUR RULES! God has His rules, and if we fail to follow them then there is little He can do except follow the standards that He has set.

Is sin always an outward act? No. We can sin in our minds. Christ mentioned this, "But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Mat. 5:28

Sin can also be an omission of an act that God asked us to do. This situation would not require others to know of our sin.

Sin is not always within. It can be against God, another person or yourself.

Against God: God tells us that we are not to covet. When we covet we sin against God. We sin against God anytime we decide to go against Him.

Against another person: When God leads us to give to a missionary, or witness to a lost person, and we refrain, we sin against God as well as that person. That person is hurt by your omission.

Against yourself: God tells us not to abuse our bodies. A Christian places himself into a place where he is in danger. If the person is hurt then he has sinned against himself. Example: Someone offers to let you try drugs. You "try" it and you are hooked. The physical, mental, financial and eternal damage is against you. (Eternal in that you are sidetracked - out of God's will and not interested in things that will bring you eternal reward.)

The believer should consider his activities in relation to this. Just how much danger should we place ourselves in when we are enjoying recreation. Should we put our physical being in danger? I suspect that the believer that places himself in danger and is injured to the point of being handicapped, will suffer loss in the eternal reward that they could have had.

I heard two crack users on the news that mentioned that soon after starting on crack there were no outside interests. Crack was their total life. Family was out. Drinking was out. Friend's were out. Both even mentioned that they weren't even interested in sex. Sin can cost us everything.

A good Biblical illustration of all three of these in one case of sin is David's sin with Bathsheba. It was a sin against God as David mentions in Ps. 51:4, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight...." He sinned against another in that he had Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, killed, and he sinned against himself. He caused himself great trouble and pain - his child died.

When I was in the navy, I had opportunity at one point to be division head in the Electronics department. I was told that the captain was going ashore and that they needed a radio in his boat. I called the shop and told one of the men that I wanted him to go put a radio into the captain's boat. I assumed he would do it. An hour later I received a call wanting to know why there wasn't a radio in the boat. I called the young man and asked him why he hadn't done the job. His answer was very simple, "I didn't want to!" His I didn't want to was not unlike Adam and Eve's I WILL EAT attitude.

The moral of this story might relate to the parenting side of your nature. God disciplines His erring believers and we as believers should discipline the children in our families.

When sin is discussed, quite often the question of the unpardonable sin arises? (Matt. 12:31-32) The unpardonable sin has been described in many ways. Many believers over the centuries have worried about committing the sin. This fear arises from not knowing what it is.

The unpardonable sin is the sin of rejecting Christ. In the context it was attributing the miracles to the power of the Devil, but behind that charge was the fact that the Jews were rejecting Christ and His deity. Anyone that rejects Christ is close to the unpardonable sin. There may be multiple opportunities, yet when the person finally and completely rejects Christ his eternal punishment is assured.

In relation to salvation/forgiveness/etc. eternal security comes into the picture. Those that believe that they can loose their salvation each time they sin, believe that when they are forgiven they are again saved.

A couple of questions: Is salvation the same as forgiveness? Does forgiveness automatically bring salvation?

Salvation is a series of thirty or so things that happen instantly. When we sin and seek forgiveness only one thing happens. God forgives us of that sin. We are not rebaptized into the body, we are not rejustified, we are not re-regenerated, we are not readopted, and we are not re-reborn, etc.

Once God has brought the person into His family, there is nothing that changes that relationship. Personal sin from that point on is forgiven, but salvation is not an issue. We must remember that salvation deals with several items. There is the sin nature, there is the past personal sin, and there is the eternal death. These were cared for in salvation. Forgiveness, there after, relates to personal sin only.

In relation to the Old Testament law, and the people under it, how did they gain forgiveness? They took sacrifices and their blood "COVERED" THE SIN so that the Lord could forgive the person. This also allowed for fellowship with God. That sin remained covered until the cross when the judgment of those sins was placed upon Christ. This is why Abraham's bosom, or the good side of Sheol was there. To contain the righteous until Christ could usher them into God's presence through His blood offered in the heavenly tabernacle.

APPLICATION:

1. As we go into new churches, we need to understand that dead and problematic churches are the way they are, most likely because of sin in the membership. If the membership is living in sin, there is no way that God can be working in and through them.

2. As we are going into churches, we need to understand those nasty things people say and gossip about are stemming from sin.

3. Take time to read Isa. 1:1-9. This is God's view of a sinful people. The better I understand sin from God's perspective the more gracious he automatically seems to become.

We cannot understand God's view of sin, for we are not infinite, but we need to strive to see it as clearly as we can.

4. Because we have men like David Brainard that were so terribly introspective about themselves, we often say because of their overemphasis on self examination, we will not do any of it. He seemed to thrive on looking for his worst parts, and his sin. We tend to go the other way and not look at all, to our inward beings.

In a devotional by Spurgeon we read, "It will be humbling and profitable for us to pause awhile and see this sad sight. The iniquities of our public worship, its hypocrisy, formality, lukewarmness, irreverence, wandering of heart and forgetfulness of God, what a full measure have we there! Our work for the Lord, its emulation, selfishness, carelessness, slackness, unbelief, what a mass of defilement is there! Our private devotions, their laxity, coldness, neglect, sleepiness, and vanity, what a mountain of dead earth is there!" (Spurgeon, Charles H.; "MORNING AND EVENING"; Mclean, Virginia: Macdonald Publishing Co., p 16 - Jan 8)

We need to ask God to teach us how vile sin is!

Martin Luther said, "The recognition of sin is the beginning of salvation." True we are saved, but do we really know the real joy of our salvation?

Because we today diminish sin so much can we really know the truth of what we were saved from?

FROM DIARY OF DAVID BRAINARD.

"At times I grew remiss and sluggish, without any great convictions of sin, for a considerable time together; but after such a season convictions sometimes seized me more violently. One night I remember in particular, when I was walking solitarily abroad, I had opened to me such a view of my sin that I feared the ground would cleave assunder under my feet, and become my grave; and send my soul quick into hell, before I could get home. Thought I was forced to go to bed, lest my distress should be discovered by others, which I much feared; yet I scarcely durst sleep at all, for I thought it would be a great wonder if I should be out of hell in the morning. And though my distress was sometimes thus great, yet I greatly dreaded the loss of convictions, and returning back to a state of carnal security, and to my former insensibility of impending wrath; which made me exceedingly exact in my behaviour, lest I should stifle the motions of God's Holy Spirit. When at any time I took a view of my convictions, and thought the degree of them to be considerable, I was wont to trust in them; but this confidence, and the hope of soon making some notable advances toward deliverance, would ease my mind, and I soon became more senseless and remiss. Again, when I discerned my convictions to grow languid, and thought them about to leave me, this immediately alarmed and distressed me. Sometimes I expected to take a large step, and get very far toward conversion, by some particular opportunity or means I had in view."

That man knew what sin was, he knew how to view sin, he knew what God thought of sin, we should have such a reality about the sin in our lives!

5. We have mentioned that sin is really only a surface action due to the real problem, or root cause down below. I personally believe that at times we deal with the surface and forget about the root.

Can you think of any examples of this in the church today? Divorce and remarriage is the outward sin activity.

We are finding ways to work with divorcees.
We are finding ways to help the divorcees.
We are finding ways to put them to work in the church.

BUT

Are we dealing with the root? The root is that we aren't teaching a proper concept of marriage. The root is that we aren't teaching a proper concept of divorce. The root is that we aren't teaching a proper concept of remarriage. When we deal with the roots, we will eliminate most of the outward manifestations of it!

Outward sin in the church MUST be dealt with. We have churches where adultery is going unpunished. We have people hopping from church to church so that they can tickle their ears. We have people leaving their spirituality at the church door when they leave, and assuming it again Sunday morning when they return.

The problems, must be met, if the church is ever again to be the light of the Gospel to this nation. We MUST be the salt of the earth, or we will be discarded.

I trust that the realization of the terribleness of sin might begin to come to the reader. I trust that God will assist the reader in finding His perception of sin, rather than the perception of the world, or the humanist. SIN IS MISSING THE MARK OF GOD, not something that we decide in our own minds.

Some references that might help in your further study: Heb. 3:13; Heb. 11:25; Heb. 12:4.

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THE SIN NATURE

The sin nature is that part of us that came from Adam. It is also called: Adamic nature, Inborn sin, Original sin, and Old man.

Calvin held that God created Adam perfectly and that his nature was perfect. Adam sinned, becoming another nature which was a corruption of his original nature. Thus he would have held that we only have one nature pre-salvation. I do not know if he held to one or two after salvation. To be consistent with what has been said, it would seem that even after salvation, the nature of man would be singular - a new nature.

As the normal two nature thinking goes the Bible deals with the cause of our outward sin, and that cause being our inward nature, or Adamic nature. In short, if we as believers have sin, it is because we have a new and an old nature that war. When we don't war properly the old wins out and we sin. On the other hand is we war correctly, the new nature will win out and we will not sin.

Now, to some that makes God a God that gives us a new nature that is barely able to cope with our old nature, and that He may not be the powerful God that He claims to be. On the other hand, if he has given us a new nature that is consistent with Himself, and has changed our very being into something new, then we have the power to say no to sin. That is a God that I can deal with.

There are systems of religion that function to control and eradicate the outward sin, but never deal with the inner problem. Any system of works usually is dealing with the outward sin, and not the inner problem.

To a point some past fundamentalists did this, in that they mean mouth the outward on a regular basis, but never concentrate on the inward. This is changing and is not very common anymore.

The liberal movements also deal with the way you live your life and seldom deal with the inner man. A friend of mine witnessed to a Methodist pastor one time and mentioned being born again. The minister stated, "Don't try to talk to me about that deep stuff. I don't understand that stuff!"

Let us consider some questions concerning the natures.

Can the Adamic nature be eradicated? Chafer mentions that it cannot be. Others believe that it can be put down on a daily, moment by moment basis. Others believe that the believer has only one nature and that, being the new nature, from God. We will consider some of these thoughts.

There are some in our day that feel that we need to kill the old nature daily - that it is a daily duty of a believer to see to it that God put's down the insurrection that comes up every single day. I was once told of a president at a Canadian Bible Institute that felt this way, and one day in chapel the speaker had just stepped to the pulpit and the president yelled as loud as he could - "KILL HIM LORD!" In short put that old nature to rest so he can preach properly. At times this thought has been affectionately termed "slain in the spirit."

Because we are totally depraved and because all believers tend toward evil naturally, Chafer seems to draw the conclusion that the old nature cannot be eradicated.

Let's consider the idea that the nature of man was injured in the fall and that his nature is similar to Adam's post-fall.

This position would hold that Adam's understanding and conscience were perfect prior to sin, yet after sin they are injured. I am sure the Calvinist would say that the injury was total and that man was left with no understanding, and that his conscience is useless. They would also feel that man's will was turned COMPLETELY away from God and toward sin. The result of the three changes is that man is totally void of any proper thoughts toward God.

The question is this. Can you buy all three of these? The understanding of man seems to have been affected, we could agree. The Scriptures tell us that the lost cannot understand the things of the Lord. Indeed, the conscience and will are damaged in lost man as well. So, yes, we can go along with this definition of man post-fall. Some might question the COMPLETENESS of this injury. They might suggest that our understanding is injured, but not so badly that we can't respond to the natural and inward revelation of God to man.

It seems that if man is responsible to God for the revelation given, then there must be some amount of understanding left. This does not detract from the thought of total depravity. Man is always, in his lost state, completely without help, and completely bent on wrong.

This should not surprise anyone, for we have already mentioned that man is totally depraved. Not partially depraved but totally depraved. All parts of man were affected by the fall.

FOR YOUR REVIEW, READ THE FOLLOWING ON TOTAL DEPRAVITY: Gen. 8:21, Ps. 14:2-3, Ps. 51:5, Isa 42:7, Jer. 17:9, Jn 3:6, Rom. 1:28-29, Rom. 5:12, Gal 5:17-21, Eph. 2:3, and I Tim. 4:2.

Is man lost by nature? We will see some verses that would indicate that man is not lost eternally because of his nature. In Adam we were a race that were lost by nature, however Christ corrected that problem, and we will see that the lost are now lost because of their rejection of Christ's work on their behalf. He nailed all sin to the cross, and made us as if Adam had never sinned. We are as Adam was before the fall in our post-salvation state.

Remember II Pet 1:3-4? It mentioned that he gave us all things pertaining to life and godliness. ALL things are available for salvation. The sin nature of all of mankind was cared for at the cross.

This may sound strange, however if you take most of the thinking current today about the work of the cross to its logical end, you will have to agree with the statement.

Is man lost because he has sinned? No. He is lost because he has rejected Christ, not because I stole that penny tootsie roll from the dime store in 1948.

What did Christ die on the cross for? The sins of the world. What sin is involved in this death for the sins of the world? Jn. 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Notice the singular "sin." Both the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version follow this translation. Even the Living Bible uses the singular sin.

Just what "sin" means is up for the person to decide. I would agree with Chafer that this is speaking of sin personal, sin nature and any other type of sin you want to include. Let me quote Chafer, "The sin of the world is taken away in the sense that by Christ's threefold accomplishment in His death every hindrance is removed which restrained God from the saving of even the chief of sinners." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol V, p 191.)

His threefold work involved Redemption, Reconciliation, and Propitiation. Jot that down for now and we will explain those terms fully in coming sessions. Let it suffice the mind at this point, to say that Christ died for all of the sin in the world, indeed, all types of the sin of the world.

Take Chafer's quote to its logical end and you find that the person that goes to hell does so because he rejected Christ, or in the case of those that have never heard of Christ - rejected the revelation that they had. Thus, we can take one step further and say that Christ's work on the cross makes the believer as Adam was before he sinned.

Christ died for the sin nature as well as for personal sin. He removed all barriers between The Father and the sinner. The sinner has only to accept that work on the cross as payment for all that is owed! Salvation is free in all areas for the receiving.

If a person is lost it is because he refuses the free salvation that is offered to him by God. Jn 1:29, "...the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Jn 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Heb 2:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." I Jn 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for us only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

The entire human family can be saved. II Cor. 5:19, "To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Isa 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;" Col

2:14-15, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

It has been suggested that we still have the sin nature, but that God gave us the Holy Spirit so that we can live a holy life. In effect the teaching holds that the Holy Spirit allows us to win the battle between the old and new natures. I find a problem in this thinking.

If under this case I sin, I am left to understand that the Holy Spirit did not do His work properly and the fault of my sin was His. The thought set forth - that the Holy Spirit controls the sin nature, and that this is our hope for living a good life as a believer - is illogical.

Secondly, this tells us that the Old Testament saint could not have lived a righteous life, for he did not have the Indwelling Spirit as we do. Thus the Old Testament saint had no possibility of pleasing God. NOT LOGICAL! INDEED, UNSCRIPTURAL, FOR DAVID PLEASED GOD.

How did the Old Testament saint keep from bringing three thousand lambs per day for sacrifice? He had to have sinned continually if the New Testament person has a struggle. This teaching is not acceptable!

Chafer mentions, "...the gift of the indwelling Spirit as One who is able to give victory over every evil disposition." (SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, p 293) This implies that he agrees with what has been previously set forth, with the exception that it is not the Holy Spirit that controls whether the person sins or not, but that the individual controls it by being filled with the Spirit.

This line of thinking tells us that the believer has an old nature, and a new nature. The Holy Spirit, if in control, will see to it that the new nature has victory over the old nature. The emphasis is on the control of the Spirit. I have always wondered how this teaching relates to James when it tells us that sin comes from lust. The James text seems to indicate a choice of the will. If what has been set forth is true, the believer that is not controlled by the Spirit will automatically sin. If sin is automatic, then what is James speaking of? James 1:14-15 "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." If sin is automatic why does James say it comes from lust?

On the other hand if the believer has only one nature, and that being the new creation of God, and if we are as Adam was before the fall, then we have this choice of the will which James indicates. The main objection to this thought is that we still sin. Yes, we still sin, because we are humans, descended in the image of Adam. We choose to do our own thing, rather than follow God.

This is not hard to understand. Given the choice of a life of ease or a life of tribulation, we naturally want to go the easy way. It takes a choice of the will to do either. Those that want to follow God, will choose the life that He shows them, rather than what they would naturally

desire.

To sin or not to sin, then is the choice to do it God's way or our own way. The committed Christian will choose the way of God and the non-committed Christian will choose his own way.

No one disagrees that man has a bent toward evil. Christianity has taught the mediate transferral of the sin nature. Chafer lists three proofs that the sin nature is received mediately from Adam. In other words because of Adam we received a sin nature. First, Scripture says it, that finishes it. Secondly, it is observable in all of history - war, Hitler, hateful things man does to man, etc. Man shows his true, sinful, colors when he opens his mouth or acts. Finally, the fact that man is consciousness of God. Most every civilization recognizes man is not a perfect creature. Why else would they work for merit. We all work to improve our perception before man. There is always a concept of right and wrong.

Most agree that in Adam, all of mankind sinned. We are all in our earthly father's image.

THE NATURE, OR NATURES OF MAN

We have already hinted at the fact that there is discussion as to the number of natures of man. This question has been around for some time.

There are two views as to the nature, or natures of saved man. Both views would see lost man as having one nature, and that being an old nature, or possibly better termed Adamic nature.

The difficulty comes in whether the old nature, which by the way is not a Scriptural term, so let us say whether the Adamic nature, is eradicated, or if it is present along side the new creation of God.

As you read the texts that supposedly prove that we have two separate and distinct natures, read them carefully and examine them within their context. Many verses used to prove this point are poorly if not wrongly used.

I don't think anyone would dispute the fact that the saved man has an inner man. What is the inner man? The Spirit? The nature? The soul? I'd say soul, and this would require the lost also have an inner man.

The two nature people use Rom. 7:25 to prove the struggle between the old nature and the new nature. "I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of god; but with the flesh, the law of sin." One must determine if this is Paul speaking from his lost state, or his saved state. I wonder at a statement of Paul that mentions that he serves the law, being tied to his saved state. I doubt that after his conversion he followed the Old Testament law. If he did, it was only until Christ taught him that he didn't need to.

Cambron states that this new nature is a "Christly Nature...an Imparted Nature...a Holy Nature...an Unchangeable Nature...a Non-forfeited Nature." "Its End is Resurrection and Rapture" "Every child of God has two natures; the unsaved man has only one nature. The old nature cannot be eradicated while the believer lives in the flesh; therefore, we have the fight between the old and new natures." (Cambron, Mark G., D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954)

He also mentions that Rom. 7:22 is speaking definitely of Paul as a saved man. No unsaved ever delights after the law of God. He also mentions that "...only the saved man has the inward man, which is the new nature." He offers no proof of this.

The two nature thought requires that the one nature system, eradicate the old nature. Eradicate is the wrong term. Eradicate has the idea of doing away with - getting rid of - destroying. The thought of the one nature person is more along the line that the lost person has a sin nature which is a nature of man that is injured by the fall. (We have shown that the two nature people hold to this.) The work of the cross transforms that injured nature, back into the nature that it should have been had Adam not fallen.

We are a new creation according to Scripture. We are not a depraved person that is given a new creation - the new nature, we are a depraved person that is transformed into what we should be! If this is not true how do you deal with the meaning of rebirth.

The two nature people would view the struggle of old nature versus new nature as our state, and the fact that we are Spiritual in God's eyes as our standing.

They use several verses to prove their point. I would like to list these verses with some thoughts for you to consider as you consider their position. If there is a reference with no comments, it is probably because it is dealt with later in this section.

Rom. 13:14

Col 3:10. " And have put on the new [man], which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:" I would start at 3:1. Putting off the old man was a past item of business. We will see this later. The putting on of the new man is also a past item of business. There is no continuing action.) This has to do with living as they ought to live, and not as their Adamic nature is forcing them to do.

Rom. 6:13 "Neither yield ye your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness unto God."

I would add vs. 11 and 12 also. "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal

body, that ye should obey it in its lusts. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." This is not saying that there is a conflict - only that we can yield ourselves to serve sin, or serve God. It is our free choice - an act of our will.

Eph. 4:22 "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;"

Eph. 4:24 "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Let us look at the terms involved and see what the Scripture has to say. (I have included the tenses of some of the verbs in brackets for your convenience.) We are just listing the references and making observations.

A LOOK AT THE TERMS:

OLD MAN: Rom. 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." The old man is crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be destroyed. Three things that need to be noticed: One is that our old man was crucified - put to death as Christ was. Secondly, we need to note the term destroy, which would give the impression that it is no longer around. The body of sin is no longer around. Thirdly, all this is so that we "should not sin." This does not say we cannot sin, nor does it say that we do not sin - only that we SHOULD NOT SIN.

II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away [aorist, active, indicative]; behold, all things are become new [perfect, active, indicative]." (The perfect is an act in the past that has continuing action into the future. It is something that is permanent.)

If we are in Christ the text tells us that we are new creatures - that old things are passed away, and that all things become new. Passed away indicates "gone." All - ALL becomes new - we are new creatures!

What can we say from all this? All the old ways are gone and they are replaced by new. Might this be speaking of our life style and way of doing things? I suspect so. There is also indication that the old is gone and that we are a "new creature" - singular.

Eph. 4:22, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" The old man is corrupt. Statement of fact. They have put off the old man which is corrupt. It is done. We are a new creation. This is not a command to put him off! Nor, is it a command to keep putting him off every day. He was put of in the salvation

experience.

Col 3:9, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;" The old man was put off past it would seem from this text.

OLD NATURE: There is no listing for old nature in the Scripture.

NEW MAN: Eph. 2:15, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace;" The context seems to indicate to me that this new man is a combining of the Jew and Gentile into one people for the Lord, and that people, probably referring to the church. This verse really does not relate to our discussion.

Eph. 4:24, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "Put on" is aorist middle, and thus is an action that they have done.

Col 3:10, "And have put on the new [man], which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:" "Have put on" is aorist middle. Renewed is present passive, thus the renewing is continuing and it is being done from outside the person. The new man is knowledgeable after the image of our creator.

NEW NATURE: There is no listing in Scripture for this term.

NEW CREATURE: II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (See above for comments.)

Gal 6:15, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The new creation availeth for something, and the context would indicate that salvation is in view. The new creature evidently comes from the salvation experience.

Miscellaneous texts:

Eph. 2:1-3 tells us of our past life that is now gone because of what salvation has done in our being. "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins; In which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; Among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." We are no longer this type of person due to salvation. all this is behind us.

II Pet 1:4 mentions that we partake of the divine nature. The context is strictly salvation and its benefits. There is no hint of struggle, or vestige of the old nature left in our being. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the

divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

I Cor. 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This is contrasted with a spiritual man. This is man in his Adamic fallen, unsaved, unregenerated state.

Gal 5:16-26 contrasts the lost, or life of the flesh, to the saved, or the life of the Spirit filled man. It is a stark contrast of lost vs. saved. Verse 24 is of interest to our discussion. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." "have crucified" is an aorist active, indicative tense, which means that they did it at a point in the past - point of fact. (Indicative shows a statement of fact.)

If you are to make this a conflict between the flesh and spirit in one person you have problems with vs. 21 which states that the workers of the flesh won't be in the kingdom of God. I think that one holding that this is old vs. new natures must also hold to the insecurity of the believer. Indeed, Bancroft a two nature man states that the saved person is not in the flesh, but relates that he still has the flesh within. He bases this on Gal. 5:16,17. That is a real problem for the doctrine of the security of the believer!

Rom. 8:12-13, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if we live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

To say that the flesh is in us and read this text where it says "if we live after the flesh, ye shall die" gives some rise to the thought of eternal security and its truth!!!

Let us move on to consider further the question of one or two natures. So, if there is no struggle between our new and old nature, why do we sin as believers? Because we make a choice to. We chose to follow our desire. Not because some ugly sin nature is pressuring us to, but because we allow our minds to dwell on things that they ought not dwell on. We allow our mind to decide to sin. James 1:14-15, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

There is a sequence involved in our sin in this text, and there is no mention of our old nature, old man, evil self or any other thing in the text. Only lust - enticement - sin.

Rom. 6:11-13, "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in its lusts. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Gal 2:20, "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, who loved me and gave himself for me." "live in the flesh" relates to living life, not living with the "flesh" or the old nature.

We have the choice to do either - sin or serve God. Romans six calls us to serve God and not sin!

CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THESE REFERENCES:

1. The indication is that the new man is something put on in the past by some of the recipients of Paul's writings indicating that it is something that came at salvation. The putting away of our old life.

2. We are told that we SHOULD not serve sin.

3. Our old man was crucified, and is no longer a threat to us, if he is dead.

4. All things in the believer are new.

5. The old is passed away. This terminology would indicate that the old is not going to bother us at all.

If you haven't tumbled to it yet, it should be obvious that the definition of "nature" is of great importance to us. How can we define nature?

Buswell suggests in the discussion of Christ's nature, a "complex of attributes" (Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 250). In other words, the compilation of all the attributes of a person. This would be the person's nature.

We might make note that a nature cannot sin. A person sins. A nature is the sum total of all attributes of the being.

If this definition is true then all the attributes of a lost man would include things like, fallen, vile, evil, against God, etc.

If this definition is true then all the attributes of a saved man would include things like, saved, holy, regenerated, righteous, etc.

The old attributes have passed away and the new attributes are in place.

What of the saved person that ceases to walk with God? Are his essential attributes or nature changed? No. He is still saved, righteous, etc. though he is not walking with God.

In all of my study I see nothing to warrant a doctrine of two natures in any of the texts that are normally given to prove that we have two. Nor have I run across any references in my own reading of the Word that indicate two natures.

It is suggested that Romans seven depicts the struggle between the old and the new nature. There are several possible settings to this passage. The key to understanding the text is to put it in the context of Romans 7:25 and 8:1-2. This can't depict chapter seven as a saved man's view.

Possible settings for Romans seven.

a. Paul reflecting on his lost days and his struggle as a Pharisee with following the law.

b. Newel suggests it is Paul describing his past struggle with the law as a believer before he knew he wasn't bound to the law. He did not realize he did not have to live up to it.

c. Others suggest that he is describing a constant, day to day struggle between the Adamic nature and the new nature. This requires that Christ died for only our personal sin and not the sin nature.

Rom. 7:25-8:2 are hard to accept if Chapter seven is a saved man! Indeed 8:1-4 gives the idea that we, because of salvation, don't serve this law of sin that he has just struggled with, and that we do serve God!

I am not sure I understand all I desire to know about the Romans seven text, but I see enough to say that this is not stating that we have a struggle with the flesh and the spirit going on all the time.

Indeed, the overwhelming evidence is that there is no struggle, except between the lust that we can follow with our minds, and our will. This is not two natures! This is mind over lust - matters of the will and intellect, within the recreated soul of man.

I might mention that those that believe in two natures base much of their position on this Romans text, which is in high dispute. Few can confidently state, without reservation what it truly means. So why base a doctrine on a questionable text? Look at the whole of Scripture and see how the questionable text relates to it, not look at the questionable text and attempt to relate all of Scripture to your interpretation of the questionable text.

Our new nature has attributes that make it heavenly and Godly. All our attributes are our nature.

I realize this goes cross grain with many men. Scofield, Bancroft, Cambron, Walvoord and I'm sure Chafer and many others. I wonder why Ryrie does not deal with it (that I have found anyway). Is it because he disagrees with the boys? I don't know.

Walvoord does not believe the old nature is eradicated but that it is out of luck as far as controlling the believer. "Though it is impossible to eradicate the old nature, the exhortation prohibits the old sin nature from dominating the believer's manner of life. The old nature has lost its power in view of the crucifixion of Christ, but the victory can be wrought by God only through the indwelling Holy Spirit."

He goes on to state something that is somewhat eschew of his thinking. "...Christians continue to contend with the "old self" which is contrary to the new nature." (Reprinted by permission: Walvoord, John F. Editor; "LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY VOLUME ONE"; USA: Victor Books, 1988, p 406) If we aren't dominated by it then how can we be constantly struggling with it?

So, if we do have a left over of the Adamic nature, it is an integrated part of our one nature. I do not think that this is what we have seen, but is an option to the person that desires to retain the Adamic nature within the saved person.

The Adamic nature does not, nor can it ever, force anyone into sin. It is a collection of spiritual characteristics, and not a force to be dealt with.

The new creation is also a collection of characteristics which make up what we are. It cannot, nor can it ever force us to live correctly. It is not a force.

The individual can, at his will, decide to follow the old ways of the lost. This is termed carnal, or flesh in the Scripture. This is not something he is forced to do, but is something that he desires to do. (If we view him forced to, we must give stock to the world's favorite phrase, "The Devil made me do it.")

One must then submit that if a believer that was once spiritual, which is acting as carnal, is acting against his own character - his divine character.

We say man has three parts. Body, soul and spirit. This is pre and post salvation. Where does the Adamic nature fit in? Is it a forth part? No. It is the characteristics of the lost being. It is the pollution of the soul and/or spirit. Which? The spirit is our God consciousness - even in lost man. It is not clearly seeing God. The soul is polluted by sin.

Now salvation comes on the scene and we are a new creation. How are the Spirit and soul affected? Are we given a forth part? A new nature? No. It has to be a changing of the spirit and soul.

Is it a partial changing? How could God call us a new creation or new creature if we were only partly new? He can't!

It seems from what we have seen that we, as believers, are in Adam's pre-fall state, and we

choose to sin as Adam did. It is a decision, or act of the will, not a lost struggle with the old nature.

We have one thing that Adam did not have - I John 1:9. We can go before the throne of grace to confess our sin and be restored to that wonderful state, anytime we want.

If you study the word nature, you will find that normally it is viewed as the sum and substance of all that a thing or being is. For example, let us consider a glass of milk. It, as milk, has certain characteristics. If you put poison in, and stir it, the overall nature has been changed. You don't have two natures, you have one that is drastically changed. So, in our being, God regenerated us, we are born again, we are new, we have only one nature.

From all of this, we should deduce that nature is the inherent character or total collection of facts about ones character. The nature of man then becomes all that the man is.

The question then comes, how many natures does he have? Only one. The lost man has one, the saved man has one. The lost man's nature is sinful, and the saved man's is either sinful, or not sinful.

Part of that overall make up needs to have the idea of a self centered, self willed, self serving, characteristic, but still within only one nature.

We then sin because we decide. We then sin because we desire. We then sin because we are self willed, self serving and self centered.

Does that put the monkey of sin and its cause on our back? Very definitely!

I trust that as you approach sin, you will realize that if you proceed, it is because of your decision, and not the old nature, not the Devil, and not the Spirit. It is because you want to.

The ultimate reality in this question is this. If you believe that you have a constant struggle going on, as the two nature people believe, and that you can have victory by relying on the Holy Spirit, as they also believe, then when the person sins, they feel that they have failed to have the victory. Allow this to go on for many years, and you will find the many, totally defeated Christians that we have in our churches. They are totally discouraged because they can't find the victory that they have been taught they can have.

Now, on the other hand, if you tell them that the sin of their life is not due to failing to have the victory, but that it is because they CHOSE - DECIDED - ACTED - because they wanted to, and you will give them instant relief from their terrible guilt. They don't have victory because the choose not to, not because they have failed in some spiritual battle.

They have not failed the Lord because they haven't been able to walk with Him as closely as they

needed to, to have the victory, they have failed the Lord because they have decided to sin.

There is a vast difference between failing the Lord, because you couldn't walk close enough to Him, and to fail Him because we decide with the will to turn against Him. The difference is the terrible guilt.

If we realize we choose to sin, we then realize how important I John 1:9 is to us. We will also realize that confession is that which brings us to not want to have to confess the same sin again. On the two nature side, I John 1:9 seems to be a crutch for life. You sin because you can't walk close enough to the Lord, and this is the way back.

Confession is, in part, agreeing with God about the terribleness of the sin. If we sin by an act of the will, we are in open rebellion against God. If we sin because we didn't walk as close to him as we should, the sin becomes only the slip of the walk, and a slip of the control of the Spirit.

I see sin, and I John 1:9, as a one nature person, as open rebellion and restoration. It is a terrible process to have to go through. As a two nature person, prior to coming to the conclusions I have submitted to you in this section, I was prone to I John 1:9 my problems away lightly, because, I was just a little remiss about my walk with the Lord. "Oh, Lord, I forgot my quiet time where I ask you to control me, and got a little off track. Sorry. Forgive me. Amen."

To see sin as rebellion, to see sin as my own responsibility, to see sin as God sees it, as filthy unrighteousness, is to see I John 1:9 as a serious place to find yourself.

I trust that you have a healthy realization of what sin is. I trust that you will seriously consider ALL OF THE SCRIPTURES before you decide on one or two natures.

Remember, the crux of the decision is the definition of "nature." To have two natures is to do damage to the normal definition of the term.

Are we talking about sinless perfection. No, never. We will sin however we do not have to. Remember II Peter? "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (2 Peter 1:3)

We aren't perfect, yet we don't have to sin. Because we have tried to get away from the false teaching of sinless perfection, we have over reacted to the point of saying we sin because it is our nature. It is almost as if we have to sin - we have no choice. Based on this teaching, we have allowed sin to become a normal part of the Christian life.

We need not see sin as an integrated part of life, we should see it as something that is an option. We don't need to sin, we need to not sin!

04600

IMPUTED SIN

Man is lost due to Adams sin. Is that a true statement? In that God justly transmitted Adams nature to all mankind, yes.

In reality, man is lost in this life because of Adam's sin. In the next life, man is lost due to the fact that he did not respond to God's free offer of salvation in this life.

Rom. 5:19 tells us, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Wow! Two, huge doctrines introduced in one little verse.

WE ALL WERE MADE SINNERS BY ADAM.

WE ALL CAN BE MADE SAINTS BY CHRIST.

The thought of our sinning in Adam is foreign to some people. I wasn't there so why should I be blamed. Heb. 7:9-10 may help us to understand this one. "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him." (Melchizedek met Abraham in Gen. 14:17-20, Levi was born in Gen. 29:34) As Levi paid tithes before he was even born, so we all sinned before we were even born.

Rom. 5:12 also is quite plain on the subject. "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"

Q. Would you have sinned if you had been there in the garden?

YES! Rom. 3:23 tells us that all have sinned. It would be illogical to assume that one of us could have "not sinned" if we had been in the garden. God could not justly pass sin on to all mankind, unless it was the just thing to do. It must be, that we would all have sinned had we been in the garden.

There are some varying views as to how this concept of our being a sinner in Adam is explained.

1. Pelagian: We aren't sinners in Adam. We sinned as he did after our perfect creation. Adam himself was only a bad example, and we being big copy cats, followed his example.

2. Arminian: Because of Adam's sin all mankind is unrighteous and unable to seek God. God does, however give us enough Spirit to counteract this evil, enough so that man can respond to God, or turn to sin. This conscious turning to evil instead of to God is when God imputes sin to

us.

3. Federal: God made a covenant with Adam and Adam broke it. Ever since God has been creating souls with evil natures which leads to sin. Adam was the federal head of the race. This is a result of Adam's sin, not a passing down of a sinful nature because we are sinful.

4. Mediate Imputation: The new physical body is corrupted by propagation from Adam. God creates the soul perfect but as soon as the body and soul are joined, the soul is corrupted. It is automatic. Man has no test to undergo, or to fail. (This theory again shows it to be a consequence of Adam's sin not a consequence of our nature.)

5. Augustinian: "In Adam's free act, the will of the race revolted from God and the nature of the race corrupted itself. The nature which we now possess is the same nature that corrupted itself in Adam." (From Strong.) Adam's sin is given to us not because he failed, but because it is ours. He is the representative of the race. We are corrupt because we chose to be with Adam not because of consequences of his sin.

APPLICATION:

1. If we sinned in Adam then we must also assume if it had been Stan and Faith instead of Adam and Eve, that Stan would have sinned.

If the above is true then: a. We should not be upset with people that sin, for we in their place would sin also. We do have the Holy Spirit, however that gives us the opportunity to not sin. b. There should never be any self righteousness on our part when dealing with sin, or sinners. Our only righteousness is the best robe of the Son placed upon us by the Father.

2. Christ took ALL our sin and gave us HIS righteousness. A feeble illustration would be - at one point in my life in the 60's we owed $6000, plus. At that point had Mr. Getty the multimillionaire, come to me and said, "I am taking over your debt and I'm going to give you every penny I have or own." I would have received not only the forgiveness of the debt, but also the riches of the debt taker. This illustrates that Christ took our sins and gave His righteousness! "Think on these things" Philippians says.

When God says, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isa 6:8b, How can anyone not respond "HERE AM I SEND ME!"

WE HAVE NOTHING WITHOUT CHRIST!

DO WE LIVE LIKE IT? IS HE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE?

A sociologist researched the family history of the Edwards and the Jukes families. This is what he found.

The Richard Edwards and Elizabeth Tuthill family over 300 years have produced 1,394 offspring. The result was as follows: "12 have been college presidents, 65 professors, 265 college graduates, 60 physicians, 100 clergy men, 60 authors, 100 lawyers, 30 judges, 80 public officials, three congressmen, two senators, and two presidents. Distinguished names like Jonathon Edwards, Aaron
Burr, Eli Whitney, Bishop Vincent, Grover Cleveland, U. S. Grant, and Edith Carow Roosevelt...."

"On the other hand, during the same period, out of 1,220 members of the Jukes family 300 died in infancy, 440 were wrecked by disease, 310 were professional paupers, 50 prostitutes, 60 thieves, seven murderers, and 53 other criminals!" (From Treasury of Christian Faith; under topic of sin. by Albert W. Palmer.)

Now we all know that the Adamic nature is passed on generation after generation, but with statistics like these, one must wonder if the proper upbringing can't help in the overall situation. We all know that all of mankind is lost, but the Godly influence has something to do with the way people respond to their creator.

MAN UNDER SIN

Chafer suggests some points to describe man under sin. I would like to adapt these for our discussion.

Man is:

1. Definitely dead in Adam.
2. Depraved, dead and damned.
3. De sins de same - Devil's, Adams and personal.
4. Decreed "under sin".
5. Disregarded merit.
6. Divine extendable grace.
7. Devilish domination and deception.

I would like to elaborate on these briefly.

1. Definitely dead in Adam. We are proclaimed by Scripture to be dead in Adam. All mankind, fell with him. The lost person has no choice in the matter, he is dead in Adam.

2. Depraved, dead and damned. Because of the common fall of man, lost man is unable to respond properly to the creator. Not only is he unable of proper response, he is dead spiritually and damned to the lake of fire because of his sin with Adam.

3. De sins de same - Devil's, Adams and personal. All sin is the same, whether it is the Devil's,

Adams, or our own. Sin is missing the mark set by God, and we all have accomplished that.

4. Decreed "under sin". God tells us in the Word that all lost mankind is under sin. There is no choice, there is no option - under sin is the lot of lost man. Only in Christ can this change.

5. Disregarded merit. Had Adam lived in the garden without sin, we must assume that merit would have been the result. He would have deserved to have eternal life with God in the garden, yet he chose to eat the fruit that was forbidden.

6. Divine extendable grace. Through Christ, God was able to extend His grace to man, to provide a method of salvation. This salvation allows Christ to give HIS merit to us, so that God can save us.

7. Devilish domination and deception. Lost man is dominated by the Devil. The Scripture tells us that he is the god of this world system, and the lost are totally caught up in the system.

Now, believer, do you have a little more to be thankful for? Are we not learning a little about how great God's grace is as we study and learn of sin?

APPLICATION:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9) Not of works lest any man should boast.

God is perfect so cannot accept less than perfect into His presence. Only the works of Christ's can appear before Him.

Unless I missed some loophole I think it is like this. God did it all. We can't do anything. - OR - God did it. We didn't it.

HOW FINAL CAN YOU GET?

One final thought. There is a teaching around in the 1990's which says that grace covers it all. No matter what we do, grace will cover it. Yes, grace will cover it, but our realization of what God has done and how terrible sin is, then why in the world would we want to walk in sin so that grace could cover it.

Christ suffered and died on the cross for our sin. His suffering ought to bring us to desire not to sin.

Grace covers it all - yes. Common sense says take opportunity of grace as little as possible!

04650

CHRISTIAN SIN

We have already established, in this book, as well as in our lives, that believers sin. We want to consider believers sin. Sin in our lives is not a top secret. We know our own sin before we step into it. We know our sin, because we consider what we want to do and then do it.

Our conscience is present, just in case we desire to sin and forget it. As we sin, the conscience tells us immediately so that we may care for the infraction. If we put off confession it remains in place to prod us into correcting the error.

As we determine to do the wrong, we know it to be wrong. As we determine to forget our wrong, we know it is wrong. The conscience is there to keep reminding us that we have done wrong. It will not go away and it will continue to return from time to time until we correct our problem.

Is there a difference between the sin of the lost and the Christians sin? Sin is sin no matter who it is that is doing it. Sin is missing the mark that was set by God. The sin of the believer may well hurt the Lord more, in that it is His own child that has gone against Him. It may be similar to my own child disobeying as compared to my neighbors child disobeying. My own child's conduct is more important. God is injured by the sin of the lost, in that His creatures are going against Him.

Christ's work on the cross is the only remedy to any sin, be it the sin of the lost, or the sin of the believer. This work was done one time in the past. We do not have to re-kill Him for each sin. He died and offered His blood in the heavenly tabernacle once and for all. His death on the cross was to care for all sin both past, present and future.

Sin severs our fellowship with the Lord. This fellowship can only be restored by confession. I John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

God will forgive, based on our confession. Confession, however implies two things. First, that you agree with God's evaluation of the act being sin, and secondly, that you will attempt to not fall into that sin again.

We also need to know that before we seek forgiveness, we must have forgiven others of their wrongs to us. Mark 11:25-26 (Matt 6:14-15 also) shows that there is a link between the Father's forgiveness and our forgiveness of others. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have anything against any, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father, who is in heaven, forgive your trespasses." Indeed, the context of I John indicates that our fellowship with the Father is directly related to our seeking forgiveness.

We need to recognize also that confessing is not just lightly admitting that you did it, but that you

have God's feeling of disgust over that sin.

The blood of Christ is not applied to the sin until after the forgiveness is sought. This is only logical. If it were applied automatically, we would have no need to go before the Lord with our confessions.

Now, in light of all we know about the sin nature and sin itself, how do we approach a lost person, in an attempt to lead them to salvation? What do we tell them to do? Do we say that they need to ask forgiveness for their sins? Do we say that they need to ask that God would take away their sin nature? Do we say that they need to stop sinning?

Just what is the Gospel that we need to share? Let me share a few points that seem to be consistent with what we have learned thus far. They should know that:

1. They are by nature, and by walk, a sinner.

2. They are by nature unable to correct their problem.

3. They are dependant on Jesus Christ as the only possible solution to their situation.

4. They must believe that He was God, that He died for their sin (singular), and that He was buried and raised from the dead.

5. If they believe that, and accept his work for their sin, they will be saved. This is similar to the Old Testament saint that brought a sacrifice and gave it to the priest to be killed. The priest would place it on the alter and the saint would place his hand on the head of the sacrifice to signify that the animal had to die because of his sin.

Forgiveness is part of salvation, as well as part of the Christian walk. It is not salvation however. Forgiveness for the lost is a step in the process of salvation. The lost person can never receive forgiveness for their past personal sin until they are regenerated.

In our Christian life, we must seek forgiveness any time we sin. If we sin a dozen times, then we should seek forgiveness a dozen times. Some ask forgiveness once a day, in which they lump them all together. This does not seem to be the proper way. When we sin, we automatically take control of ourselves. The Spirit no longer controls our lives. If we sin, and sin, and sin, then we are not walking with the Lord. To live properly, we should restore fellowship as soon as possible.

Since we know the Devil and his ways lead to sin, and that Godly ways lead to a Spirit filled life, why do we choose to sin?

There are two reasons. First of all the Devil, at times can confuse the issues at the cross over

point between good and evil. We like to call these gray areas. It usually is the Devil that made them gray. We might in this case sin, due to improper knowledge.

The usual reason we sin is the fact that we decide to sin to fulfill our own lusts.

The devil has devised many tools for man to use in this STRUGGLE between evil and good. Let's look at some of these tools briefly.

Rationalization: It won't hurt just this once. A little social drink can't hurt. One time with that other woman won't hurt. (You know, two consenting adults etc.)

Gray Areas: Well the Bible really isn't clear on this. This is a disputed area - no one knows. I disagree with Paul the apostle on this one.

Desire: God gave me these desires so they must be okay. Desire is natural so why not follow them.

Service to God: I will make money to give to missions. I will serve Him next year. I will serve Him when I retire.

God has a given expectation, for the believer and the believers life. That expectation can be maintained, otherwise God would be unjust to give it to us. He has given us all the help that we need to live up to that expectation. That help is the Holy Spirit. As we allow the Spirit to control our lives and our decisions we will walk along the expected courses. When we deviate from the Spirit's leading and prompting then we deviate from the expectations that the Lord has set.

I Jn. 5:4 tells us, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (is born = perfect, passive; overcometh = present, active, indicative. The being born was something that is past and continuing into the future to a point of conclusion. The one that is born of God continually overcomes the world on a daily basis.

SO, THEN, OUR SALVATION FAITH GIVES US VICTORY TO OVERCOME THE WORLD IN OUR CONTINUING DAY TO DAY BASIS! Think on that one for a time.

God does not attempt to keep the believer from the Devil's work, but He does give us all that is needed to continually walk in the control of the Spirit. Job is a good example of the exposing of the believer to the testings of Satan.

He will however totally isolate us from the Devil and all evil, in that day when He removes us from this life for life in His presence.

God may allow the Devil access to our lives, but He will never allow him to overcome us. In I Jn

4:4 John is speaking of the false spirit's that the believer will be confronted with. He mentions, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." The Holy Spirit within is greater than the Devil that is without!

James tells us to resist the Devil. What does that mean? (James 4:7 "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.") Notice that one little ittey bittey prerequisite! SUBMIT YOURSELVES THEREFORE TO GOD.

How do we resist the Devil?

a. SAY NO!

b. Be prepared with knowledge of what is sin, and what is not sin so that you can make your decisions quickly when tempted, and walk away from those things that are sin. Don't hang around trying to figure out whether it is sin or not. If you aren't sure don't do it, and work it out in your mind later when you aren't being confronted.

c. Avoid situations that could lead to problems, or that could lead you into a situation in which you would be forced to make a decision for or against.

d. Maintain your walk with the Lord at the highest, and best level that you can.

There is no reason for there to be sin in the life of the believer! We have the Word to guide our path. We have the Holy Spirit to lead and guide our path. When we blow it, we have Christ interceding before the Lord to be sure that forgiveness of our boo-boo's is forthcoming.

I would like to consider I Jn 1:7 for a few moments. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

It might be suggested from this verse by itself that if we walk with the Lord we are automatically cleansed by the blood of Christ. You need to take this verse within the context of verse nine. As we confess the blood is applied, not automatically!

Chafer lists seven losses when the believer sins. I would like to mention these for your thought.

1. Loss of light. We cannot receive guidance from the Spirit nor from the Word when we have sin in our lives.

2. Loss of joy. Again due to sin, the Spirit is quenched and one of His fruit is joy.

3. Loss of fellowship. This is clear from I Jn. 1:6, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."

4. Loss of closeness: The closeness that we have to God in our personal lives and quiet times.

5. Loss of peace. Again a fruit of the Spirit. Indeed, when you know what peace with God is - when you loose it you are miserable.

6. Loss of confidence. Your prayer life may suffer - lack of faith etc. You may even lack confidence to go on with your everyday life. If you rely on the Lord heavily in the daily walk then when you don't have Him to lean on, you may become very unsure.

7. Loss of confidence. In the area of His coming was Chafer's thought but it may also relate to security of the believer as well.

Needless to say, when we sin we loose fellowship, and when we loose fellowship, we loose.

Confession is for correcting things with God. However, if the sin affected others, you must correct things with them as well. Indeed, the correction with others must be a part of correction with God. Confession of your wrong and seeking of forgiveness from others that your sin has affected is necessary. (Col. 3:13, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Eph. 4:32, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for christ's sake hath forgiven you.")

I SAID NECESSARY - NOT PLEASANT!

We need to be sure we realize that sin only breaks fellowship and communion with God. It can never, under any circumstance break our Father/son relationship!

When we sin there is further action taken in relation to the confession of sin and the forgiveness of I Jn. 1:9. I Jn. 2:1 mentions, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Just when is the Lord our advocate, before we confess or after we confess? The terminology of advocate would indicate that He stands up for us. When we sin there is an accusation so to speak, and this is followed by our defense. We confess and plead guilty - throw ourselves to the mercy of the court. Christ then steps in to plead our case. Forgiveness is forthcoming for the Father views the Lord's righteousness, and not our filthiness.

Chafer observes four things about the sin of the believer (on page 345). I would like to list these quickly for your contemplation: 1. The sin of the believer is as evil as the sin of the lost. 2. The sin of the believer is against a greater light than the lost's. 3. The sin of the believer is worse in that we do not have the world, the flesh and the devil to fight against. 4. The believer has the Holy Spirit, the Word and the Advocate to aid him in his sin problems.

APPLICATION:

1. As we consider our personal sin: a. Our sin hurts God immediately. b. Our sin immediately breaks proper fellowship. c. Our sin immediately places God in a bad light. d. Our sin immediately places Satan in a good light. e. Our sin immediately affects our testimony before man. SO, WHY DO WE SIN SO MUCH?

When we resist sin: a. Satan is put down - he is the loser. b. In the great spiritual arena, when you say NO Satan looses face! SO, WHY DON'T WE RESIST MORE?

QUITE A THOUGHT TO SAY THE LEAST!

THE REAL CLINCHER IN THIS IS THAT WE CAN CHOOSE TO OFFEND GOD TO WHOM WE OWE SO MUCH - OR - WE CAN PUT DOWN SATAN, THE ENEMY OF GOD, TO WHOM WE OWE NOTHING!

WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD WE WANT TO KNOWINGLY SIN?

It has to be a conscious decision to do what we want to do, when we know that God has specified that we are not do it.

WE SIN FOLKS, BECAUSE WE WANT TO!

WE OUGHT NOT SIN, BECAUSE WE WANT TO!

04700

PUNISHMENT

We have studied the Lord and His Word, we have studied sin, and we will soon move on to the great thoughts of salvation, but we need to look briefly at the intermediate topic of punishment.

Punishment comes in several fashions which we need to look at. The lost will receive a completely different punishment than the believer that has strayed. The believer, in this life, may even find himself under the punishing hand of his Heavenly father.

We want to think about trials and chastisements. Just what are trials, what are chastisements? Trials are for the building up of the believer and the stretching of his spiritual being. It is the positive side of the negatives of life.

Chastisement on the other hand is for the bringing back of the believer to his Lord, after a period

of sin and rebellion. It is not meant as punishment, though there is a punitive aspect to it. It is meant to draw their attention from their own desires unto the desires of their Lord.

God chooses to chastise, rather than allow the believer continue to go his own way to the detriment of the believer, or of the believers testimony.

What about the person that is living in open sin yet is not chastised. Indeed, at times it seems that the person is being blessed of the Lord. How do you explain God allowing a person to continue in rebellion against Him, to continue walking in sin, and to continue to ruin the testimony of God?

We knew of a man that drank fairly regularly and was very close to criminal in his business life. He was making money, he was building his business, he was making all sorts of progress in the world's eyes. He had seen his business triple in less than a year, yet there was no sign of outward chastisement. Why does God allow this to continue?

There are three reasons that come to mind in this case. Possibly I don't know everything. Maybe there was inner chastisement. Maybe there were serious problems inwardly. Secondly, it is possible that he was not a believer. Heb. 12 is quite specific that God will chastise a son. If there is no chastisement then there may well not be sonship. Then the final possibility is that God was using the man in some way to prove His own case to the principalities and powers of the air. God may do as He wills with His people, and He is not required to do as we feel He should.

God is in the business of doing what He desires to bring about His own glory, and to put down the Devil's pride. He has limitless possibilities, when it comes to allowing, shaping, and molding in the believers life.

I always believed that this man was a believer, and still do. What God was doing in his life is for God and the man to know. It is our place in life to pray for such people, and to assist them in any way that we can. We must assume that they are believers, and continue to assist as if they would some day return to a proper lifestyle. This does not mean that we shouldn't prod them to consider their salvations validity, nor should we become involved in their sin, and/or business practices.

Chastisement is not something that the believer should fear, after sinning. God does not use chastisement to beat us over the head; He uses several other items, much less painful, to draw us back to Him when we stray. Chastisement is the next to last tool in His methods with the erring believer. (Taking the believer home is the final tool.)

When He has exhausted all the other possibilities, He will move on to chastisement. Before this he uses any or all of the following methods of drawing the believer back, the Word, the leading of the Holy Spirit, the prompting of other believers, the small trials of life, and the conscience.

If all of these fail, then He may move on to the harsher, yet loving, chastisement. There may be times when the sin is so outward and damaging to the testimony of the person or God, that God might use more drastic action, yet He always uses any tool, in a perfectly loving manner, for the best of the believer.

Once the chastisement has begun, it is normally quite easy to stop. Confession at any point in this line of reformation will stop the course of things. The believer should realize, however that the effects of that chastisement may flow into the future.

The believer that is walking closely with the Lord will know the moment that he sins that there is a problem, and will immediately confess, before the Lord has to take any steps.

Chafer makes the following comment: "Discipline in one form or another is the universal experience of all who are saved; even the fruit-bearing branch is pruned that it may bear more fruit (John 15:2). The testimony of the central passage of the Bible on chastisement (Heb. 12:4-15) is to the effect that every son is disciplined." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, p 361)

Chafer equates the pruning with chastisement, which may not be a valid point. Pruning, may be chastisement, but may also be other things.

If we don't want to worry about what tool the Lord is going to use on us, we should merely be faithful to confess our sins. He then will not need to use any tool on us. Remember when you were a child? You found that if your father spanked, you soon learned what not to do. So, God teaches His children. God on the other hand has given us the Word and the Spirit to guide us into proper living, so we should never need to learn of God's chastisement.

Chafer mentions that Heb. 12:4-15 teaches that ALL believers experience chastisement. Does Heb. 12:4-15 teach that discipline in one form or another is the UNIVERSAL experience of ALL who are saved? I personally do not believe that it does. THAT ALL SUFFER CHASTISEMENT IS PROBABLY TRUE IN THAT WE ALL TEND TO GO OUR OWN WAY AT TIMES. THAT ALL SUFFER CHASTISEMENT DUE TO A PLAN OF GOD IN THE BEGINNING FOR THE TEACHING AND TRAINING OF THE SAINTS, NO!

A reading of the text will, I believe, show that as we had earthly fathers that chastened, so we have a Heavenly Father that chastens. The fact that we all have sinned now and then would show that we all are chastened. It is because we sinned and not because God planned to chasten everyone that came into His family.

Remember Heb. 12:4-15, for it is important to the doctrine of God chastening the believer, and it also lays groundwork for the earthly father's discipline of the child.

Chafer mentions, "It is reasonably concluded that scourging refers to the conquering of the will

and results in a surrendered life." (Chafer, "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, p 361)

In the believers life, this is probably true. In the life of a child, in recent years this has come to be questioned. In past years there were few parents that would disagree with Chafer's statement.

Today there are those that say you must not conquer the will. The strong willed child will go far in this life because of his strength. Indeed, I have observed children that have been raised with this line of thinking.

Is it proper? Their children are very blunt in their disobedience. They will ultimately submit if the parent pressures, but they will defiantly say no several times before they do.

The will needs to be broken, but not the spirit. There is a difference. If the will is not broken in childhood, then God will have to deal with it in adulthood, and it will normally be much harder.

When I speak of breaking the will, I mean that you must break the "I will" attitude and bring them to understand the authority of the family and society.

There are two terms that are used. Scourging and chastisement. The question arises, is there a difference between scourging and chastisement in Heb. 12?

I think that they are similar. Chastisement would be any discipline that is brought to bear on the believer. Scourging would be harsh chastisement aimed at gaining the believers attention after he has ignored the chastisement.

Vine relates chastise to being "paideia" which "denotes the training of a child including instruction; hence, discipline, correction..." He mentions that "mastigoo" is similar to "mastix" which is "a whip, scourge, ... as in the Roman method...." He mentions earlier of the Roman method, "Under the Roman method of scourging, the person was stripped and tied in a bending posture to a pillar, or stretched on a frame. The scourge was made of leathern thongs, weighted with sharp pieces of bone or lead, which tore the flesh...."

There is another term which you may run across. It is not a Scriptural term, yet it describes well the plight of the lost. Retribution is used of the lost and their eternal punishment. What is retribution? It relates to the giving out of punishment after guilt has been proven. It usually relates to eternal judgment. In relation to the lost it is the dispensing of punishment as they deserve.

All forms of trials, chastisement, etc. are used to bring about proper living. There is always an instructional value to the process with the believer.

There is, however, no instructional value in the giving of retribution to the lost, unless their final kneeling before Christ in acknowledgement. This indeed will be a heavy lesson.

There is no instruction at the giving of retribution to the saved, unless it is their final realization of whom and what God is. Again this will be some heavy learning.

Rom. 12:19 tells us, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves but, rather, give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." There is application in this for both the lost and believers.

a. The believer has the peace of knowing that God has promised to repay wrong actions of others toward them.

b. The lost have the horror of knowing that this is coming.

We as believers should realize that when some lost person buffets us, it is not the believer that is being downed, but it is the Lord! Realize that when you are buffeted, the person will answer to Almighty God.

I was doing door to door visitation once and a man came to the door. I told him who I was and that I was just going door to door in the neighborhood to invite folks to church. His mouth opened and the cloud of nastiness billowed forth. As I left, I was shocked at his response, but more than that, I was concerned about that man. He will have to answer to God for his actions.

Since we know that God is just, then we can know that the punishment will be completely just and correct.

Chafer draws an interesting contrast for us in that he mentions that God's chastisement is a show of God's Divine Love, while God's judgment is a show of God's Divine Wrath.

Guess which I'm glad I'm going to be on the receiving end of?

The question that often comes when you are witnessing to some of the cults and isms of our day is the eternal nature of man. How do the cults view man and eternity?

There are some that hold to the total destruction of the lost. Others see the lost as asleep now for a time, and then they will be destroyed. Some, when describing their belief state that at the point of death, the person becomes non-existant. Think about that for a moment. If you become something, can you be nonexistent? NO!

We hold that the lost person, as well as the saved person, at death are conscious beings and always will be. The quality of life will however differ drastically.

How can we prove that those holding to "soul sleep" and total destruction are incorrect? a. Luke 16:19-31 shows the rich man and Lazarus in Sheol, one on the side of torment, and the other on the side of God. Both were conscious of their surroundings, as well as one another. b. Logically

why would God put the lost to sleep till the judgment and then torment, or destroy them. It makes no sense. c. The Scriptures never speak of soul sleep, or the total destruction of the lost. Why would anyone assume it?

The lost are going to be just as eternal as we are! They just won't be comfortable.

With all of the emphasis on the love of God, we have tended to shy away from talking about hell. Some wonder why God would ever describe in His Word, the terrors of Hell? It is obvious to many, to give people a proper choice of heaven and hell. The prophets gave God's message of destruction and the purpose was that God was hoping that some would turn from their sin, but they did not.

Hell is described quite well in the scripture. It may well be that God doesn't want anyone telling Him that they would have accepted the Lord if they had known how bad it would be.

Another heresy of our day concerns a place where God purifies the lost in preparation for their time in heaven. The Mormons teach that if you don't accept their teaching here that you will be given a second chance after death. The problem is that you will have to be purified for a while in hell until you are ready for heaven.

The Catholics also have their thought except they call it purgatory. They feel that if a church member is not good enough at death they will go to purgatory for purification. Your relatives can pray and pay you out of purgatory if they desire to. The one big question is, how much paying and praying will it take. You never know if you've done enough.

Is punishment remedial? It depends on what you are talking about. When punishing a child it is quite remedial. You will find that they respond quite well to punishment. Our daughter told us that she had said no-no to an item. Our granddaughter touched it and received a swat with the second no-no. The "little angel" touched it again, and before her mother could do anything, the angel was squinting her eyes and bracing for the swat that she knew she was going to receive. Remember the will we were talking about?

If you are talking about the believer, yes punishment is remedial, in that the chastisement is to bring the believer into a proper relationship with his God.

If you are talking about the criminal, yes there is a remedial aspect to punishment. Not only in the one punished, but in those that hear of his punishment. There is one country that has the death penalty for anyone caught with drugs. Would you believe they have no drug problem in that country?

If you are talking about punishment of the lost, then no, punishment is not remedial. Their punishment is set and eternal.

One further question that we need to deal with. If a person has not heard the Gospel will they be in heaven? Some believe that the lost are lost, because they have rejected the Gospel, however if they have never heard the Gospel, then they are not held responsible. Others say that all are lost, no matter whether they have heard the Gospel and rejected, or if they have never heard.

What is the answer? Are they lost or saved? First of all, if they are saved, then why worry about going to them with the Gospel. The great commission is a foolish thing for Christ to have given. Secondly, Rom. 1-2 shows that God has given light to all of mankind concerning Himself. If a person responds to that light then God will see to it that the Gospel is preached to that person before they die. God could not be just if He withheld the Gospel from anyone that was seriously seeking the creator.

All are responsible to respond to the light that they have. If they don't respond, then God has no reason, nor responsibility to save them.

Well, maybe just one more question. There usually is a question that comes up in relation to punishment. I would like to list some comments on the subject of babies that die. Some believe that they go immediately to be with the Lord as all dead saints, and others feel that they go immediately to the place of eternal suffering. I think that this subject was covered in a previous study, but I will include some thoughts here as well.

I will not answer this question for all readers, but would like to list some information and texts that might allow you to do further study.

A related question is the mentally retarded, or physically deformed, which do not acquire the mental capability of understanding the Gospel message. Those that cannot understand would be the same as a baby that died in infancy. Those that can understand, and that can make conscious decisions, will be held accountable, as every other man woman and child that understands the message and rejects it. On the other hand, if they accept the Gospel, they will enjoy the Lord for all of eternity.

II Sam. 12:16-23 is the key passage of Scripture that relates to our question. It depicts David in the context of losing his son to death. Verse 23 mentions, "But now he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

This is a very plain and bold statement of David's belief that his child was in paradise.

Job in chapter three laments the fact that he was even born. (11-13) "Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not expire when I came out of my mother's body? For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest." This indicates his belief that death as a new born baby would have put him at rest eternally.

Those that believe that babies go to punishment normally set forth the fact that all men have the

sin nature, and that all sinned in Adam. If that is true then the only way to heaven is the Lord Jesus, however the question is this. Did Christ die for the sin of the world, including the sin nature? Yes. He did all that was required to bring man to God. The work is done. Those that reject Christ, reject His work on the cross and suffer eternally for their rejection. Those that accept are eternally with Him. The child that has not been given opportunity to say ye, or nay would automatically be included in the work of Christ.

The opposition would say of this then that the heathen are automatically saved. NO! They have rejected the natural revelation of God in nature and in them. They have rejected and are on their way to eternal torment. Their children that have not reached accountability, or possibly a better term would be the age of understandability, will be with the Lord.

Scripture text? Only those that have been given. I have known good, fundamental men that oppose my thought, but many others that agree. Study it for yourself.

We might close with the thought that God is Just - perfectly just. He will not send a baby to heaven if it is not just, nor will He send a baby to hell if it is not just. He will do as His justice demands, no matter what we decide on the subject.

This should be a comfort to those that loose a child, or that have a badly retarded child. God is the God of comfort and He can help anyone through these situations.

Some references that may help: II Cor. 1:3; Luke 18:16; Romans 8:28; I Thess. 4:13, 16, 17.

In a situation where some parent is in one of these situations, it would be best to just comfort them without bringing up the subject. If they ask, then give them the information that you have. The key, however is the comfort that they need.

APPLICATION:

1. If I believed that God does chastise, why in the world would I continue in sin? If I believed that chastisement turns into scourging, why in the world would I continue in sin? Both are beyond me! Yet, some do it!

I have a very dear Christian acquaintance that related to me that as a young man he had a good business and God started leading him away from that business to go north to work as a layperson in a church. He said no many times to the Lord's promptings. He was on his death bed with pneumonia when he finally decided that the Lord was serious.

He said, yes and went north. He said his job over the years payed better than his business could ever have paid, and that his health was better as well. He was able to retire and spend many years enjoying his life and family due to that simple yes to God's prompting.

2. If we really believe Heb. 12, and what it indicates about chastisement, we would certainly be moved to care for our own physical children in the same manner that our Heavenly Father cares for us. We should seek to break the self will of the child before the Lord has to do it in adult life, when the chastisement will be hard.

3. What do you know of hell? Let me just list some of the topics concerning eternal punishment for the lost.

Darkness: Matt 8:12; Ps. 49:19
Bound: Matt. 22:13
Memory: Luke 16
Conscience
Lust and Desire: Rev. 22:11
No hope: Isa 38:18; Prov. 11:7
Fire: Jude seven; Matt. 5:22; Mk. 9:44
Companions: Rev. 21:8; 22:15
Fear:
Isolation: Jude 13
Pain:

The Bible tells us that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" Rom. 3:23. The lost are sinners and deserve the very best that Satan has to offer, and that is, his eternal repose, that is his eternal dwelling place, that is his eternal destination, that is the eternal burning fire of hell.

The sinner is lost and on his way to hell and nothing can stop that decent into the place prepared for him lest he call on the merciful name of Jesus Christ.

Your choice is heaven or hell.
Your choice is eternal delight or eternal agony.
Your choice is eternal life or eternal death.
Your choice is the refreshing waters of the river of life or the flames of hell.

Your choice is eternity with the Father or eternity with the father of lies.

Your choice is eternal light or eternal darkness.

Your choice is eternal comfort or eternal suffering.
Your choice is eternal joy or eternal sorrow.

Your choice is a glorified body or a tormented body.

Your choice is eternal fellowship with Christ or eternal fallowship with Satan.

Your choice is accept Jesus Christ as your Savior or accept the consequences of following the devil into the lake of fire.

That is if you call that a choice.

To me the choice is obvious to the most casual observer.

To put it as one flippant observer of the Gospel has put it, "It's turn or burn."

04750

TRIUMPH OVER SIN

We need to realize that evil is not eternal. It did not exist in eternity past however it is everlasting. It will exist into eternity future. It is important to know that the evil in the future, exists only in the lake of fire. Once Christ finishes the judgments, all evil will be isolated with the Devil and his, in the Lake of Fire. (Rev. 20:10, Rev. 20:14)

All evil will be eradicated from God's domain, one way or another as the eternal state is instituted!

Will all evil be confined in the Lake of fire? This is a philosophical question. The evil will be confined, that is the people and fallen angels however one might ponder whether they will be able to do further evil in their confines. I suspect, that outward acts of evil will be missing. Hell has the idea of silence and binding. This would make all but mental evil impossible. If the torment is as bad as I suspect it will be, then it is probable that they will not think of evil, but of their pain and torment.

Indeed, Luke 16:19 ff indicates that the lost have very good thoughts. The rich man was concerned with his brothers. It may be as they bow before the Lord in submission that the priority straightening will be permanent.

Reason would require that a righteous God would put a limit to the progression and lasting of evil. He must stop it at some point in time. Indeed, the lake of fire and all it means may well be His method of putting a final stop to all evil. He binds it forever.

A brief overview of the resurrections would be good at this point. The Lord took the Old Testament saints out of Abraham's bosom when He ascended to heaven. The New Testament saints will be taken at the Rapture. The Old Testament saints are resurrected at the beginning of the Millennium. Where they are at present is not clear. The thought of "present with the Lord" is

clear in Scripture however they are not in Sheol. The thought seems to be that they are raised in the end time, so there may be a place for them in the earth in some manner. My personal opinion would place them with the New Testament saints, in the Lord's presence. The lost of all ages will be raised at the end of the Millennial kingdom for the Great White Throne judgment. The saved will spend eternity with Christ, and the lost will spend eternity in the lake of fire with the Devil.

The raising of Lazarus was not a resurrection as such, for he had to go through death twice. The final resurrections are for all eternity.

1. Christ's own resurrection was the first resurrection unto eternal everlasting life. He is the example of our own coming resurrection.

2. The resurrection of the saints at the rapture for the joining in the air.

3. The resurrection of the righteous Jews at the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the millennium. They will be a part of the fulfillment of all the promises of the Old Testament.

4. The resurrection of the lost. Rev. 20:12-13, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hades delivered up the dead that were in them...."

Some feel that it is possible for some righteous from the Millennium to be raised at this judgment. They were killed in the Millennium. Whether any righteous die in the Millennium is the question. If there are, then those believers will be raised either in a separate resurrection, or at the raising of the dead. I question there being a resurrection that we aren't told of however.

Some suggest that Jn. 5:25-29 speaks of one general resurrection for all the dead. It is not viewing number, but the fact of all being raised. Other scriptures show that there are more than one resurrection.

The final enemy is death. I Cor. 15:26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." How can a believer use that verse in his own life, or in the life of others?

This may relate to the fact that believers may not die in a bed of roses. You may find some that hang onto life tenaciously and struggle to continue living right up to the last moment, and with their dieing breath desire to live. Others may die with a smile on their face, looking forward to seeing the Lord.

Death is an enemy. It need not be for the believer. If the believer finds his purpose in Christ then he may well go to see Him very peacefully. On the other hand if a person has not found that

peace, and if a person has much to do for his Lord, there may be a real dread of dieing. I've on the other hand seen people that were probably lost, die in relative peace.

Death is an enemy and we need to realize it and not condemn believers, if they don't have the peace at death that we think that they should.

What is the purpose of the end times, the resurrections and the whole end times agenda? I Cor. 15:28, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." It is to give God the preeminence in all things!

Chafer mentions four dwelling places to be found in Rev. 20:11 through 22:7. The new heaven, The new Jerusalem or heavenly city, The new earth, The place known as "without". He goes into some detail concerning these three abodes of the believer. A good study is to be found in each of the four.

He mentions that there seems to be a freedom to travel from one to the other in the first three, however those dwelling without, are limited to that sphere of dwelling. In your spare time you might like to dwell on the following text and let me know what you find. I have not studied it as yet, but it has some very interesting possibilities for truth which I have never heard before (Isa 66:22-24).

The new city is evidently that city which Abraham looked for in Heb. 11:10,16. Thus we must assume that Israel is involved in this city. It is called the bride and the lamb's wife so the church will be involved in it as well.

There is a discussion about whether this city is ever placed upon the earth, or whether it may be a satellite city. In other words does it hover over the surface of the earth. Since it is never mentioned that it is placed upon the earth it is quite possible that it is hovering, or more exactly "PLACED" above the surface of the earth. It really makes little difference that I can see, other than we want to be as Scriptural as possible.

On the other hand the earth was promised to Israel not the church. It is possible that the city is basically for the church and the earth is basically for Israel. Why, I don't have the foggiest. The problem with this is that Israel's tribes are upon the gates of the city.

I'm not sure there would be a distinction since eternity is prepared for all of us. I would assume that the city is the dwelling place that Christ went to prepare for us. I would not be hurt if my next door neighbor was a Jew. I rather suspect that the city is for dwelling and the earth is for enjoying, but that is doctrine of Derickson.

The lighting system will be of the latest possible design, or should I say of the oldest possible design. It is the Glory of the Lord. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to

shine in it; for the glory of God did light it, and the Lamb is the lamp of it." Rev 21:23

Indeed, the glories of the new state will be quite extreme. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isa 65:17) That's something to think about! We won't remember the ocean beaches, the mountains, the bluffs of Wyoming, the glories of Montana, The hills of South Dakota, nor the desolateness of Nebraska! (I was born and raised in Nebraska so I can say that. It isn't altogether true, anyway.)

We see in Rev 21:1-4 that God is dwelling with man and that there will be no more tears, death, sorrow, crying, pain or former things. This is not to say that before God eliminates those things that He won't confront believers with things that will draw much pain and sorrow, things from their lives that were remiss in their serving Him completely. I would relate this to unconfessed sin. We will not be held accountable, yet we may well be shown what we could have done for God had we followed Him in all that He desired.

Rom. 11:33, 36 state, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

AMEN! What a fitting end to our study of our sin as man.

Possibly a contrast would make things even more pointed.

THE TRIUMPH OF GOD OVER SIN AND EVIL

THE PLUS SIDE OF TRIUMPH	THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF TRIUMPH
THE HEAVENS RESTORED	SATAN IN LAKE OF FIRE
THE EARTH RESTORED	DEATH IN LAKE OF FIRE
CHRIST SEATED WITH GOD	THE LOST IN LAKE OF FIRE
NATURE AT REST	THE FALLEN ANGELS IN TORMENT
THE RIGHTEOUS WITH GOD	THE FALSE PROPHET IN TORMENT
NEW JERUSALEM IN PLACE	THE BEAST IN TORMENT
NO EVIL, CRYING OR PAIN	ETERNAL TORMENT
ETERNAL JOY	NO PEACE
ETERNAL PEACE	NO HOPE

SOTERIOLOGY

04800

INTRODUCTION TO SOTERIOLOGY

Soteriology comes from the Greek term "soterion" meaning salvation and "logia" meaning study. A study of salvation.

The meaning of salvation communicates the following ideas in Scripture: deliverance, safety, preservation, soundness, restoration, and healing. It is in a general sense a work on the behalf of man, by His creator. In specific, we are talking about that act or work of God that restores full and inseparable fellowship between God and man.

We will be covering the doctrine of Salvation by topics. The topics will be covered in the following order: conviction, repentance, faith, forgiveness, regeneration, propitiation, redemption, reconciliation, sanctification, justification, security, fore-knowledge/predestination/election, Calvinism vs. Armenianism, atonement, and glorification.

I heard an interview of three women healers years ago. One of them was Ruth Carter Stapleton. The host of the talk show asked her what it meant to be born again. She related that it could be many things. It could be one thing for a Roman Catholic, and something else for another person. She mentioned that it could happen when you saw a beautiful painting. She called it a religious awareness. Several questions sprang into my mind after hearing her definition of being born again.

Is there a difference between being born again and religious awareness? Can you be born again in more that one way? Does knowing you've had a religious experience get you to heaven?

On the tape is a woman that was in the hospital and she picked up her Bible and opened it. She opened to two pages that were completely blank. On those pages God literally wrote with Jesus Blood the words "I love you."

Is it any wonder why some pastors preach against the Charismatic movement? Personally, I wonder why more pastors don't.

I trust salvation and being born again mean more to you than seeing a beautiful painting.

In salvation two thoughts come to mind. Chafer puts it this way, "on the one hand, to be saved is to be rescued from a lost estate, while, on the other hand, to be saved is to be brought into a saved estate, vitally renewed, and made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, p 5)

Let us look at salvation as a whole and see where it has been as well as where it is going.

Salvation is from eternal hell: Jn 3:16 All of mankind is under the penalty of death, and eternal torment. This is true no matter how hard the liberal theologians deny it. It is a sentence that is set, and it is a sentence that is to be carried out.

Some tell us not to talk about hell, because we do not want to scare people into heaven. Personally if they have a genuine salvation experience, what does it matter if they listened out of fear, or even terror. It is the Gospel message that must be given, and it is hell that is a part of the message. Christ spoke of eternal torment a number of times in His own ministry.

Salvation is for God's purpose: Eph. 2:7 "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Naturally man is the recipient of all this, yet God did it because He desired it - not because we conned Him into it. We surely benefit from His grace and His riches, but grace and riches are only a by-product of His overall program - bringing glory to Himself.

Salvation is free and not attainable by works: Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."; Eph. 2:8-10

Salvation, the most important, the most beautiful, the most valuable thing that man might gain. It is free, it is without strings, and it is a gift from our Creator.

Many there are through the centuries that have tried to work for salvation, to fight for salvation and to gain salvation, yet it is there for the asking.

Salvation is a past, present and future condition in two ways:

1. THE PHYSICAL REALM: It is offered in the Old Testament economies, it is offered in the New Testament economy, and it will be offered in the future millennial economy. It was available to all of mankind in the past, it is available to all of mankind in this present time, and it will be available to all of mankind in the future days. It will be offered until the consummation of the age.

2. THE SPIRITUAL REALM: On an individual basis it is past, due to the election of God. It is present in that the saint is being saved from eternal damnation. It will be a completed work in the future.

We are beings in transition in this life. We are saved in God's mind at this moment in time, yet we are not yet completely and finally saved until we are present before Him in our glorified bodies.

APPLICATION:

1. God has always been in the saving business and will remain in that business until all is complete.

2. None that should be saved will be left, for God will not cut off the program before someone gets there.

Might I share a personal belief with you. I think that it is a valid application of an Old Testament account. The people who owned and occupied the land of Israel, before the Israelites conquered them, were a vile people. God gave them the forty years that Israel wondered in the wilderness to turn to Him. He was longsuffering with them. He gave them extra time, just in case they might change. This gave them many years to turn to God yet they did nothing. There would have been grace for them just as there will be grace for any that want to respond to him today!

The solemn point is this; at some point in time the Lord will cut off His offer of salvation. He will swing into the completion of His program for this earth and it's people, closing the door to salvation.

In closing, just remember that salvation was God's idea. He did a fine job of putting together His plan in eternity past, even though man attempts to change that plan from time to time by denying God's part in it, or by denying that man needs the plan.

We need the plan, and it is free!

04850

CONVICTION

Conviction comes in two types. The lost experience conviction when the Lord is drawing them unto Himself. The believer experiences conviction when the Lord is drawing them unto Him. The difference is that the lost benefits, when he responds, by receiving salvation, while the believer regains fellowship with the Lord.

What is it like to be under conviction as a lost person? A man I ministered with in Denver, CO years ago told me of his talk with his father, when the father was on his death bed. The man had witnessed to his dad many times, but to no avail. The father told his son just before he died that he knew that the Gospel was what he needed. He knew that his son was right in what he was telling him. With tears in his eyes, he said, "But I just can't accept Jesus." The man knew his sin, he knew that Christ was his answer, yet even when facing death, he refused the peace of salvation.

Others when faced with their conviction, fall before the throne of grace accepting the work of Christ on their behalf.

The moments before a person accepts the Lord vary from person to person. Some are very emotional. They have lived so long under sins' domination, that they are elated when they find there is a way of freedom. Others that have lived a fairly decent life, may just move through the acceptance of the Gospel with no real emotional moving.

What is it like to be under conviction as a saved person that has sin in his, or her life? What is it like when God is leading a person into something and the person refuses to move ahead?

Again, different people react and feel differently however there are a few common items that we might mention. There will quite often be a sense that the Lord is far away. If there have been chastisements, then the person knows that God is dealing with them. There may be a feeling of dread of what might come next. There may also be a very severe loneliness, spiritually.

I will share one brief illustration. I was raised in a Christian Church, and was baptized many years before I was saved. As I was learning things in Bible College, I came to the place where I knew that I should be baptized as a believer. Being a very shy person, I did not want to go through all that. As time went by, I was very definitely aware of my disobedience. The finances went to pot, work was not going well, the family was not doing well, and all because I was saying no. Conviction is powerful!

DEFINITION:

"In evangelical PROTESTANTISM, attainment of a sense of sin and a need of salvation through the work of the HOLY SPIRIT." (Kauffman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967)

Do you like his thought, that it is an attainment? I think that this may be a misnomer. It is not something that is sought after in any case that I can remember. It is something that is brought upon a person not something that one might attain. Kaufman is correct however in the thought that it is a "sense of sin and a need of salvation." He is also correct to attribute this ministry to the Holy Spirit.

"To convict, confute, refute, usually with the suggestion of putting the convicted person to shame;" (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co, p 239)

"CONVICT, kon-vikt', CONVICTION, kon-vik'-shun....It always implies the presentation of evidence. It is a decision presumed to be based upon a careful and discriminating consideration of all the proofs offered, and has a legal character, the verdict being rendered either in God's judgment (Rom. 3 19) [think I disagree on this ref.] or before men (Jn. 8 46) by an appeal to their consciences in which God's law is written (Rom. 2 15). Since such conviction is addressed to the heart of the guilty, as well as concerning him externally, the word "reprove" is sometimes substituted." (Orr, James; "THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE

ENCYCLOPAEDIA"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1939, article by H. E. Jacobs pp 707,708)

"The meaning of conviction as a law term is being found guilty. In common language it means being persuaded or convinced. In theology it means being condemned at the bar of one's own conscience as a sinner in view of the law of God. It is the antecedent to repentance, and is often accompanied by a painful sense of exposure to God's wrath. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, showing the heinousness of sin and the soul's exposure to divine wrath." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 219)

It would seem that the word convict in the Bible has a similar meaning to the word in our own day. It relates to a person being proven guilty. It carries, as well, the thought that the person realizes and concurs with the verdict.

So, now that we understand the term, how does conviction strike or affect a lost person? The lost person reacts to conviction much as the saved person. Both are proven guilty, and both agree with the verdict.

1. A feeling of guilt for the sin that he knows that he has committed. As a small child I enjoyed going into the dime store and shoplifting (I did not enjoy the buzz of the stealing, but rather the taste of the candy, or the joy of the item taken).

Very small items, usually just a piece of candy. As I was enjoying the candy I usually had regrets over what I had done. I had knowledge that it was wrong. I felt guilty - isn't that odd? I WAS GUILTY! So why should I be surprised that I felt that way?

The feeling of guilt can only come when you realize that you are guilty. In my case I was being confronted with what I had been taught from the Word of God in church (even though I was unsaved)! I had the sense of what right and wrong was.

The lost know when they have done wrong, else why would they try to cover their wrong. Watergate is an example. The men involved went to great lengths to cover their wrong. John 3:20 may reveal something on this question - "For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

The saved person may realize and submit to conviction quicker than the lost person. The believer knows immediately when they are out of fellowship with the Lord. This brings conviction quickly.

Conviction comes to the Christian through their conscience and the spoken Word.

From the conscience: John 8:9, "and they who heard it, being convicted by their own conscience," The context of this passage is the woman taken in adultery. Christ told them that the one without sin in their life should cast the first stone. The lost people were convicted by their conscience. They knew that none of them were without sin. It is quite possible that they were guilty of the same sin.

From the spoken Word: I Cor. 14:24, 25, "But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convicted of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God and report that God is in you of a truth."

Just a couple of observations from this text: a. Conviction comes from prophecy in the New Testament Church. b. The unsaved have the secrets of their hearts revealed. This is a good example of the conviction of the lost. His response was neat - he fell down to worship God!

We see this in our own worship services today. At times the unsaved enter the services, hear the Gospel, and come to know the Lord. They do this because they come under conviction through what they have heard.

If the spoken Word has this effect on a person, then we could, I think safely assume, that the written word would also be capable of bringing conviction. I have heard the testimonies of several people that were reading the Word, when the Holy Spirit brought them to the Lord, without the intervention of another person. Just the reading of the Word, is sufficient to bring people to the Lord.

The prime element of all sources of conviction, is the fact that all are dependant upon the work of the Holy Spirit within the life of the person, be they saved or lost.

We can see this in John 16:7-11. 1. The Holy Spirit will convict or reprove the world of SIN. 2. The Holy Spirit will convict or reprove the world of righteousness. 3. The Holy Spirit will convict or reprove the world of judgment.

All conviction comes to the lost via the work of the Holy Spirit. All conviction comes to the believer via the work of the Holy Spirit.

APPLICATION:

1. Mr. Unger suggested of conviction, "In theology it means being condemned at the bar of one's own conscience as a sinner in view of the law of God." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright , Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.) How do we make this practical for our own lives?

If the only possible source of true conviction is via the Holy Spirit, then why do we try so hard to

bring young believers into conformity with our life styles? True, we should show them what the Scripture teaches, and help them to understand that what they are doing is wrong. There really isn't any amount of pressure that we can apply, that will bring them into a state of honest conviction? We probably should leave it to the Holy Spirit.

Why don't be seek help from the person that can help in the situation? THE HOLY SPIRIT! This may not only relate to life style, but it may well relate to bad habits, or it may even relate to baptism. We need to be sure they know all they need to know about these things, yet the Holy Spirit is the only one that can bring them to a decision to change a life style, or break a habit, or come to the church for baptism.

2. Conviction seems to be a confrontation with the evidence to show guilt no matter what the response to the conviction might be. In salvation conviction brings evidence of guilt. That conviction may be ignored, or responded to. In the believer, the conscience, Word, or possibly another believer using the Word, produces proof of sin and error. Again, that evidence can be ignored, or responded to. Matt 18:15ff illustrates this. If you go to a brother and he does not respond, you take witnesses. The person has proof given to him - he responds, and changes or continues, and suffers the consequences.

Conviction, then brings the person to the point of response/no response. It can do no more. The mind and will must take it from there. Example: In past sections the reader has been confronted with a study of the fruit of the Spirit as it was contrasted with no fruit of the spirit. All readers have been confronted. How have they reacted? Have they changed their lifestyle, or are they remaining unchanged?

The presentation of the study is like presenting the Word. It brings a person to the point of response/no response. The Holy Spirit takes over and confronts through the conscience.

It is not my responsibility to force a person to respond. The prophets presented the evidence of Israel's great sin. They did the job. The fact that Israel didn't respond was disheartening I'm sure, but the prophet had done his job.

We, as Christian's, need to go to the world and do the job. The Holy Spirit will do the convicting. The people will respond one way or another.

3. This is a judgment question, but I think it might do well to ask it anyway. What outward behaviors, or mannerisms, or frame of mind does a person present when he is under the conviction of the Holy Spirit? They may be very nervous. Many, when in church stare at the floor as if totally uninterested. They may be full of honest questions not just argumentative questions. They may at times disoriented in their thinking, and their own beliefs when they are confronted with the Word.

I think the story in John 8 may indicate an uneasiness to truth and possibly an uneasiness to be

close to a man of God - in this case Jesus Himself. Note also should be taken that these were unsaved men who were convicted by their conscience. They were so convicted that they left!

It has been said of the lost, "You can't repent too soon, because you don't know how soon it will be too late." It has been said of the saved, "True repentance has a double aspect. It looks upon things past with a weeping eye, and upon the future with a watchful eye." (McKenzie, E.C.; "14,000 QUIPS AND QUOTES FOR WRITERS AND SPEAKERS"; New York: Greenwich House, 1980, p 446)

4. What about the person that has sin in their life - maybe has had for several years. Can you guess what they are like? They are unhappy, they have no peace, they are full of guilt, and they are critical of everyone else's sin. (At times super sensitive in areas of their sin.) They are quite often involved in covering up their own sin. That is one sad case. If you run into this type person, suspect unconfessed sin.

David Brainard searched for peace for twenty years. He was constantly plagued with conviction in his life. He finally found peace with the Lord. I would like to quote from his diary.

"I was from my youth somewhat sober, and inclined to melancholy; but do not remember any thing of conviction of sin, worthy of remark, till I was, I believe, about seven or eight years of age. Then I became concerned for my soul, and terrified at the thoughts of death; and was driven to the performance of religious duties. . . ."

"Sometime in the beginning of winter, 1738, it pleased God, one Sabbath morning, as I was walking out for secret duties, to give me on a sudden such a sense of my danger, and the wrath of God, that I stood amazed, and my former good frames presently vanished. From the view which I had of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed all that day, fearing that the vengeance of God would soon overtake me. I was much dejected; kept much alone; and sometimes envied the birds and beasts their happiness, because they were not exposed to eternal misery, as I evidently saw that I was. Thus I lived from day to day, being frequently in great distress: sometimes there appeared mountains before me to obstruct my hopes of mercy; and the work of conversion appeared so great, that I thought I should never be the subject of it. I used, however, to pray and cry to God, and perform other duties with great earnestness; and thus hoped by some means to make the case better."

He mentions a night when he felt that the earth would open up and swallow him, sending him to his grave and his soul to hell. "I was wont to tell God in my prayers, that now I had those very dispositions of soul which he required, and on which he showed mercy to others, and thereupon to beg and plead for mercy to me. But when I found no relief, and was still oppressed with guilt and fears of wrath, my soul was in a tumult, and my heart rose against God, as dealing hardly with me."

"At some turns, for a few moments, I seemed to myself lost and undone; but then would shrink

back immediately from the sight, because I dared not venture myself into the hands of God, as wholly helpless, and at the disposal of his sovereign pleasure. I dared not see that important truth concerning myself, that I was 'dead in trespasses and sins.' But when I had, as it were, thrust away these views of myself at any time, I felt distressed to have the same discoveries of myself again; for I greatly feared being given over of God to final stupidity. When I thought of putting it off to a more 'convenient season,' the conviction was so close and powerful, that the present time was the best, and probably the only time, that I dared not put it off."

"After a considerable time spent in similar exercises and distree, one morning, while I was walking in a solitary place, as usual, I at once saw that all my contrivances and projects to effect or procure deliverance and salvation for myself were utterly in vain; I was brought quite to a stand, as finding myself totally lost. I had thought many times before, that the difficulties in my way were very great; but now I saw, in another and very different light, that it was for ever impossible for me to do any thing toward helping or delivering myself."

"At this time the way of salvation opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of any other way of salvation; I was amazed that I had not dropped my own contrivances and complied with this lovely, blessed, and excellency way before. If I could have been saved by my own duties, or any other way that I had formerly contrived, my whole soul would now have refused. I wondered that all the world did not see and comply with this way of salvation, entirely by the righteousness of Christ.

"The sweet relish of what I then felt continued with me for several days, almost constantly, in a greater or less degree. I could not but sweetly rejoice in God, lying down and rising up. The next Lord's day I felt something of the same kind, though not so powerful as before. But not long after, I was again involved in darkness, and in great distress; yet not of the same kind with my distress under convictions. I was guilty, afraid, and ashamed to come before God; and exceedingly pressed with a sense of guilt; but it was not long before I felt, I trust, true repentance and joy in God."

I suspect if the American public experienced this type of conviction, we would see some sudden changes in our country. I also suspect that if American Christians were to view sin as this man viewed it, we would see drastic changes in the Church and in the world.

04900

REPENTANCE

When I was about ten I was commonly known as the cake and icing snitcher. I would break small pieces of icing off of the edge of the cake. As my memory serves me, I never cut a piece of cake to eat - only little snitches. One day my mother found a piece of cake missing! I was naturally the suspect of the hour, only I was innocent. My mother was bent on having me confess

and repent of my crime. I told her multiplied millions of times that I had not done the nasty deed. Finally, after several hours of sitting in front of her, I admitted to the crime that I had not committed. I had many things to do, and one of them wasn't sitting in front of her.

I confessed, but there was no repentance - indeed, there could be no repentance because I had done nothing wrong. In God's eyes, He seeks people who are knowledgeable of their sin, and willing to repent.

Repentance according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary is ".....the action or process of repenting esp. for misdeeds or moral shortcomings....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Vine mentions, "to perceive afterwards ('meta', after, implying change, 'noeo', to perceive; 'nous', the mind, the seat of moral reflection), in contrast to 'pronoeo', to perceive beforehand, hence signifies to change one's mind or purpose," (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., p 281-282)

Unger tells us "in the theological and ethical sense a fundamental and thorough change in the hearts of men from sin and toward God."

"Without some measure of faith no one can truly repent, and repentance never attains to its deepest character till the sinner realizes through saving faith how great is the grace of god against whom he has sinned."

"On the other hand there can be no saving faith without true repentance." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Repentance is a change of mind:

There should be a sense of dislike toward sin, as well as a desire, and decision not to do it again. When I was snitching the cake, I was not sorry, I was not going to stop doing it; unless the punishment made it repugnant. Even when confronted with the snitching, I was not sorry for my wrong, only for getting caught.

In the case of sin and repentance toward God, there needs to be a surrendering to His will and desire. In sin, we have set aside His will or commands. In repentance, we need to include the thought of a return to what He has commanded, and turn away from our desire to set Him aside.

Repentance is a gift of God: Acts 5:31 God set Christ as the one able and desirous to extend repentance and forgiveness to the Jews. The fact that they, for the most part, rejected this free offer does not negate the offer.

God, due to the rejection of the Jews, opened His program of grace to the gentiles (Acts 11:18). The gentile world knew of their need, and multitudes received this offer of grace, repentance and salvation.

Repentance is something that God leads us to:

Romans 2:4 Our salvation is based squarely on the goodness of God. He formed the plan, He executed the plan, and He draws us to the plan. Had He not acted, we would not have sought to please Him. We would not have sought to find Him. We certainly would not have sought to repent.

Repentance can have three stages: Chafer suggests these three stages for his reader's consideration.

1. Repentance comes from fear of the penalty. In this repentance there is no sorrow over what was done, just dread of the consequences.

2. The second stage of repentance comes when the person realizes the baseness of sin. It results in self condemnation, because the person is so vile and sinful. I suspect that this is the stage that David Brainard was in during much of his struggle.

3. Upon salvation the person can more fully understand the evilness of sin, and realize the fullness of God's grace. This moves the person to genuine repentance, which can give the peace that the person has been seeking.

Repentance is a change of mind:

This thought is seen in Matt. 21:28-29 where the son that would not go to work, later changed his mind and went. Within the idea of a change of mind, is the fact that the mind must consider and weigh the information, and then decide. Along with the change of mind in this case, is the act of the will to go.

In the case of sin, there needs to be a consideration of the information, a decision not to sin followed by a continuing action of the will, not to sin. To decide, and not to act is not the desired process. To decide followed by action is what God desires in His people.

This is also true in the lost person that is considering the claims of Christ. He can consider the information, he can even decide that the information is valid, but until he acts, there can be no salvation.

Repentance requires no sorrow:

Repentance requires no sorrow however sorrow may be an integrated part of the person's

experience when coming to repentance. Technically sorrow may lead to repentance, but repentance seems to be separate from sorrow. (II Cor. 7:9-11)

Repentance is not separate from belief:

"repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, but it is included in believing and could not be separated from it." (Chafer's Systematic Theology, p 373)

So why are there two terms? Why does the Bible speak of repentance and belief, if they are inseparable?

In Acts 16:31 the jailor was told that he needed to believe to be saved. The fact that he asked what he must do to be saved demands that he had already gone through a mental process of realizing he was wrong, and that God was right. He had already decided to follow God, rather than the world system. Thus, he was told to believe, rather than to repent.

Chafer mentions, "it is clear that the New Testament does not impose repentance upon the unsaved as a condition of salvation." (p 376)

I do not think that I can agree with his conclusion. How can you have salvation without having a change of mind, or repentance? You are lost, you are condemned, you are in the world system, you enjoy the world system, and you can't be saved without turning from that system, to God! THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE! (See the following references to see that lost people are told to repent for their salvation and belief is not mentioned. Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; II Pet. 3:9.)

I would have to disagree with anyone that states that repentance is not required for salvation. Belief and repentance are both involved in the process. You can believe, but not repent - resulting in no salvation. You can't repent unless you believe.

Repentance is based on the realization that what is (present life), is incorrect, and that what will be (salvation), is correct. It is a realization that God has truth, and is the answer. It is also a realization that the world has no truth, and that it is deception.

World Relief had a film that depicted an old Muslim man that had seen his sons come to know and embrace Christ. He knew in his own mind that what they had done was correct. He, however, would not leave his old ways. He had the belief, but there was no change of direction - repentance if you will.

Repentance is a work of the Spirit:
Chafer states that repentance is a work of the Spirit and lists Ephesians 2:8 for proof. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:"

I do not see that this is a proof text for his statement. The thought is wrapped up in the truth of this text, yet the text does not state this.

All that God does in man is a work of the Spirit, be it belief, repentance, or salvation. As the Spirit moves in lost man, he has the choice to respond or reject that work. When lost man responds and turns to God, then that repentance is truly a work of the Spirit.

Repentance is limited in the lost person:

"No individual can turn to Christ from some other confidence without a change of mind, and that, it should be noted, is all the repentance a spiritually dead individual can ever effect." (Chafer, p 374)

In his concluding paragraph Chafer states, "It is asserted that repentance, which is a change of mind, enters of necessity into the very act of believing on Christ, since one cannot turn to Christ from other objects of confidence without that change of mind. Upwards of 150 texts-including all of the greatest gospel invitations-limit the human responsibility in salvation to believing or to faith. To this simple requirement nothing could be added if the glories of grace are to be preserved."

This defines belief as a confidence in which requires a change of mind or repentance. He seems to bottle repentance and belief into one package. This is not an uncommon line of thinking, which follows quickly after Calvinistic thought.

PROBLEM: I believed in God - in Christ - long before I knew that I needed to be saved, long before ever committing myself to Him and His work on the cross for me.

I knew and believed many of the Bible stories, the miracles, etc. I knew that Christ lived, and died on the cross. I believed that Christ existed. I believed that God existed. I believed that God created the heaven and the earth.

I even, somewhere in my mind, knew that God was watching over me, yet I did not know the reason for the cross, nor did I know that I needed Christ. I had belief, but there was no knowledge that a change was needed.

Ultimately, through circumstances, I was confronted with the Gospel and knew that it was true. I still was lost as I could be as one born in Adam. Until I decided - an act of the will - there was no salvation, there was no repentance. Upon that belief, there was a decision made which turned me from the first Adam, to the second Adam, Christ.

Belief is possible without repentance, so I feel it is very hard to say they are one and the same.

It is of interest to note that the Gospel of John does not use the term repent, but only the term

believe. This indicates that John felt that belief would automatically move the person to repentance and salvation. It does not mean that John was teaching that repentance was not needed.

Cambron is quite clear in his belief that repentance is an integrated part of salvation. "To those who say that repentance is not to be preached today, and that it is not essential for salvation, we point out that repentance was preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul. Repentance was proclaimed before Pentecost, at Pentecost, and after Pentecost." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 188)

Repentance in not reformation: Man, in his lost estate, can reform himself. He can clean up his life and live like a Christian. Many of these people probably lead a better Christian life than many Christians.

The sad fact is that this reformation leads only to reformation. It does not bring salvation, nor does it bring the peace these people often seek.

Reformation is great. It helps in the person's family, in his social relations, and may even help in the person's life. It can never result directly in eternal changes however.

Repentance is not contrition: It is not being sorry for your sin. Being sorry is great, but it alone can never bring salvation. Repentance requires a change of mind. Sorrow is an emotional response to information. Repentance is an act of the will in response to information and belief in that information.

Repentance is not penance: This is an expression of sorrow by some act. Penance is giving up of something in response to guilt or sorrow over doing something.

Repentance is a change of mind: It is a response of the mind that has been given information which the mind labels truth. It is a decision to move from one mind-set to another. The world is our natural mind-set. The lost person is motivated and directed by this mind-set. When the mind set is changed the life that mind controls, changes to the new direction.

Repentance is a part of faith: Faith is that which allows the person to turn from the world to God. God reveals Himself to all of mankind, according to Romans one. When someone responds to that revelation, further information is given. When there is enough information to confront the person with the Gospel, faith or belief in that information will move the person to a conscious decision. That decision will shift them from the earthy, to the heavenly.

LET US RECAP

1. Repentance is a change of mind (the heart and life).

2. Belief is an acceptance of facts (the brain).

3. Salvation is a result of both repentance and belief. Without repentance there is no salvation. Without belief there is no salvation. Without repentance there can be no belief and thus no salvation. Without repentance, belief cannot save you.

4. Sorrow may lead to repentance.

5. Sorrow may accompany repentance, but is not the same as repentance.

6. Repentance may come without sorrow.

CONCLUSIONS:

Repentance comes from the goodness of God Rom. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9

Repentance can come from hearing the Gospel. Acts 2:37-41

Repentance can come through teaching. II Tim. 2:24,25

Repentance can come through chastisements of God. Rev. 2:16; 2:5; 3:3; (Heb. 12:6-11; Rev. 3:19 may relate - "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.")

Repentance is a gift of God. It was a gift to the Jews, Acts 5:31 and to the Gentiles Acts 11:18.

Repentance is something that God leads us to. Romans 2:4

Repentance is a change of mind. Matt. 21:28-29

Repentance requires no sorrow.

Repentance is a work of the Spirit.

Repentance is limited in the lost person.

Repentance is not reformation.

Repentance is not contrition.

Repentance is not penance.

Repentance is a part of faith.

Repentance primarily is for the lost and is part of bringing them to Christ.

Repentance is sometimes used of the believer and his need to return to something. See Rev. 2:5,16; 3:3,19.

APPLICATION

1. This should give flight to the easy believism so prevalent today in our evangelism. If you want to say, "Believe and thou shalt be saved" be sure that they have had a change of mind first, else you had better explain very carefully what you mean by believe.

2. In our own lives - when we became a Christian did we have a REAL change of mind - from trusting in ....., TO trusting in Christ? Many "Christians" have never seen repentance in their lives! This may well be why our churches are as they are.

3. As we witness - we need to show the person that they need to make a conscious choice to turn from ....., to Christ!

At times the person will know that changes are needed. I witnessed to a man years ago that was not living a proper life. He was a motorcycle nut. He knew what I had told him was true. He also knew that he needed to accept Christ. His problem was that he knew there would need to be changes. His first question after realizing this was, "But will I have to give up my motorcycle?"

As lost people repentance is needed for salvation. As believers, we do not normally deal with repentance. It is wrapped up in confession, in that we need to agree with God as to the terribleness of our sin, and decide not to sin again.

There are some believers that for one reason or another walks in the world. They are carnal. They are not walking with God. Again, in a sense repentance is required of them. They need to change their course.

Repentance - a simple change of mind that brings salvation. Repentance - a simple change of mind that brings restoration of fellowship.

04950

REGENERATION

Let us look at a few definitions:

"A spiritual resurrection; the beginning of a new life" (Hodge, Charles; Gross, Edward N. Ed.; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, Vol. 3, p 5)

"Regeneration is the communication of the divine nature to man by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word. (Dr. A. J. Gordon as quoted in Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 319)

"the spiritual change wrought in man by the Holy Spirit, by which he becomes the possessor of a new life. (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

Regeneration is the Greek word "palinginesia." It is only used twice in the New Testament. Vine tells us that "Palin" is usually translated again, and that "genesis" means birth. Thus, we would say that it is again born, or again birthed.

In Matt 19:28 Christ mentions that those that follow him in the regeneration will rule with him. Since Christ did not need to be saved, He could not have been referring to the salvation experience of the believer. It seems that the structure would indicate that He was stating that when the world system, or the world itself is again born, when the Lord is ruling, these things will happen. (Scofield, in his cross reference Bible holds that this is referring to "the re-creation of the social order and renewal of the earth"/Vine also views this as a restoration, "the word is used, in the Lord's discourse, in the wider sense, of the 'restoration of all things'" Thiessen also relates this to the regeneration of the Creation. He quotes Isa. 11:1-9; 35:1-10 and others as a basis for his thinking.)

The American Standard Version states, "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Christ has been asked a question about the future reward of the apostles. Christ answers as though from that future point in time. Since these things were decreed before the foundation of the world that would fit.

The American Standard Version indicates that the regeneration is speaking of the again born world. Christ will rule in the Millennium, and the world will have undergone a drastic changing in preparation for the kingdom.

The second passage where the term appears is in Titus. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;" (Titus 3:4-6)

This text speaks of the rebirth (the "washing of regeneration"). The washing of regeneration depicts the "washing" or the completeness of the occurrence, and the regeneration, the again born process.

Technically, it is the term that describes what we call rebirth, or new birth. It is spoken of in John 3 where Christ told Nicodemus that he must be born again. It is the changing of a person from lost and condemned to saved and forgiven.

REGENERATION WAS FORETOLD BY THE OLD TESTAMENT: Regeneration was looked forward to by the prophets for Israel (Ezek. 36:24-30 and Jer. 32:38-40). There are some that contradict this thought when they say that the Old Testament believer was regenerated, by his faith in the coming Christ. This is in error, because regeneration could not take place for any person until Christ settled the sin question.

REGENERATION CHANGES THE PERSON: We are told that we are new creations, that we are partakers of the divine nature, and that we are completely new. That seems to indicate that when a person accepts Christ, there will be some changes in the life. (I Cor. 5:17; Jo. 3:3,6,7; II Pet 1:4; Eph. 4:23-24.)

The simplicity of the term itself demands drastic change. Again born. There is no choice except for the person to have change in their life.

REGENERATION IS AN OCCURRENCE RATHER THAN A PROCESS: Luke tells us in 23:39-44 that the Thief on the cross was to be in paradise with the Lord immediately. Thus, we can assume that regeneration is not something that takes six months to a year to complete.

It is not related to good works nor is it related to the process of living a holy life. It is an act of God that changes the person immediately and eternally.

REGENERATION IS LINKED TO OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST: We are in Christ. This shows a close relationship. II Cor. 5:17 "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (John 3:16 tells us that it is because of what He did that we can have eternal life. Eph. 2:8-10 states that we are created in Christ.)

REGENERATION HAS RESULTS:

Firstfruits: James 1:18 We are firstfruits of God's creatures: " Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

It might be an interesting study to relate this verse to the use of the term regeneration in relation to not only our own rebirth, but that of the world. Matthew used the term of creation. We are firstfruits of "his creatures" indicating that we will be changed before the creatures of creation. Would this not indicate a pre-millennial glorification for believers. Something to think about when you have time.

Inheritance: We have an inheritance due to this regeneration. I Pet 1:3-4, "Blessed [be] the God

and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,"

This inheritance is sure, and it is not going to corrupt. It is ours; it is ours for all eternity.

Good works: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) We were not created in Christ to live plush lives. We were created in Christ Jesus so we will do good works.

Walk in good works. That indicates more than a casual occurrence. Our lives are to be good works. Our lives are to be filled with good works.

Pledge: Regeneration brought the Holy Spirit as our pledge or guarantee of a completion to what God has begun in our lives. Eph. 1:13-14, "In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

REGENERATION, A PROFILE:

The means: Belief/reception of Christ. Regeneration comes to the person through belief in, and reception of Christ. Due to this we become sons of God. Jo 1:12, "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:"

The author: I Cor. 3:6-7 tells us that only God can increase the population of the church. He is the one that adds to the body of Christ. We can plant and water, but He will give the increase. (See Jo. 1:10-13 also)

The agent: We are born of the Holy Spirit. He is the activation behind all of salvation. God provided salvation, through Christ, but the Spirit brings the person to salvation.

The instrument: Only when a person is able to hear or read the Word of God, can they know salvation. Salvation cannot creep up on you and win the attack. It is only through the Word that we can know of salvation. (I Pet 1:23-25; James 1:18,21; Jo 17:17)

REGENERATION HAS EXPECTATIONS: God didn't reach out and touch someone, just so they would feel good. Remember that verse we covered earlier? We are created in Christ unto good works. The natural result of regeneration should be good works. The good works are a result of a proper relationship to God. Not having sin in your life is the method of keeping that relationship proper. I Jo. 3:9 "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (see also I Jo. 2:29; 5:4,18.)

REGENERATION IS ETERNAL: We cannot loose anything based on regeneration. All is guaranteed. We are dealing with God and not some sleezy salesman. What He has said, He will do. We will live forever because of this work of regeneration, which He has done. I Pet. 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

REGENERATION IS NOT REFORMATION: It is more than turning over a new leaf. You could, from some point onward, without sin and yet know nothing of regeneration. There are many lost people in this world that live good lives, yet are still lost.

REGENERATION IS NOT CONFIRMATION: Only God can bring about regeneration. Nothing that man can devise will do the trick. Man has been trying to come up with some method for centuries, but always fails in his attempts.

REGENERATION IS NOT WATER BAPTISM: Baptism is a memorial and ordinance for the one that has already undergone regeneration. However, be forewarned, some believe this. Some believe that baptism is how a person is regenerated.

"Regeneration by baptism, or baptismal regeneration, has been a widely prevalent error. This is due in part to an improper use of the term. A proselyte from heathenism to the Jewish religion was said to be 'born again.' A corresponding use of the term crept into the early Christian Church. Those who received baptism, the initiatory rite of church membership, were said to be regenerated; but this was probably without any intention of denying the deeper work of the Holy Spirit. It was only a loose and improper way of indicating the change in a man's external relationship. And it is proper to say that some of the advocates of the baptismal regeneration in the Church of England still use the term in this sense, and make a distinction between regeneration as effected by baptism and the great work of spiritual renewal. But the error has its broader basis in an unscriptural idea of the character and efficiency of the sacraments. And thus it is held not only by Roman Catholics, but also by many Lutherans and many in the church of England." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

Let's consider baptismal regeneration for a moment. Titus 3:4-7, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." What in this verse equates "regeneration" with "born again?" Nothing.

Matt 19:28 seems to be the transformation of the earth in preparation for the kingdom. What in that verse equates "regeneration" with "born again?" Nothing.

Titus 3:5 speaks of washing (Cleansing) yet new birth has to do with getting rid of old and

installation of new. The two facts don't compute. This washing is not to be construed to be baptism, for it is not.

If "regeneration" truly is "rebirth" or "born again," how do we get from baptism to regeneration? Washing is the Greek word "loutron" which has the idea of a bath or a laver. It is used in the Septuagint in Song of Solomon 4:2 and 6:6. This passage
speaks of the washing of sheep. (Eph. 5:26 and Titus 3:5 are the only New Testament usages.) Washing gives the impression of "dirty in" and "clean out." Otherwise, why wash something. This would seem to be the root of the meaning of the word.

The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit seem to be two different things. Most commentaries seem to follow similar thinking. It seems that the washing of regeneration might be the cleaning out of our past sins, while the renewing of the Holy Spirit is the removal of the Adamic nature. They are both an integrated part of the whole - salvation.

Rebirth seems to be that shift from lostness to savedness; that shift from dead to alive. It is an integrated part of salvation. Without it there is no real salvation, yet it is linked to the renewing of the Holy Spirit as well. Regeneration may refer to salvation as long as you view the work of the Holy Spirit as well.

REGENERATION IS NO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NOR THE LORD'S TABLE: Church membership and the Lord's table are never linked to regeneration itself, though a church member should be regenerated. Someone partaking of the Lord's table should also be regenerated, however becoming a member, or partaking of the table can never bring regeneration.

REGENERATION IS NOT JUSTIFICATION: "It is to be distinguished from justification, because justification is a change in our relationship to God, while regeneration is a change in our moral and spiritual nature." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

REGENERATION IS NOT SANCTIFICATION: "Regeneration is also to be distinguished from sanctification, inasmuch as the latter is the work of God in developing the new life and bringing it to perfection, while the former is the beginning of that life." [not sure I agree with his definition of sanctification but do agree that they are different.] (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

REGENERATION IS REQUIRED: John 3:7 simply states the facts. "Ye must be born again."

Cambron lists three areas which show the need of regeneration. The depravity of man (Jo 3:6); The universality of man (Rom. 3:23); and the holiness of God (I Peter 1:16)

REGENERATION IS A DIVINE GIFT: John 1:12, 13 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name; Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Regeneration comes as an integrated part of the salvation experience. We cannot continue toward eternity without it, nor can we step backward into our past life without it. Once regenerated, there is no return to the lost life of Adam. We may step into a walk that resembles our old walk, but we can never become unregenerated again.

THE WALL OF SALVATION

"Now I saw in my dream, that the highway, up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called salvation. Up this way, therefore did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back. He ran thus till he came at a place somewhat ascending; and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a sepulcher. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulcher, where it fell in, and I saw it no more." John Bunyan (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 613)

05000

PROPITIATION

We need to define the term propitiation which we have all heard so many times before. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary states that propitiate means ".....to gain or regain the favor or goodwill of." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Pardington states, "literally signifying an appeasing, a placation, an expiation. Propitiation comes from the Latin and means that which renders one propitious or favorably disposed towards another." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 254)

Kaufman states, "Theological term for the appeasement of the wrath of God through sacrifice, prayer, or in some other way. According to the New Testament, guilt is removed and broken relationships with god restored only by the sacrifice of christ, received in faith and obedience. God has set forth Christ "to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Romans 4:25)." (Kauffman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967)

From this we can conclude that Christ propitiated God on our behalf. In other words he regained God's favor for mankind. We were, so to speak, on His bad side, and Christ got us onto His good side. That is very simplistic, yet true.

In Adam, all of mankind fell into sin, into damnation, and into eternal death, yet Christ corrected all those problems, through His work on the cross. We can, if saved, stand before God as Adam stood before the fall. Christ made ALL things right between man and God.

There are three Greek words translated propitiation in the New Testament (All usages are listed).

1. "hilasmos" This term is seen in two passages where it depicts what Christ did for mankind. I John 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I John 4:10, "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Two things we need to notice. First of all, the propitiation was for our sins, and the work was done by Christ. Secondly, it was propitiation for the ". . .sins of the whole world." Just how the limited atonement people get around that clear statement of Scripture would be an interesting study in foot work.

2. "hilasterion" Unger mentions this passage and term as relating to the place of propitiation, however the context would indicate more specifically the person of propitiation, Jesus Christ. Rom. 3:24-25, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

Does this mean that propitiation is based on repentance as well as forgiveness? The two certainly seem to be tied to faith! It would seem in light of all we know that propitiation was for all people both lost and saved, yet there seems to be a need of faith for one to receive the benefit of this propitiation.

The term is used of an interesting place in Heb. 9:5, "And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat [this is the term]; of which we cannot now speak particularly."

The dwelling place of God in the Wilderness was named propitiation. The spot where the blood of animals was sprinkled (Lev. 16:15), is used to signify what the New Testament calls propitiation.

Hebrews tells us that Christ offered His own blood in the heavenly tabernacle as an everlasting propitiation for sin. It is faith in that blood that saves man.

3. "hilaskomai" is our third term. It refers to the act of God toward man which is propitious. Luke 18:13 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto

heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." ("merciful" is the term in view. The translation should be propitiation.)

Heb. 2:17 "Wherefore, in all things it behooved him to be made like his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." ("reconciliation" is the term that we are looking for.) The term reconciliation should appear as propitiation. The interlinear translates it this way.

Vine mentions of this term, ". . .was used amongst the Greeks with the significance to make the gods propitious, to appease, propitiate, inasmuch as their good will was not conceived as their natural attitude, but something to be earned first." He also mentions that the term is never used in a way that would suggest that man is able to propitiate our God. (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., p 895) THIS SEEMS TO BE A GOOD THOUGHT!

Cambron relates the word to the term "satisfaction." "The law demanded death for sin; therefore, the blood of the sacrifice was placed on the mercy seat (Ex. 25:22; Lev. 16:13,14), showing that death had taken place. God looked upon the mercy seat and saw blood - life - and was satisfied. Since calvary, God looks upon our Mercy Seat, which is Christ, and is satisfied. Therefore, the underlying thought of propitiation is "satisfaction." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 97)

I question his comment, that Christ is the mercy seat. His shed blood is on the heavenly mercy seat in my estimation, rather than Christ being the mercy seat Himself.

Propitiation is for all mankind, both lost and saved. I John 2:2 "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Propitiation is not automatic for the lost person. It seems to be linked to the faith of one coming to the Lord. Rom. 3:25 "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" The provision is made yet this verse seems to indicate the application or benefit is based on faith.

Propitiation is not something that we need to ask God for, nor is it something that we have to request Him to be. Unger states, "In this present age since the death of Christ God does not have to be asked to be propitious, because He has become so, through the death of Christ." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Propitiation is the "Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "kapporeth," or mercy seat, the lid of the ark of the covenant." (Pardington p 255) The meaning of that close link should drive some young theologians into a detailed study!

Propitiation must be God's idea if it came through the cross, for man could not have devised that plan! Man's plans are evident the world over, and none even come close to the cross, nor God dieing on it.

Propitiation is not salvation. "It rather secures the possibility of salvation." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. 5) It places man in a proper attitude or position before God, whereby the possibility of salvation exists.

There probably is a need for further study as to the specifics of this doctrine. Since faith is involved, I assume that propitiation is a precursor to salvation - something which Christ did make available to me. Since propitiation is for the whole world, I assume that it is available to all, but must be received by faith. Though it is not salvation, nor an integrated part of the salvation process, it is necessary for the salvation process to begin.

Propitiation is NOT Jesus Christ Himself as Chafer mentions in Vol. VII p 259. "...His body at Golgotha, becomes the Mercy Seat in reality." If this were really true then why did He bother to offer His blood upon the heavenly mercy seat as is indicated in Heb. 9: 22,23? True it is not stated yet the Old Testament priest did this and the context is contrasting the old and the new. Vs 23."It was, therefore, necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

Propitiation is not reconciliation. Propitiation would be a step toward that reconciliation between God and man. Propitiation makes it possible for the reconciliation to occur.

Propitiation does not bring forgiveness as some set forth. Thiessen states when he quotes from Hodge, "By the suffering of the sinner's atoning substitute, the divine wrath at sin is propitiated, and as a consequence of this propitiation the punishment due to sin is released, or not inflicted upon the transgressor. This release or noninfliction of penalty is "forgiveness," in the Biblical representation." (Thiessen quoting Hodge: Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 326) Propitiation opens the door of possibility to forgiveness, though the two are not one. Propitiation is something that is provided by an act of Christ, and recognized by the Father, while forgiveness is something that is given by God and enjoyed by the believer.

APPLICATION

1. Here we have another fact that drives home the truth that there is nothing that man can do for his own salvation, except believe and accept that which God has provided for us, even before we needed it. Does not Rom. 5:8 relate to this thought? "But God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Christ provided the act that made propitiation, The Father is satisfied, and the Spirit draws the

lost person to realization of all of these truths relevant to salvation.

HE did it all, not my plan, or your plan or someone else's plan.

05050

REDEMPTION

As in previous studies we want to define the term. Redemption according to Shedd is as follows: "God's mercy ransoms man from God's justice." (Shedd Vol. II, p 398) I think that I like this definition, but I would add just a little more to it. I like it because it centers itself around God rather than man. Man had the need, yet all of redemption is actually of God.

God planned the program, God provided the program, God will consummate the program, and God will apply the program.

Might we amend Shedd's definition slightly by mentioning the provider of the ransom? God's mercy, through Jesus Christ, ransoms man from God's justice.

Chafer's definition is good, but contains a need for logic, rather than literary licence. "The death of Christ is said to be a redemption or ransom paid to the holy demands of God for the sinner and to free the sinner from just condemnation." (Reprinted by permission: Chafer, Lewis Sperry/Revised by Walvoord, John F.; "MAJOR BIBLE THEMES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, p 61)

This definition seems to be true, except that ransom cannot be paid to demands. A demand cannot receive payment. Only a being with intelligence accepts things. The thought that Christ paid a ransom to satisfy God is correct.

It is of interest that both these men use the term ransom. I am not sure that the English word ransom, is the real meaning of the term in the Bible, nor is it the real meaning of the doctrine of redemption. The term purchase is more to the point of redemption. It is the payment of a price for something. Ransom has the idea that someone has been kidnaped. We have not been kidnaped, we are in sin, and sin always carries a price. Christ paid that price for all who will receive His payment.

So, to put it simply, redemption is the purchase of a soul by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross of calvary.

Let us look at the terms used in Scripture.

OLD TESTAMENT TERMS:

The first word we want to look at is the Hebrew word "g'l," which means according to Ryrie, a "family obligation related to payment of a price." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986,)

Ryrie says of the term "pdh" a ". . .payment of a price as in a commercial transaction without any obligation arising from kinship. . . ." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986)

A third Hebrew word is used which is "kopher," which means a "sum paid to redeem a forfeited life..." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986)

"All these words consistently signify deliverance by payment of a price. The circumstances may vary from redeeming a prisoner of war, or a slave, or a pawned article, or the nation Israel, but always because of the payment of a price." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 290)

NEW TESTAMENT TERMS:

"agorazo" is a term that originally related to going to the forum, but later, became a word that indicated buying or purchasing in the forum. The same term is used by the Septuagint translators of commercial purchases. Some references that might be good sermon material for the topic are: II Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9-10; I Cor. 6:19-20; I Cor. 7:22-23. These verses should give a definite definition to the term slave in relation to the believer.

There are other terms used that are related to "agorazo." I will just list these with comments from other authors. ("exagorazo"/"compound simply adds the idea of purchasing out of the forum." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986); "a strengthened form of "agorazo", to buy... denotes to buy our...especially of purchasing a slave with a view to his freedom." Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

We see in Acts 20:28 the purchase of believers via the blood of Christ. It also pictures the importance of caring for those believers. Christ paid a terrible price to purchase them, and now He has placed them in the hands of His shepherds. Any pastor reading this passage ought to gain just a hint of his responsibility before God. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

There is another aspect to this passage. The indications are that the purchase of Christ was not only for the buying of souls, but it is also related to the church, or His Body.

Ryrie correctly and concisely, summarizes the doctrine around three points. "(1) People are

redeemed FROM something; namely, from the marketplace or slavery of sin. (2) People are redeemed BY something; namely by the payment of a price, the blood of Christ. (3) People are redeemed TO something; namely, to a state of freedom; and then they are called to renounce that freedom for slavery to the Lord who redeemed them." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 292)

Unger in his Bible Dictionary mentions that the freedom of redemption implies a former bondage. He goes on to relate this bondage to our position in sin, our servitude to Satan, and our bondage to spiritual death. It seems that we were not in too good a position until Christ came along!

Indeed, Unger's observations should bring us to a real sense of what Christ did when He died on the cross. He didn't just save us, He saved us from sins dominion, from Satan's dominion, and death's dominion. In response to this we live our lives as if we were still under sin's dominion, Satan's dominion, and death's dominion. We ought to live our lives as if we knew from which we came!

Some indicate that the ransom or payment was to free us from Satan's ownership. This is not true. We were under his control and bondage, yet he did not have ownership. The sinner ends up in the same place as Satan in the end, but not because Satan has any claims on the lost. Both are committed to the Lake of Fire by the justice of God for their disobedience.

Redemption is both universal and limited. It was provided for all of mankind, yet man must accept the work of Christ for it to be of value, or benefit to the individual.

Redemption involves the soul and spirit. Ps. 49:15 "But God will redeem my soul from the power of sheol; for he shall receive me." (note the soul only is mentioned however the soul and spirit always go together.) All of spiritual man is provided for, both soul and spirit.

Redemption also involves the body. Rom. 8:23 "...waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body." The body will see its final redemption when it is glorified and united with our soul and spirit (unless we are fortunate enough to be taken in the rapture, in which case body, soul, and spirit will be finally and completely redeemed at one moment).

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW: Gal. 3:13 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law" We are freed by the work of the cross, yet the proper response to that freedom is not to live in sin.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE LAW: Gal 4:5, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." We not required to keep the law for salvation, but we are expected to keep the principles of the law as rule and practice for our lives.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM INIQUITY: Tit. 2:14 "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity" Now, notice that verse. It relates to what we have said about our nature and our sin life. He redeemed "us from ALL iniquity" which, if we hold to plain literal interpretation says we do not have to sin, we do not struggle to keep from sin, we only need to submit to the Spirit rather than self.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM ENEMIES: Ps. 136:24 "hath redeemed us from our enemies." We may have enemies, we may struggle with enemies, but we will not fall to enemies. God will care for all our enemies, big and small.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM DESTRUCTION: Ps. 103:4 "whom redeemeth thy life from destruction" Isn't that what salvation is all about? We were on our way to physical destruction as well as spiritual destruction. Christ intervened and corrected all that.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH: Hos. 13:14, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." It is not that we will not go through the death process, but we will not suffer from the effects of the grave, or of death. This is also seen in the following point.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF THE GRAVE: Ps :49:15, "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah." The promise of bypassing the power of the grave is linked to another promise, "he shall receive me." The account of the beggar in Luke 16:22 comes to mind, where it mentions that the angels came to carry him away. The thought of going through death will be relieved if we realize the truth presented in these two texts.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM VAIN LIVING: I Pet 1:18, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers;"

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THIS PRESENT WORLD: Gal. 1:4 "who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age" Another glorious promise. We will not have to continue in this life and in this world forever; there is a life and world yet future that is far better.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF SIN: Rom. 6:18-22, "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things [is] death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have

your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

Again, I would draw your attention to the thought of why we sin. Is it because we loose the struggle with the old nature, or is it because we mentally take control of our lives to serve self? This passage seems to indicate the later. Notice the terminology, free from sin, servants of righteousness, yield to righteousness, servants to God.

REDEMPTION IS ACCOMPLISHED BY: God's power: Deut. 7:8; Isa. 44:21; Isa. 43:1; Lu. 1:68. Christ's blood: Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12. God's grace: Rom. 3:24,25. Do you get the feeling that redemption is centered in God. I think that this is truly a valid observation.

There are many benefits that come with redemption. We will mention a few of these benefits. Since these verses are so self explanatory, I will just list the benefit and the verse.

BENEFITS OF REDEMPTION:

We gain forgiveness: Col 1:14, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins:"

We gain justification: Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

We gain adoption: Gal. 4:4,5, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Note the fulness of time. The time was set before the foundation of the world.)

We become God's possession: I Cor. 6:20, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (Our body and spirit are His - ours for the using only.)

We become God's people: Tit. 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

We gain purification: (Above)

We gain sealing: Eph. 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

We gain an inheritance: Heb. 9:15, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [that were] under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

The book of Ruth is a very good illustration of the idea of redemption. It is quite fitting for it concerns one of the couples in the line of Messiah.

We have already seen that "salvation" isn't as simple as it seems. Salvation is simple in its reception, but very complicated in its application. Many things are involved in God saving an individual.

Each of these items are very precious to study in and of themselves. Don't allow yourself to stop with this surface study. Take time to do further study and give much thought to these things. God can use it in your spiritual life.

05100

RECONCILIATION

DEFINITION: Thayer as quoted in Pardington states, "The word is used in the New Testament...of the restoration of the favor of God to sinners that repent and put their trust into the expiatory death of Christ" (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 254)

"Reconciliation is the restoration to friendship and fellowship after estrangement. Old Testament reconciliation contains the idea of an atonement or covering for sin" (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

RECONCILIATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

"And he slew [it]; and Moses took the blood, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it." (Leviticus 8:15)

"And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded [that] the burnt offering and the sin offering [should be made] for all Israel." (2 Chronicles 29:24)

"And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD. 16 All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince in Israel. 17 And it shall be the prince's part [to give] burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace

offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel." (Ezekiel 45:15-17)

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." (Daniel 9:24)

These are the references where the term reconciliation appears in the Old Testament. Let us gather some facts from these verses.

1. There was shedding of blood in preparation for reconciliation. The blood was a means by which the alter was purified, so that sacrifices could be offered for reconciliation. (Lev. 8:15)

2. There was a shedding of blood to make reconciliation for the nation of Israel. (2 Chronicles 29:24)

3. There will be offerings of animals in the Millennial Kingdom for the people of Israel. It is not known just why these offerings will be given. The Lord will be in their presence and Israel will have turned to Him nationally. Whether they will be under the sacrificial system literally or for a memorial, we are not told. (Ezekiel 45:15-17)

It is of note that the offerings for reconciliation were commanded by God, not devised by man. Again, we see that the different items of salvation are God's idea!

4. In this passage as well as the others, reconciliation is linked to the sin of the people. The sin was separating the people from God. (Daniel 9:24)

The question that might come to mind is this. Is reconciliation a prerequisite for salvation? We always tie reconciliation directly to salvation, but should we.

It would seem that these verses show reconciliation to be the restoration of fellowship between Israel and God. Salvation is not mentioned in these texts. It seems, at least in the Old Testament, that reconciliation may be that action which brings the believer back into fellowship with God.

It seems that Lev. 16:20 might back up this idea. It mentions a reconciling of places rather than people. It seems that the term has the idea of correcting a relationship. In the case of the holy place, it was correcting from impure to pure.

Now let us move on to the New Testament.

RECONCILIATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

WORDS USED

I will list the words and the passages where they appear. Comments will be made as needed. (All usages of the words are listed.)

VERBS

"katallasso" (Strong's 2644) "properly denotes to change, exchange (especially of money); hence, of persons, to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile." (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Rom. 5:10 "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." It seems that we may have been reconciled even before we were saved. It seems that the term relates to that action of Christ which made it possible for God and man to have fellowship. It is a changing in the relationship.

I Cor. 7:11 "But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to [her] husband: and let not the husband put away [his] wife." Though this passage is speaking of marriage and separation, it depicts the action by which the wife can be brought back into a proper marriage relationship with her husband. The term reconciliation again seems to mean the action of repairing a relationship.

II Cor. 5:18 "And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" Here we see that it was God's idea to reconcile us to Himself. It is also shown here that it is our responsibility to share the Gospel so that others might also be reconciled to Him. II Cor. 5:19-20 adds to this thought.

"apokatallasso" (Strong's 604) "to reconcile completely...to change from one condition to another, so as to remove all enmity and leave no impediment to unity and peace" (Vine)

Eph. 2:16 "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:" This passage indicates that there was enmity between God and man, but that the enmity was done away with by the cross. Again, it would seem that Christ's work repaired a relationship, but it does not indicate that this is indeed, salvation. Salvation was made a possibility because man was reconciled with God through the cross.

Col. 1:20 "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, [I say], whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven."

Col. 1:21 "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled"

"diallasso" (Strong's 1259) "to effect an alteration, to exchange, and hence, to reconcile, in cases of mutual hostility yielding to mutual concession" (Vine)

Matt. 5:24 "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." This shows the repairing of a relationship as has been mentioned before.

NOUNS

"katallage" (Strong's 2643) "primarily an exchange, denotes reconciliation, a change on the part of one party, induced by an action on the part of another" Vine.

Rom. 5:11 "And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The word we are looking for in this text is atonement. It is normally translated reconciliation.

Rom. 11:15 "For if the casting away of them [be] the reconciling of the world, what [shall] the receiving [of them be], but life from the dead?" This pictures the world reconciled. It seems that reconciliation was provided for all of mankind, through the cross of Christ. Christ's action repaired the relationship between God and man. All has been done by Christ, so that man can come to God. If man refuses, then this results in his eternal position in the Lake of Fire.

II Cor. 5:18, 19 "And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" 19 "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

"hilaskomai" (Strong's 2433) It is translated merciful in Luke 18:13 and reconciliation in Heb. 2:17. (This term is related to the Greek term translated propitiation. Ro. 3:25; Heb 8:12)

Lu. 18:13 "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as [his] eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

Heb. 2:17 "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his] brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things [pertaining] to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Let us recap what we have learned from these passages.

1. We were enemies when we were reconciled. Rom. 5:10; 11:15; Eph. 1:21

2. We were reconciled to God. Rom. 5:10; II Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 2:16. This reconciliation was a

restoration of man to God, not the other way around.

3. We were reconciled by Jesus Christ. Rom. 5:10; 5:11; II Cor. 5:18-20/by His death Rom. 5:10/by His blood Col. 1:20.

4. We went away from God by our own will, and now Christ makes it possible for us to return. Though this verse deals with marriage it gives the essence of the term. That is one that has gone away of her own will is to return. I Cor. 7:11

5. We are ministers and ambassadors of reconciliation to the world. II Cor. 5:18-20

6. The world is in view when God was reconciling. II Cor. 5:18-20

7. We are to beseech the lost to be reconciled to God. (We do this in Christ's stead.) II Cor. 5:18-20

8. God has COMMITTED the job of reconciliation to the saved! II Cor. 5:18-20

9. We are reconciled WITH the Jews, unto God. Eph. 2:16

10. There is more to reconciliation than man alone. Col. 1:20, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself - by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

The earth and heaven are under duress in some manner due to the fall of man. The ground only was cursed in Genesis three, however this verse would indicate that the whole of creation is in the backwash of man's sin and fall.

All things have been reconciled unto Christ. The completion of this is yet to come, but the provision has been made for all things to be reconciled unto him. In the creature realm it is limited to those that can, and do choose to respond to that reconciliation. (The angels can't, but man can, if he desires.)

11. Reconciliation should cause joy in our lives. Rom. 5:11, "And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

Thiessen relates the terms propitiation and reconciliation thusly: "The two ideas seem to be related to each other as cause and effect: Christ's death 'propitiated' God, and as a result he is 'reconciled'" (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 327)

He relates an apt illustration. "At first God and man stood face to face with each other. In sinning, Adam turned his back upon God. Then God turned His back upon Adam. [due to His

justice demanding He turn away from sin.] Christ's death has satisfied the demands of God and now God has again turned His face toward man. It remains for man to turn round about and face God. Since God has been reconciled by the death of His Son, man is now entreated to be reconciled to God." (Thiessen, p 327-328)

Have you really thought about all that we have been studying to this point? Have we really gotten hold of the truths that we have been studying? II Cor. 5: 18-19 states "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, [This almost sounds like God has not been keeping track of sins since the cross. This would be a good study sometime!] and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF"

IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST died for all sin - the sin of the world - IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST propitiated God for the whole world-IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST reconciled the whole world - IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST did all there was to do to bring the sinner to a point that all he had to do was to reject or accept Christ's sacrifice for his sin - THEN - We have the sinner at what position before God? Think about it. What position is the lost person in today, before almighty God?

IS HE NOT AT THE POINT OF ADAM IN THE GARDEN IN ESSENCE - TRUE HE IS IN A DREADFUL STATE OF SIN AND ALL ITS RAMIFICATIONS BUT ISN'T HE AT THE SAME DECIDING POINT THAT ADAM WAS?

"DO I WANT TO OBEY GOD, OR DO I WANT TO DO MY OWN THING? In reality I believe that is just were lost mankind is today, and has been since the cross!

Thus, one that argues against the total depravity of man being based on the sin of Adam - he argues a mute question. It really doesn't matter in the context of salvation.

THE WORD OF GOD STATES THAT CHRIST HAS PAID THE PRICE, AND THAT YOU MUST RECEIVE HIS WORK, OR SPEND ETERNITY IN THE LAKE OF FIRE.

YOU WILL ACCEPT THAT IMPERATIVE OR REJECT IT. IN SO DOING YOU ACCEPT OR REJECT GOD'S INJUNCTION TO ADAM TO OBEY GOD.

The application of this thinking is to the fact that we are all like Adam - we all chose to sin. Thus at the point of decision which God has so graciously brought us through His Son, we will as Adam - reject God's injunction to obey. THUS, WE HAVE THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN PROVEN AS WELL AS THE ELECTION AND DRAWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF THE ELECT TO GOD!

HE DID HIS PART. "That man is an utterly lost sinner who could never find his own way back to God, is a very unpalatable truth for the average natural man or woman. We all like to think that there is something we can do to help save ourselves, whereas, according to God's Word we are not only lost, but without ability to retrieve our condition. It is remarkable how apt the colored folks are in quick illustrations of spiritual realities, as the following instance will show.

"A recent convert, a colored man, rose in a meeting to give his testimony to the saving grace of God. He told how the Lord had won his hear and given deliverance from the guilt and power of sin. He spoke of Christ and His work, but said nothing of any efforts of his own.

"The leader of the meeting was of a legalistic turn of mind, and when the negro's testimony was ended, he said, 'Our brother has only told us of the Lord's part in his salvation. When I was converted there was a whole lot I had to do myself before I could expect the Lord to do anything for me. Brother, didn't you do your part first before God did His?' The other was on his feet again in an instant and replied: 'Yes, sah, Ah clear done forgot. Ah didn't tell you 'bout my pard, did I? Well, Ah did my part for over thirty years, runnin' away from God as fast as evah my sins could carry me. That was my part. An' God took aftah me till He run me down. That was His part.' It was well put and tells the story that every redeemed sinner understands." (Ironside/"ILLUSTRATIONS OF BIBLE TRUTHS")

Let us close with a summation of the doctrine by Unger. "By this change lost humanity is rendered savable. As a result of the changed position of the world through the death of Christ the divine attitude toward the human family can no longer be the same. God is enabled to deal with lost souls in the light of what Christ has accomplished. (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

05150

SANCTIFICATION

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, [who is] our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:1-4

Thiessen suggests: "we may define sanctification as a separation to God, an imputation of Christ as our holiness, purification from moral evil, and conformation to the image of Christ. This statement needs further elaboration." He takes over a page to do so. (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949)

The terms for holiness and sanctification in the New Testament are very similar. The terms translated sanctify and sanctification are of the same family as terms translated holy.

The Greek term translated sanctify, sanctified and sanctifieth is Strong's number 37. This is the word "hagiazo." It is translated holy in Rev 22:1 (speaking of holy living), and hallowed in the Lord's prayer (hallowed by thy name, Mat 6:9; Lu. 11:2).

A related term (Strong's 38) is the term translated sanctification. It is "hagiasmos." It is also translated holiness at times. (Rom. 6:19; Rom. 6:22) The word seems to relate to something being set apart.

Another related term is "hagion" which is translated "sanctuary" or "holy place." It is only used in the book of Hebrews. All of the related terms refer to holiness or sanctification.

WE GOT IT. WE GET IT. WE'LL GET IT. Sanctification is both an event and a process.

We are set apart for the Lord's purposes. He should direct us into that which He desires for us. This is dependent upon our willingness to follow.

We need to mention two terms which have been covered in detail elsewhere. Standing and state relate to this study. Standing is that which we have in Christ before God. These are things which we have automatically when we are converted. Our state is the way we are living. We can live in a sinful state, or we can live in a state of relative holiness. So, standing is what we are before God and state is what we are living like before God.

As an event sanctification is an event of standing, something which happens at the moment of salvation. Believers are sanctified no mater what their state is. You can be submerged in sin (state), yet you are sanctified in God's eyes (standing). We are set apart whether we act like it or not. If we are living for God, then we are sanctified in both our standing and state.

I Cor. 1:2 mentions, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called [to be] saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:" This pictures the sanctification before God. It is something that is a done deal.

Sanctification as a process is the process by which we make ourselves, with God's help, sanctified. Col. 3:4-13 mentions things that we as believer are to do. Take a moment to read this passage.

In this passage we are encouraged to "Mortify" our members. Verse 8 tells us to put off the works of our former life. Verses 10-12 tell us to put on the new man - the works of the sanctified person, as opposed to the works of the lost life.

We are sanctified in God's eyes, yet this is not complete. We still have that state in which we sin. There is a day in the future, when we will reside in our glorified bodies when we will be finally and completely sanctified for all of eternity. God will see to this event for all that have accepted His Son's work on the cross.

Let me list some references and comments which will cover the sanctification of the believer.

IT IS AN EVENT

GOD SANCTIFIED US: Jude 1; I Thess. 5:23.

CHRIST PROVIDED FOR IT: Eph. 5:26; Heb. 2:11; Heb. 13:12. With his blood (Heb. 13:12) and His body (Heb. 10:10). Righteousness and redemption are also linked to sanctification, in relation to Christ's provision. I cor. 1:30.

THE HOLY SPIRIT ENACTED IT: Rom. 15:16; I Cor. 6:11; I Pet. 1:2.

IT IS A PROCESS

GOD DESIRES SANCTIFICATION: Sanctification is God's will. I Thess. 4:3 "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication;" It should be our desire as well. We need to see to it that our mental faculties bring about decisions which keep us in a state of sanctification. (In our state. We have nothing to do with our standing sanctification. It is complete and set by God.)

WE ARE TO SET GOD APART IN OUR LIVES: The Lord's prayer (Matt. 6:9) uses the term of God's name. "Hallowed be thy name" This relates to using the Lord's name improperly. His name should be something that we set apart for only Him.

He should be uppermost in our lives. I Pet. 3:15 "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" He should rule our lives. This is our decision. Either we allow him to or we rule ourselves.

WE ARE TO SET OURSELVES APART FOR GOD: II Tim. 2:21 "If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and fit for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." That seems to be self explanatory!

WE CAN SET OBJECTS APART FOR GOD'S USE: This was done in the Old Testament. II Chron. 29:17 "So they sanctified the house of the Lord" This might relate to building dedications. As long as the service is centered on God, and the buildings use for Him, it would be quite appropriate to dedicate a building. (Or possibly an airplane for missionary service, etc.)

Sanctification for food is mentioned in I Tim. 4:4,5 "For every creature of god is good, and nothing is to be refused, if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God

and prayer."

A question might have come to your mind. Just how does sanctification relate to salvation. We have seen that it is something which takes place at salvation. We have seen that it is a provision of God through Christ. We have also seen that it has other aspects, but how does it relate to salvation? Let us consider this for a moment.

1. We, at salvation, are set apart for God, or should we maybe say unto Christ. John 6:39-40 "And this is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." This text seems to show two things. First, God has given the believer to Christ, and secondly, He will take care of those given Him unto eternity.

2. Romans 8:28 and following indicate that there was a setting apart in eternity past. It is related to the predestination of some unto salvation. I Pet. 1:2 also relates to this train of thought. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:"

3. We are a peculiar people. Eph. 1:14 "Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory." ("purchased possession" is the same term translated a peculiar people in I Pet 2:9)

Notice here that we have redemption tied to possession. Christ bought us to be a possession. The term redemption has the idea of "buy out of the market." This idea of sanctification seems to be the setting apart of the believer after the price has been paid. The taking home of the product, or the servant if you will.

Eph. 1:4 may well be the clincher to this thinking. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him, in love." Chosen to stand before him without blame!

Another passage which ties in well with this is I Pet. 1:20, "Who [Christ] verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you," Christ was foreordained to die for those that were predestinated to be His peculiar people or His possession! He purchased us (redemption).

Sanctification is an event which takes place at salvation. It is also a process as we attempt to maintain holy lives. We are set apart in standing before God, but we are to be set apart in our state as we live before Him.

APPLICATION:

"Once there lived another man within me,
Child of earth and slave of Satan he;
But I nailed him to the cross of Jesus,
And that man is nothing now to me.
Now Another Man is living in me,
And I count His blessed life as mine;
I have died with Him to all my own life;
I have ris'n to all His life divine."
Rev. A. B. Simpson.

We are to be holy people, or set apart for His purposes. I Pet. 1:16 "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am Holy." A simple instruction! God is Holy and that is the example that we are to follow!

We must make the decision as to how we live this life that we have been given.

ON DIFFERENT TRACKS

"An eminent Eastern divine was riding, some years ago, on one of two railways which ran side by side for a mile or two, and then diverged, ending at points far distant from each other. Sitting with him was a clergyman of 'liberal' views, who had what he supposed to be an unanswerable question to ask.

"'You orthodox have among you regenerate souls, as you call them, who are proud, and penurious, and uncomfortable to others, as husbands, fathers, and friends. Then, too, you have unregenerate sinners who are amiable and genial, public spirited, and, in short, make for the present, at least, a better show than the saints. Now, I want to know the real difference between the worst Christian and the best sinner.'

"Just then, his friend, looking out the car window, saw another train moving by their side, and said, 'You see that other train?'

"'Yes.'
"'With the same number of cars as ours?'
"'Yes.'
"'And the two engines are alike?'
"' Yes.'
"'Not much difference as to looks between them?'
"'No.'
"'But, my dear friend, they are running on different tracks!'"
Lorenz, (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949)

Many years ago I picked up a quote from somewhere, I know not where. It is great for our thoughts so I would like to share it. "Sow a THOUGHT, and you reap an ACT. Sow an ACT, and you reap a HABIT. Sow a HABIT, and you reap a CHARACTER. Sow a CHARACTER, and you reap a DESTINY."

So it is with the life of holiness. A thought moves to being an act, which if repeated becomes a habit, which becomes part of your character, and that becomes part of your destiny. You will become a holy person.

05200

JUSTIFICATION

"Justification may be defined as that judicial act of God by which, on account of Christ, to whom the sinner is united by faith, He declares that sinner to be no longer exposed to the penalty of the law but restored to divine favor." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, pp 316-317)

Pardington continues in a note, "In the New Testament, the word "justify" means not to make righteous, but to declare righteous. And justification is the state of one who is thus declared righteous"

Let's look at the terms used in the New Testament.

NOUNS

"dikaiosis" "denote the act of pronouncing righteous, justification, acquittal; its precise meaning is determined by that of the verb "dikaioo", to justify" (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.) Rom. 4:25 "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." (Scofield mentions "for" in both cases can be translated "on account of.") Rom. 5:18 "...by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

"dikaioma" "has three distinct meanings, and seems best described comprehensively as "a concrete expression of righteousness;" it is a declaration that a person or thing is righteous, and hence, broadly speaking, it represents the expression and effect of "dikaiosis"" (Vine) This word is translated ordinances, judgment, righteousness and justification.

VERBS

"dikaioo" "primarily, to deem to be right" (Vine)

These terms are very closely related to the terms translated righteousness.

Now that we have seen the terms, we need to draw some conclusions from their usage in the Scriptures.

JUSTIFICATION IS DEPENDENT ON THE RESURRECTION: Rom. 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." It would seem that the resurrection was a prerequisite for our justification. This would relate to the fact that if there were no resurrection, Christ could not enter the heavenly tabernacle to offer His blood. Without the offering of His blood there could be no justification.

JUSTIFICATION IS A FREE GIFT FROM CHRIST: Rom. 5:18, "Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life." Christ provided, in His death, the justification of all that come to Him for salvation.

JUSTIFICATION IS DEPENDANT ON BELIEF: Acts 13:39, "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (See also, Rom. 3:26)

JUSTIFICATION IS NOT BASED ON WORKS: Rom. 3:20, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law [is] the knowledge of sin." (See also Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16) There is nothing that we can do to secure justification. We cannot gain it by keeping the law, we cannot gain it by keeping a list of do's and don'ts, and we can't gain it by giving up material items.

We might just insert a brief commentary on the thought of legalism. Legalism in the Bible is the attempt to keep the law to gain salvation. There are those today that relate legalism to many other thoughts. BIBLICALLY, legalism is keeping the law for salvation.

Some charge that anyone that keeps a list of do's and don'ts is a legalist. NOT SO! God keeps a list of do's and don'ts in the Word, and He is not a legalist. Lists are not wrong! If a person is attempting to gain salvation by keeping those lists, then they are legalistic.

Don't allow someone to condemn you because God has burdened your heart to not do something. It is between you and God, and it is not legalism. If your convictions are based on the Word, then you are responsible before God to follow them. Do it.

JUSTIFICATION CORRECTS THE PROBLEMS OF THE FLESH: Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16. The natural position of man is one which will result in the lake of fire. That position is changed by the work of justification. Justification corrects all that Adam brought upon mankind.

JUSTIFICATION IS RELATED TO REDEMPTION: We cannot be justified, until we are

redeemed. Yes, the two occur in an instant, yet justification cannot occur until we are redeemed. Romans 3:24

JUSTIFICATION COMES VIA THE GRACE OF GOD: Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" (Also Titus 3:7) We fell with Adam, and God was not responsible. He had no obligation to do anything, yet because He was gracious, He extended salvation as a remedy to our problem.

JUSTIFICATION BRINGS SONSHIP: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:7 Again, we see the sequence of the salvation event. We are justified, and then we have sonship available. Sonship then is dependent upon justification. This is only logical. God is not going to share His Son's kingdom with children of Satan.

JUSTIFICATION IS BY FAITH: Justification cannot be worked for, bought, or stolen. It is dependent on the faith of the individual that comes to Christ for salvation. (Rom. 3:28, 30; 5:1; Gal. 3:24)

JUSTIFICATION IS PROVIDED BY GOD: "Seeing [it is] one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." Romans 3:30 (It comes by belief; Rom. 4:5. It frees us from all charges; Rom. 8:33.)

JUSTIFICATION IS ACCOMPLISHED BY CHRIST'S BLOOD: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Romans 5:9 His blood being offered in the heavenly tabernacle opened the way for justification to become a reality. With no blood, there would be no justification. We were fully dependent upon Christ and His provision.

JUSTIFICATION IS A RESULT OF PREDESTINATION: "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:30) Again, we see the sequence aspect of salvation. In this text justification is preceded by our calling, and followed by glorification.

JUSTIFICATION IS CARRIED OUT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:11) As in most of the great doctrines of salvation, God the Father enacted the program, God the Son made provision for the program, and God the Holy Spirit brings the program to pass in the individuals life.

JUSTIFICATION IS FOR ALL PEOPLES: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Galatians 3:8) God provided salvation to all peoples in the beginning, but in Abraham narrowed His focus for a time. This is not to say that only Jews could be saved, but that the Jews were the messengers. In Abraham, all nations were to be blessed.

JUSTIFICATION SHOULD RESULT IN A CHANGED WALK: "the just shall live by faith." Our walk should be based completely on faith in God. Our lives should be planned by faith, our years should be planned by faith, and our every minute should be planned by faith.

This is not a request, but a command. God expects us to live by faith, no matter what situation we find ourselves in. It has always interested me to notice that our Christian colleges and seminaries attempt to teach their students to live by faith. They expect their faculty to live by faith. Yet, the organization is somehow magically exempt from this concept. The School must survive, so the students WILL have money for school before they arrive. Many students have been turned away at registration because they do not have a specific amount of money.

If the student is to walk by faith, and the faculty is to walk by faith, then how can they learn this concept if the institution is not operating by faith? Seems somewhat illogical to me.

I would like to list some quotations which will further define the thought of justification.

Chafer mentions, "Imputed righteousness is the ground of justification. According to the New Testament usage, the words "righteousness" and "justify" are from the same root. God declares the one justified forever whom He sees in Christ. It is an equitable decree since the justified one is clothed in the righteousness of God. Justification is not a fiction or a state of feeling; it is rather an immutable reckoning in the mind of God. Like imputed righteousness, justification is by faith (Rom. 5:1), through grace (Titus 3:4-7), and made possible through the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 3:24; 4:25). It is abiding and unchangeable since it rests only on the merit of the eternal son of God.

"Justification is more than forgiveness, since forgiveness is the cancellation of sin while justification is the imputing of righteousness. Forgiveness is negative (the removal of condemnation), while justification is positive (the bestowing of the merit and standing of Christ)." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry/Revised by Walvoord, John F.; "MAJOR BIBLE THEMES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, p 200)

Chafer in his systematic theology: "Theologically considered, the term justification means to be declared righteous. It is true that, being in Christ, the believer is righteous; but justification is the divine acknowledgment and declaration that the one who is in Christ is righteous. That which God thus publishes He defends. Justification is immutable." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. III, p 128)

The Westminster Shorter Catechism states, "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone."

The opposite of justification seems to be condemnation. We were condemned to the lake of fire, and now we are justified.

CONCLUSION

I would like to share some thoughts from Best Sermon Pictures by Lawson; Moody Press. They were quoting The Sunday School Times. "An instrument used for weighing gold in the assay office is balanced so delicately that, when two pieces of paper, of exactly the same size and weight, are placed on the balances, it still retains the same poise. But if a name be written on one of the papers, it will turn the scale. The name of Jesus on the heart turns the scale into peace and presence of God. It is the possession of His name thus written that spells "saved." It is the lack of it that spells "lost."

Justification has been defined as "just as if I had never sinned." Indeed, it is more than that. It is as if I were Christ, in which there is no sin. I have the same standing before God that Christ has. Ponder that point for awhile.

05250

SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

When I arrived at Bible college, I was very young in the Lord and had very little training in the Word. I had one misconception of the Christian life which lead me to doubt in other areas of life.

I felt that as the believer matured, it was similar to the mountain climber's experience. As the believer goes through their maturing process, I felt that they had many problems, and trials which lead them to the maturity that they were seeking. As the mountain climber climbs, and works, and struggles up the mountain they are under heavy trials, but once they reach the summit, they can lay down and relax and enjoy the view. My feeling was that as the believer reaches maturity, the trials and problems disappeared, so that we can enjoy the Lord and His life for us.

This misconception lead me after a year or two of hard work, trials and many problems to wonder, whether I was really saved. I did not have the peace of knowing that I was eternally secure. Many are the quiet times and drives to work that were spent in wondering if I were really saved.

As my Bible training progressed, I was taught that we are maturing throughout this life, and there was no summit, where we have no more trials. I also learned that my salvation was not based on what I felt, nor on what I could do for God. I found that my Salvation was God's idea, and that it's ultimate completion in the next life was up to Him, not me.

I spent way to much time in spiritual turmoil, because of my lack of knowledge.

I trust that the study will bring you to the same knowledge. The knowledge that our salvation is not up to us, but it is up to God.

This doctrine may be hard to find in the theology books because of the diversity of terms by which it is called.

Some list it as "security," some as "eternal security," while some use the term "assurance" and yet others have used "perseverance".

Briefly, we might put it this way. It is the place of salvation with in God's realm of authority in which the believer stands forever. Since the position is "in" God, and "in" Christ there is nothing from without, which can harm the believer's position, nor is there anything from within which would want to harm the believer's position.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer quotes, and agrees with the Westminister Confession of Faith. "They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved" (17.1)

In words that I can understand, I believe that he is stating that once you are born into the family of God, you are stuck - you can't get out, you can't fall out, you can't get thrown out, you can't get enticed out, you can't get yanked out, and you can't think yourself out.

I would like to make two introductory statements concerning this doctrine.

1. I do not believe that this issue is one that can ever hinder or assist your salvation, nor standing before God. You are in the family of God whether you believe the doctrine or not. I base this on the Word of God, and will show this to you shortly.

2. The belief in eternal security can and should be of great benefit to the believer. Not only in facing their own death, but the death of others in their family.

It is not license to sin. Just because you're in, it doesn't mean that you shouldn't live a Godly life.

The lack of belief in eternal security can lead to a great lack of peace and unsureness in the persons personal life. It on the other hand tends to be a good motivator to Godly living!

There are basically two views to the doctrine. The Armenian and the Calvinist. The Armenian believes that you can loose your salvation, and the Calvinist believes that you cannot loose your salvation.

Let us consider these views this.

THE ARMENIAN VIEW as we have mentioned, is that the saved can be lost. We won't attempt to consider all of the passages that these people present. We want to concentrate on what the Bible tells us concerning our salvation.

Thiessen lists several objections to security which the non-security person would raise.

1. "That it induces laxness and indolence." To which the security person would reply - yes, you may well be correct on that point, yet it is God that set the doctrine to words in His Message to man and He is responsible for the consequences of His Word.

2. "That it robs man of his freedom." Once saved from eternal punishment and separation from God, it is hard to see anyone worrying about the fact that they can no longer go to hell by there own free will.

3. "That the Scriptures teach the contrary." Very emphatically this statement would have to be refuted!

4. "That there are many warnings." Warnings of lost reward, lost peace etc. yes, however none of lost salvation.

In considering verses which are presented by the non-security people there are some things which need to be considered. These thoughts are condensed from Chafer's Major Bible Themes. (Mr. Chafer continues with a very nice presentation of evidence for the eternal security of the believer.)

1. One holding to security usually realizes that a person can, from outward appearances, accept Christ, but that in reality at times this is an acceptance in the mind and not in the heart. After awhile there can be a falling away which the non-security person will point to as someone losing their salvation, which is in reality the falling away of a professor.

2. At other times it is admitted that "Christians" act like the world. Paul is very clear in his thinking on these "Carnal Christians" that are saved yet live like the lost. The lost that live like the saved can return to living like the lost and appear to be people that have lost their salvation as well. This situation can confuse the issue.

3. Some texts set forth by the insecure deal with rewards which may be won or lost, yet this has nothing to do with salvation.

4. A Christian that is out of fellowship is not the picture of Christ either.

5. The wayward Christian may be chastised and appear to be on God's black list yet God is trying to draw him back.

6. Gal. 5:1-4 mentions that the believer can fall from grace, however this is speaking of way of life not position before the Lord. In the early church there seemed to be the thought of encouraging the believers with the fact of their eternal salvation, yet needing to encourage them in keeping their spiritual life in proper working order.

7. Both the misinterpretation, and the interpretation out of context problems, mislead people into the thought of losing their salvation.

8. The crux of the matter is the one, or the person if you will, that brings salvation to pass. If it is man, then yes I would assume that we could walk in and out of anything that we could dream up, yet we know that the Lord God is the author and finisher of this work and it is a bewilderment to me how anyone could believe that God could not devise a better plan than one that I could slip from.

9. A point which I am surprised Mr. Chafer did not bring up is the fact that there is an overabundance of teaching which shows that the believer is eternally secure.

10. The person needs to understand that trials, troubles, and problems, are normal in the Christian life. These are not problems that are caused because we are not believers.

11. Feelings are irrelevant when we are dealing with God and His work in us.

THE CALVINIST VIEW

The view of the Calvinist is held to and defended quite extensively in Chafer Vol. III beginning at page 267. This view is based on four items of which one is the security of the believer.

1. "Depravity, by which term is meant that there is nothing in fallen man that could commend him to God. He is an object of divine grace."

The Wesleys believed in the depravity of man, indeed they agreed with most of what the Calvinists held, including grace to bring man to God, and election by a sovereign God. They did differ when it came to the security of the believer. They felt that piety and good works, were those tools given to man by which he might retain the salvation that had been given to him.

2. "Efficacious grace, by which term is meant that fallen man, in being saved, is wrought upon wholly by god - even the faith which he exercises in his salvation is a "gift of God"

3. "Sovereign and eternal election, by which term is meant that those who are saved by efficacious grace from the estate of depravity have been chosen of God for that blessedness from before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; Rom. 8:30)."

4. "Eternal security, by which term it is meant that those chosen of God and saved by grace are, of necessity, preserved unto the realization of the design of God. Since sovereign election purposes this and sovereign grace accomplishes it, the Scriptures could not - being infinitely true - do other than to declare the Christian's security without reservation or complication."

SECURITY TEXTS

Jo. 1:12 "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:"

This passage states that we are children of God - we can't be unborn thus we must be eternally secure. We have three children. Laurie, Stanley and Timothy. They were born unto the couple, Faith and Stanley Derickson. They are our children. They may deny it, they may dislike it, they may hate it, but these things do not change the parentage, nor the linage.

We as believers, are of our Father, Almighty God. We cannot change that relationship no matter how we try. I have to wonder why anyone would feel that we could, or would want to change that relationship.

Jo. 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We have eternal life. It is wrong to say we can loose our eternal life because if we can loose it then it wasn't eternal (I only had it for a very short time).

The phrase "shall never perish" is a double negative in the Greek language. A good translation would be "by no means perish."

Jo. 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." Now, if a person can loose his or her salvation, how can Christ promise that the believer will never come into judgment? Impossible.

Jo. 6:37 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." We come to Christ for our salvation, and He will not, indeed cannot cast us out.

John 10:27-30 "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Some say yes but they can jump out. How foolish to use such an argument. Never perish. Never plucked out. How much plainer can the Word be?

Jo. 14:13,14 "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

Christ used a contrast in tenses that is very important here. The well water - you drink continually - this a present tense, while the water from Christ, you drink only once - this an aorist - one time act of drinking. If salvation can be lost, then once lost always lost, because you cannot redrink.

Jo. 17:12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Christ lost none of the disciples except Judas. Judas was not one of His, he was a

professor in the following for the money.

Rom. 5:8-10 "being now justified" is an aorist tense - one time occurrence. There is no indication that it can be repeated.

Rom. 6:3-5 We are in Christ so that if we can loose our salvation then He also can slip from the hand of the Father. NOT SO!! IMPOSSIBLE!

Romans 8:30 shows that we are already glorified in God's eyes. This is impossible, if we can ruin our salvation.

Rom. 8:35-37 lists a number of things that can't separate us from Christ. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, nor the sword.

Rom. 8:38,39 lists things which can't separate us from the love of God. If we are in His love, we are in Him. Death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any creature.

I Cor. 1:8,9 We are to be kept blameless till the day of the Lord. (This blameless means blameless in God's eyes - not sinless. This blamelessness is due to Christ's work. We are justified in God's eyes, even though this action is not in its completed state as yet.)

Gal. 4:5-7 Vs 5 states, "receive full rights of sons". An aorist tense - one time occurrence. Once received, it would no longer be available.

Eph. 2:8,9 show that salvation is by grace not of works - thus if salvation is based on what we do or don't do, as they believe, then the Scriptures are wrong in stating that it isn't of works!

I Thess. 5:23,24 Our spirit, soul and body will be kept until Christ's coming.

Titus 3:3ff Our righteous works have nothing to do with our salvation.

Heb. 1:3 Christ is upholding all things. He is maintaining the heavens and the earth. He is maintaining governments in the world. Can't He hang on to me if I sin? I THINK SO!

Heb. 7:25 God is able to save completely.

And many many more verses if you only will think about them.

Salvation is seen in Scripture as being totally God's responsibility. When we accept Christ, THEN God is responsible to carry it through. What we feel, or think, or do, has nothing to do with it.

Good works and a holy life are the normal response of the Christian. If a person claims to be a Christian, but continues in a life of sin, then one might wonder if that person was really saved. Even seeing Christians turn to lives of sin. They may not have been saved either.

We must remember that unsaved people can lead a "good life" without God. Our job is to witness and leave the judging to God.

There are many other texts and logical arguments to this doctrine.

DOES IT MATTER THAT WE BELIEVE IN SECURITY?

YES

1. It gives us confidence to share an everlasting gospel.

2. It will lead to Holy living - He's done so much - we will want to live His way, to please Him!

3. It will determine how we interpret some texts. Every promise to the New Testament believer will be dependant on me, rather than the one that makes it - God. In the family situation, if a father promises to take the child for ice cream, it is not the child's responsibility to drive the car, take the parent, and pay for the treat. The father promised it, and it is his responsibility to carry it forth to completion.

4. It will shape our view of God. Is He an ogre watching for a slip, or is He gracious and wanting to do things for us?

5. It will give us a peaceful life - confident in our destination. If we aren't secure our life will always be up in the air.

6. Security is a tremendous comfort in time of trials. We can know that the trials are for a time and for a purpose, and that one day we will reap the reward in our after life.

7. If we don't believe in security then we will be doing works for the wrong reasons. (We will be working to stay on the road to heaven, rather than for Christ and His glory.)

8. It is proper doctrine taught by the inspired Word of God, so we should very definitely believe it.

CONCLUSION

From the daily bread.

"An aged woman who had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ was still plagued with doubts about her

eternal destiny. So my father and another elder were delegated to counsel with her concerning her fears. After quoting several texts on assurance, my dad said, "Grandma, if you saw one group of people drinking, cursing, and singing worldly songs, and right next door a gathering of joyful believers were singing gospel hymns and testifying of God's saving grace, which company would attract you?" Without hesitation she exclaimed, "Oh, I'd only feel at home with the saints of God. I love to fellowship with them!" Then he showed her" the following text. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren...." I Jo 3:14a (Used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

VERSES PRESENTED BY THOSE THAT BELIEVE THAT A BELIEVER CAN LOOSE THEIR SALVATION:

I have listed all that I have run into. I will comment on some of them, but usually a long look at the context will explain what the verse is really talking about. This is usually true in all doctrinal questions. The context normally clears the fog raised.

Mark 13:22 This verse is very specifically speaking of leading astray and has nothing to do with eternal life.

Luke 8:13 supposedly pictures a believer that fell away. Seems more like an intellectual belief.

Acts 5:32 The Holy Spirit is given to "them that obey him." The context looks like Peter may have been slamming them and they didn't realize it. Peter in verse 29 states they "obey God rather than men." Then in 32 again mentions obey as though - we obey God, not man - and the indication - YOU OBEY MAN IN YOUR RELIGION AND NOT GOD!

Another possible interpretation is that Peter is speaking of those that obey in the realm of salvation. He was speaking to those that were rejecting the message that God had been giving. Chafer holds to this in Vol. VI, p 131 and lists II Thess. 1:8 as reference. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This seems to speak of the Gospel when Acts mentions obeying "Him" yet may shed light on the meaning of the passage. Another verse which may help is Heb. 5:9 "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him,"

(Another possibility is seen in the fact that they had been told to stop speaking - they hadn't and now are trying to explain the situation. Vs. 32 fully states, "And we are HIS WITNESSES of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to THEM THAT OBEY HIM." IN THE WITNESS. The text seems to be speaking of only those involved.)

Acts 11:21-23 "exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." I

would imagine the insecure believe that you need to hang on, or the Lord is going to shake you off.

This means nothing more than is encouraged today! "Hang in there baby!" This common expression is indicative of maintaining what is there. This text is not speaking of salvation. Hanging onto the Lord is not salvation, but is keeping Him close for help and encouragement.

Acts 13:43 "persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." I would assume that this is speaking of the general walk of the believers. We would urge the same thing in our circles today. Encouraging one another to continue in the grace that God has been giving to you in your daily lives.

Acts 14:21,22 "exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "in the faith" in scripture is used of the Christian beliefs. "The Faith" has nothing to do with continuing in salvation. The idea of tribulation is the fact that they were going through hard times and it was through much tribulation they would go before they entered into the kingdom.

Rom. 6:11-23 I see nothing here to comment on. This is a discussion of the old way of life and the new way of life in Christ.

Rom. 8:12-17 Again this is a discussion of the way of life. It does mention "ye shall die" however this is the context of living and being taken home not eternal living.

Rom. 11:20-22 This text is speaking of two groups of people and is contrasting Jews and Gentiles, not individual believers and non believers.

Rom. 14:15-23 Again this text is speaking of personal living and has nothing to do with salvation or eternal things.

I Cor. 9:23-27 If this text is placed in a salvation - eternal things context, then verse 24 states that there will only be one person in heaven. "but one receiveth the prize" It would seem that this is speaking of rewards rather than salvation.

I Cor. 10:1-21 I'm not sure what could be built from this text.

I Cor. 11:29-32 The context is the misuse of the Lord's table. Some evidently had died because of it. The exhortation "that we should not be condemned with the world." evidently is used to show that believers can be condemned with the world. True, they can, for it says it, however what is meant by it is the question. The text is clear that it is physical death. If that person were left on earth his sin would cause him to be condemned before the other Christians. Judged would have the idea that the Christians were weighing Christian conduct and finding some of it was similar to the worlds conduct. Might this be the condemnation that is in view? I think so.

I Cor. 15:1,2 "believed in vain" would indicate a belief that failed. I would say he is calling into question the people's belief. Was it really valid? If it was then you stand in it. If it was a false belief then you do not stand in it.

II Cor. 11:2-4 Paul is simply stating that he is concerned about them, and those that might come teaching falsely. He is concerned that he present them to the Lord in good shape. Not that they can fall and not be at the presentation, but that they be less than Paul desires at the presentation.

II Cor. 12:21 Concern over sin yet there is nothing of an eternal nature in view.

II Cor. 13:5 It would seem that faith is used in the thought of beliefs and walk here. Nothing eternal here either.

It seems to me thus far that people that would use these verses to show a loss of salvation must also believe that sinless perfection is also the alternative to loss of salvation. If this indeed is the case then they must have an awfully frustrating life trying to stay perfect and "in" without sinning and falling "out"!!

Gal. 3:4-4:1

Gal. 5:1-4 This is speaking of falling from life of faith into a life under the law.

Gal. 6:7-9

Phil 2:12,12 "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." If you work it out yourself then you'd better do it with fear and trembling yet if you allow God to work it out you will have complete confidence.

Col. 1:21-23 The context is Christian walk not salvation. The "if" in verse 23, by the way is a 3rd class condition which means "if, and assumed so," Paul was assured in his mind that this would be the case. Again in the faith is speaking of living and beliefs.

Col. 2:4-8,18,19 Again there is nothing eternal in these verses. They are speaking of being misled by false teachers.

I Thes. 3:5
I Tim. 1:3-7,18-20
I Tim. 2:11-15
I Tim. 4:1-16
I Tim. 5:5-15
I Tim. 6:9-12,17-21
II Tim. 2:11-18,22-26
II Tim. 3:13-15

Heb. 2:1-3
Heb. 3:6-19
Heb. 4:1-16
Heb. 5:8-9

Heb. 6:4-20 It should be remembered that this passage is to be interpreted in light of all of scripture. There are multitudes of verses to show the security of the believer.

Hebrews 10:14 "FOR BY ONE OFFERING HE HATH PERFECTED FOREVER THEM THAT ARE SANCTIFIED." Remember this verse is coming up in the book when you interpret the one we are dealing with!

Three main views are presented to thwart the Armenian view of this passage.

1. That these people are non-Christians. Chafer Vol. 3, p 302 states that Scofield holds to this position. Chafer goes on to defend that position himself.

2. That this is a hypothetical warning given by the writer. This warning was given to believers.

3. Thiessen holds that these are Jews that had nominally accepted Christianity [they were saved people], but had returned to Judaism. This position, though slightly different, would fit into the thinking of number four.

4. That these are carnal Christians.

If these are saved people then you can't resave them for they are still saved no matter what. Thus pick them up (get their lives straight before God) and continue from this point on. You cannot bring them again unto saving repentance. That is an impossibility.

A return to 5:1 to read the whole text helps see a flow around the passage.

Actually, it seems that Paul was trying to show the same thing we are. He was dealing with people that didn't understand that they couldn't resave people. If they are going to go through saving repentance again then Christ will have to be crucified again. Indeed, that is one of the teachings in this book that the author sets forth. That is that Christ offered once for all and there is no need to offer, and offer, and offer, as they did in the Old Testament.

Ryrie states in his Basic Theology, "I personally understand the passage to be describing born again people. The phrases in verses 4 and 5 clearly refer to a conversion experience (cf. "enlightened" in 10:32, "taste" in 2:9, and "partakers" in 12:8), but they are willfully immature believers (cf. 5:11-14). Now, the writer warns, since it is impossible to go back in the Christian life to start it over (but if one could it would be necessary to fall away first in order to go back to the beginning), there are only two remaining options: stay where you are in this state of

immaturity, or move forward to maturity (6:1). Since their present state was undesirable, this passage was a strong warning to go on in the Christian life. This warning is similar to that which a teacher might give a class: "It is impossible for you students, once enrolled in this course, turning the clock back (which cannot be done, but which would have to be done if one could go back to the beginning) to start this course over. Therefor, go on to further knowledge." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 333, 324)

Heb. 10:19-39
Heb. 11:13-16
Heb. 12:1-17, 25-29
Heb. 13:7-17
James 1:12-26
James 2:14-26
James 4:4-10
James 5:19,20
I Pet. 5:9,13
II Pet. 1:5-11

II Pet. 2:1-22 vs. 22 "a dog returns to its vomit" Prov. 26:11 Septuagint: "As a dog becometh odius when he returneth to his vomit; so is a fool for his wickedness, when he returneth to his sin."

King James "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly"

This text is speaking of false teachers. The quote from the Old Testament indicates that it was a matter of them returning to their old ways rather than turning from a good walk to a fleshly walk. Either way the reference is not speaking of eternal things - only way of walk.

II Pet. 3:16-17
I Jo. 1:5
I Jo. 3:11
I Jo. 5:4-16
II John 6-9
Jude 5-12, 20, 21
Rev. 2:7,10,11,17-26
Rev. 3:4,5,8-22
Rev. 12:11
Rev. 17:14
Rev. 21:7,8
Rev. 22:18,19

To sum up:

Salvation is from a life of sin to a live of holiness.
Salvation is from the sin nature to a new nature.
Salvation is from hell to heaven.
Salvation is from death to life.

It is hard to believe that a logical, systematic God would design a system of salvation that intricate, and then have to reverse His decision or reinstitute His work at the whim of the one that He had given His Son on the cross to save.

We are saved by the substitutionary atonement of Christ. To not be saved after the atonement has been applied to us would be an affront to the work that Christ did on the cross.

It boils down to which you believe. Once saved, always saved. OR Once saved, always worried. Since God promises us peace, it would seem that the former would be the plan of salvation that He would have designed.

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FAITH

Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. Heb 12:2
Without faith we cannot please God. Heb 11:6

".....allegiance to duty or a person: LOYALTY.....belief and trust in and loyalty to God.....belief in the traditional doctrines of a religion.....something that is believed esp. with strong conviction; esp.: a system of religious beliefs....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Cambron mentions that there are three parts to faith. Knowledge, belief, and trust. Knowledge: Rom. 10:17 "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" 2. Belief: "The second element of faith is belief. Everyone knows what belief means, that is, to accept something as the truth. People can know that there is a Savior by the name of Jesus, and believe that He can save. Yet, this is not saving faith." 3. Trust: Trust is essential to faith in anything. It is most essential in saving faith. It is one thing to know that Christ died, and believe it; It is quite another thing to trust Him, the dying and resurrected Savior, for salvation.

He likens it to a chair. You must KNOW of it's existence before you can BELIEVE that there is such a thing. You cannot TRUST the chair until you have tested it by sitting in it. You must have faith in your judgment and quick reaction, to test it.

A look at Romans 10:14,15 would back up the idea of a process involved in these items. "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?"

Do you agree with his analysis that faith is made up of these things? They may lead to faith, or help faith to grow, but they are not faith by themselves, nor combined.

So, what is faith? In Hebrews 11:1 we see what faith is. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Verse three is an illustration of this thought. We by faith can accept that God created the heavens and the earth. That is a vivid example of faith. (This would indicate that the unsaved can have a certain amount of faith. I believed in the creation by God long before I was confronted with the Gospel.)

Eph. 2:8,9 mentions, "For by grace are ye saved through faith;" We cannot be saved without faith. Faith is of utmost importance, so we must understand what it is.

Pardington defines faith thusly: "Faith may be defined as that voluntary change in the mind of the sinner whereby he turns to God. Like repentance, it involves a change of view, a change of feelings, and a change of purpose." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 316)

Pardington breaks faith into three parts as does Cambron. I will list these for your study. "Intellectual. This is belief in the existence of god and in the teaching of the Scriptures: John 1.22,23; James 2.19." "Emotional. This is personal faith that Christ is the only Saviour from sin: Matt. 13.21; John 5.35; 8.30,31." "Volitional (will). This is the actual surrender to Christ and present trust in Him as Saviour and Lord: Acts 16.31; Rev. 3.20."

How can we define this term? Might we suggest that it is the mental process by which we accept as true, something that cannot be proven true?

Faith is the Greek term "pistis." Faithful is the term "pistos." "pistis" is the noun, "pistos" is the adjective. It is of interest that a term that is closely related is "pisteuo." "Pisteuo" is translated "believe" in the New Testament.

Let's illustrate the difference between these terms with the word process. There is a process (noun) for developing film. To develop the film you would have to process (verb) the film. Is there a difference between the two? Yes, there is a difference. The noun "process" is dormant, dead, unproductive and worthless, while "process" the verb is working, active, productive and worth while.

It would seem that we can apply the similar reasoning to "faith" and "believe". Believe is the verb form and is active, while faith is the noun and is inactive. Belief is the action part of faith. When we mentally give assent to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and trust in that assent, we have saving faith.

Let us consider faith.

Faith has degrees: Acts 6:5,8; 11:24; Rom. 12:3; 14:1 The degrees of faith can be seen in the lives of believers. Some believers have great faith in their prayer life, while others don't have faith enough to ask for even the smallest request.

Most have heard of the great faith of Hudson Taylor. He trusted God for the support of many missionaries in his mission. He trusted that God would bring in the funds needed. God honored that faith by providing the funds needed.

Faith purifies the heart: Acts 15:9 speaks of the salvation of people. "purifying their hearts by faith." This passage links faith directly to that wonderful transition between being lost and being saved.

Faith brings justification: Rom. 3:28,30 We have already seen that justification is an integrated part of salvation. There can be no justification, except by faith, since there can be no salvation without faith. (28 "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.")

Faith brings righteousness: Rom. 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." It seems that this verse may well illustrate the noun verb relationship that we were speaking of earlier. By the act of believing the person is justified. His faith being inactive can do nothing yet it was counted as righteousness.

Heb. 11:6 is a verse that shows the same contrast between the two terms. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to god must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Faith brings propitiation: Rom. 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" Clearly, faith precedes propitiation as well as remission of sins. Faith in Christ's sacrifice brings about that shift of relationship that allows salvation to be possible.

Faith allows us to stand in His grace: Rom. 5:2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Our spiritual standing in God's family was accomplished by faith. We stand a picture of the Grace of God because of faith in His Son.

Faith comes from the Word: Rom. 10:17, So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This is not only a statement of Scripture, but is of logical necessity. Without the message from God, it would be impossible for man to know what was desired of him by the Creator.

As the lost mind is confronted by the Word of God, the Holy Spirit moves in the life to draw them unto God. We hear or read the Word and then our being must react to that information.

Faith allows us to stand: Rom. 11:20, Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:" This passage with its context pictures the believer as a branch that was grafted into the vine after the Jewish branch had been removed. We stand in salvation through faith. This speaks of our position before God. By faith, we came to Him for salvation.

Faith can be a gift: I Cor. 12:9, To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;" In the New Testament church there were spiritual gifts that were active to give sign of the Messiah that had come. One of these gifts was that of faith. The person with this gift had great faith in prayer. I suspect that this is what James speaks of when he talks about the prayer of faith.

Whether this gift is active today is not clear. The sign gifts were of a very special type. The results were special. For example the healing that Paul did. The cured bodies were special examples of the power of God. The gift of faith most likely was also special in result.

I personally do not believe that this gift is active today, however I do wonder if God does not give some saints a special capacity to have faith. When circumstances are bad, I have observed that most believers have a real faith, yet when they are in better circumstances their faith tends to falter a little. This may relate to the next point. Are we trusting in our God or ourselves.

Faith has an object: Christ is the object of our faith (Col. 1:4; 2:5). Any other object will fail us. When we sought salvation, Christ was the only answer, and thus the only object in which we could place our faith.

FAITH BRINGS SALVATION: II Tim. 3:15, "...the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in christ Jesus."

Faith must be mixed with the Gospel for salvation: Heb. 4:2, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." This relates to the fact that faith cometh by hearing. If we hear the Gospel, but do not place our trust in it, it can do no good. Mix in faith, and you have all that is necessary for the salvation of that being.

Faith without works is dead: James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Even though I had faith in the creation of God before I was saved my faith was dead for it produced nothing. This verse in itself proves also that the lost can have faith.

Can we say concerning faith then, that it is that which allows our mind to make that step of action called belief? That mental ability that allows us to take our faith one step further.

Might we also say that faith is the intellect reacting, and that belief is the will reacting? By belief I mean a belief that has repentance built in.

Faith then can be possessed by the lost and not be leading them toward salvation. (As in the case of Heb 11:1-3)

Faith is the - shall we say - precursor to belief/repentance. Belief is the step of action which moves the lost person into the family of God.

Can we say then the Word Working in the intellect, causes the intellect to have faith? Can we further say that the faith of the intellect moves the will to act, or believe, causing salvations plan to become active? I think so.

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How does, and where does trust come into the picture? Trust must be the ingredient which causes faith to bear fruit in belief. I had faith and trust in the Word, in creation, in God, but didn't know the Gospel.

I heard the Gospel and faith moved me immediately to belief in the Gospel and my new salvation.

Belief can be active in the lost; belief in creation, in God, in Christ, in the resurrection, or in many things. What moves that person to belief with repentance? Faith and trust? Faith? Trust? How about the Holy Spirit?

Can the lost have faith and trust in creation? Yes.
Can the lost have faith and trust in the resurrection? Yes.
Can the lost have faith and trust in the Word? Yes.
Can they still be lost? Yes.

If belief is active - as above, then belief activated by faith in relation to Christ's work is what saves.

So.

Faith - trust - repentance - belief can be present in the lost persons life without salvation. It is when these are centered on Christ that salvation can occur.

The further we study, the more it seems that man is very close to the same place that the angels were. At a point in eternity past they accepted, or rebelled. We also come to a point where we accept, or reject.

Can you have belief without faith? Yes, the devil's believe. It seems that belief in facts is simple belief, yet belief of facts and trusting in those facts is complex belief which leads to salvation.

Faith, belief, and repentance are almost instantaneous, however there seems to be a sequence of events. Faith the inactive takes action in belief. Faith may be present before salvation. Belief may be present before salvation. However, the faith that trusts God's Gospel causes the active.

CONVICTION/REPENTANCE/BELIEF/FAITH/TRUST seems to be the sequence.

Faith - where lostness turns to blessedness, where sinfulness turns to holiness, where rebelliousness turns to submission, where separation turns to family ties - the only place to be!

05350

FORGIVENESS

What is forgiveness? Some thoughts from Mr. McKenzie: "Sign on a company bulletin board in Grand Rapids: 'To err is human, to forgive is not company policy.'" "Have you noticed that it's much easier to forgive an enemy after you get even with him?" (McKenzie, E.C.; "14,000 QUIPS AND QUOTES FOR WRITERS AND SPEAKERS"; New York: Greenwich House, 1980)

The result of God's forgiveness: Rom. 5:18, "Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life."

Acts 13:37-39, "But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men [and] brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Some suggest that forgiveness pardons us for our sins. We are more than pardoned. We are righteous because we paid for our sins. We did not personally pay the price, but Christ paid the price for us.

Forgiveness is a part of our salvation. "The forgiveness of sin is accomplished for the sinner when he believes upon Christ and is a part of his salvation. Many things which constitute salvation are wrought of God at the moment one believes; but forgiveness is never received by the unsaved apart from the whole work of saving grace or the ground of believing on christ as savior." (Taken from the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 186)

One of the word's translated forgiveness is Strong's number 859, which is the Greek word "aphesis" which is translated forgiveness six times, but it is also translated liberty, deliverance and remission. (remission being the more common translation)

Vine tells us that aphesis "denotes a dismissal, release." (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.) Christ used the term to portray the loosing of those that were in bonds (Luke 4:18-19) It relates to the freeing from sin, or the removal of the handcuffs and release from prison.

Forgiveness is available through the shed blood of Christ. Matt 26:28 and Col. 1:14 both boldly set forth this fact. We have forgiveness because of the blood that was shed. Indeed, there is no forgiveness from God except through the shed blood of Christ. The Old Testament saints brought their blood offering to COVER their sins, until the perfect sacrifice could be offered in the heavenly holy of holies.

The Old Testament saint was required to bring a sacrifice for a covering for his sin, due to the fact that there was no finished work accomplished, whereby sin could be taken away. The blood of animals covered until the blood of Christ took the sin away.

Forgiveness comes from repentance. Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This invitation was to gain the remission, or forgiveness of sins. We have seen in previous studies that repentance is one of the first steps toward the salvation that is offered.

Forgiveness is based on different things in different economies. "Though, on the divine side, the freedom to forgive sin is always secured, directly or indirectly, through the blood of Christ, the requirements on the human side vary to some extent with the different ages of time. During the period between Abel [I would say Adam not Abel personally] and Christ, forgiveness was made, on the human side, to depend on the presentation of a specified sacrifice. During the present age, it is made to depend, for the unsaved, on faith in Christ; but for the saved, who are already under the value of Christ's blood, forgiveness is made to depend upon confession and is impelled by the fact that God has already forgiven (Eph. 4:32)." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. II. p 272)

Forgiveness comes from God. Mk. 2:7,10, "Why doth this [man] thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, [Thy] sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)" Even the Jews that rejected Christ knew that forgiveness could only come from God. So why do so many seek forgiveness through works and deeds?

Forgiveness may be a SLIGHTLY post salvation item. Acts 26:18, "To open their eyes, [and] to turn [them] from darkness to light, and [from] the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." The phrases "turned to light" and "released from the power of Satan" precede the forgiveness. The action of the Holy Spirit linked with the persons belief system evidently brings the person into a place where they can see adequately and begin to respond to God, even before their forgiveness is realized.

Forgiveness is expressed in many ways. I would like to list some of these for you. Isa 38:17 "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back"; Mic. 7:19 "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"; Jer. 31:34 "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more"; Isa 43:25 "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions"; Ps. 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Forgiveness may be a synonym for justification. This is the thought presented in THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA. "Paul rarely uses the term "forgiveness," but in its place prefers justification. They are to his understanding practically synonymous (Stemen's, Theology of the New Testament, 418) He preferred the latter, however, because it was better fitted to express the idea of secure, present and permanent acceptance in the sight of God. It connoted both a complete and a permanent state of grace. In popular thought forgiveness is not so comprehensive, but in the Bible sense it means no less than this. It removes all of the guilt and cause of alienation from the past; it assures a state of grace for the present; and promises Divine mercy and aid for the future. Its fulness cannot adequately be conveyed by any one term or formula." (Orr, James; "THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1939, par. 7)

We have only looked at one of the Greek terms translated forgiveness. I would like to just list the others and share some of Vine's comments on these.

"aphiemi" "primarily, to send forth, send away...denotes, besides its other meanings, to remit or forgive" "firstly signifies the remission of the punishment due to sinful conduct, the deliverance of the sinner from the penalty Divinely, and therefore righteously, imposed; secondly, it involves the complete removal of the cause of offence; such remission is based upon the vicarious and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ."

"charizomai" "to bestow a favour unconditionally, is used of the act of forgiveness, whether Divine, Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13;3:13; or human, Luke 7:42,43 (debt); II Cor. 2:7,10..."

Scofield says of forgiveness, "It means, TO SEND OFF or AWAY. And this, throughout Scripture, is the one fundamental meaning of forgiveness -- to separate the sin from the sinner."

Unger states in his dictionary, "Forgiveness under this consideration [for the unsaved] is never an isolated operation but always connected as an integral part of the whole divine undertaking for man called "salvation." Forgiveness is only one of the many transformations wrought of God in the unsaved in response to simple faith in Christ." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Chafer mentions, "The underlying thought which the word FORGIVE universally conveys when expressing the act of God is that of putting away, releasing, or pardoning. It is the taking away of sin and its condemnation from the offender, or offenders, by imputing the sin to, and imposing its righteous judgments upon, Another." (Systematic Theology, Vol. II, p 270)

APPLICATION:

1. A person is forgiven of ALL, sins at salvation! God doesn't select out a few choice ones to hide away so He can bring them out later to beat you over the head with. ALL ARE GONE.

As a believer, as you confess them, they are also, ALL GONE.

2. If a person wants forgiveness - salvation is the only way to receive it - that is, true, eternal forgiveness.

3. All sin is cared for at once - all penalties and causes. Just after salvation we are without sin.

How hard is it to be saved? So simple a child can do it. You simply reach out and take the gift.

So apply that to Col 2:6, "As ye have, therefore received Christ Jesus the lord, so walk ye in Him," Your walk should be as easy as your salvation.

Realize that one! How does that relate to the terrible struggle that supposedly goes on between what is taught, as the old and new nature? There is no struggle. You accept the walk of the Spirit, and enjoy it.

4. If you were given a new car, with a twenty five coat of candy apple red paint job, wouldn't you wash it when it got dirty? Wouldn't you park in a garage to keep it clean? So, why do so many Christian's allow their new soul paint job get so dirty before confessing?

Forgiveness at salvation should be special, and we should want to keep clean. I John 1:9 is not limited. You can use it at any time of the day, at any time of the week, and at any time in the year. God provided all that is necessary for us to continue on in holiness. All we need to do, is to make mental decisions in keeping with that provision.

05400

FOREKNOWLEDGE

Before we get into this section, I would like to consider a question. Why does this subject call forth such emotion?

1. Some feel it is an affront to God, to allow man to have any part in salvation. Foreknowledge pictures man seeking God, which is counter to texts like Rom. 3:23.

2. Others see the others setting "foreknowledge" aside and ignoring that it is involved.

3. Others just like to argue.

When teaching Systematic Theology I gave an assignment asking the students to jot down what they thought foreknowledge, predestination and election were. One of the students mentioned that he thought that if foreknowledge was involved, then the game was fixed and it isn't fun playing a game that is fixed, even if you are the winner.

Probably there are many strong Calvinists that would follow a similar line of thinking, however those that read the Word and understand it as simply written, feel that since God tells us foreknowledge is involved, then we must include it in our system of theology.

From God's view everything was set in place and decreed before the foundation of the world. From man's view we have a free choice to accept, or reject God. To this point is there any conflict? No there is no real link between the two statements as yet.

Man has a choice. God has given man a witness of Himself. All of mankind has opportunity to respond to God. This witness comes in four forms. Creation, Rom. 1:20-23; Inner witness, Rom. 1:19; The written Word; and the spoken Word.

Man has the choice to respond to his inner consciousness and to nature. If he does not respond to this information then he is lost of his own choice. If he does respond then God will see to it that he has all the revelation he needs to find Jesus Christ as his Savior.

This final revelation must include all information needed for salvation. This includes knowledge of the gap that sin has caused, that he is a sinner by nature, that Christ died on the cross for his

sins, and that Christ died in his place, if he will accept Christ's work on the cross.

This decision must be based on knowledge, understanding and fear if need be. Emotions are a part of our being so may well be involved. (Heb. 11:7)

Since the terms are normally viewed in the same doctrine, I would like to look at election along with foreknowledge. Let us look at the Biblical use of the terms. Elect in the Old Testament is "bahir" (Strong's 972/TWOT # 231c). It has the idea of chosen, and is translated chosen at times.

The Theological Word book mentions of the term, "The rood and its derivations occur 198 times with this meaning. The root idea is evidently 'to take a keen look at'"

"This derivative is used exclusively to indicate the relationship of the subject to God. It commonly occurs in a direct quotation of God, having the first singular possessive pronoun suffixed to it. Thus, God himself attests that this person or nation is his own personal choice." (Taken from: "THEOLOGICAL WORDBOOK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT"; Harris, R. Laird/Archer, Gleason L. Jr./Waltke, Bruce K.; Copyright 1980, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 100-101)

This may help us understand the New Testament concept.

I will just list some references and comments on them from the Old Testament.

Isa. 42:1 foretelling of Christ. His "elect" "servant"
Isa. 45:4 Israel - God's elect
Isa. 65:9 God's elect will inherit
Isa. 65:22 God's elect
II Sam. 21: 6 God chose Saul (king of Israel)
I Chron. 16:13 Israel - His chosen ones
Ps. 89: 3 God has made a covenant with David - His chosen
Ps. 105:6 Israel - His chosen
Ps. 105:43 Israel
Ps. 106:5 Israel
Ps. 106:23 Moses - His chosen
Isa. 43:20 Israel future - God's chosen
Isa. 65:15 God's chosen

Remember, God calling them HIS elect, or chosen is the Old Testament concept of the word. Now the New Testament.

In the New Testament elect is the Greek word "eklektos" (Strong's 1588). The English term eclectic comes from this term. It is the picking of the best of something. The Greek term translated church is also from this word. (ecclesia)

The "tos" ending means that a product of something is in view. "lit. signifies picked out, chosen ("ek", from, "lego", to gather, pick out)" (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Let us look at some references.

Mat. 20:16 Christ was speaking of His own.
Mat. 22:14 Those having no wedding garment bound & cast out.
Mat. 24:22 tribulation to be shortened for the elect's sake
Mat. 24:24 False Christ's will try to deceive the elect.
Mat. 24:31 Angels will gather elect
Mar. 13:20 (same as Mar. 24:22)
Mar. 13:22 (same as Matt. 24:24)
Mar. 13:27 His elect (same as Matt 24:31)
Lu. 18: 7 His own elect
Lu. 23:35 The Christ "The chosen of God"
Ro. 8:33 God's elect
Ro. 16:13 chosen in the Lord
Col. 3:12 Elect of God
I Ti. 5:21 Elect angels/some weren't elect it would seem
II Tim. 2:10 The elect's sake - (prior to salvation)
Tit. 1:1 God's elect (speaking of Paul)
I Pet. 1:2 elect according to foreknowledge of God the Father
I Pet. 2:4 chosen of God
I Pet. 2:6 Christ the cornerstone - elect
I Pet. 2:9 chosen generation - believers Peter is writing to
II Joh. 1 elect lady
II Joh. 13 elect sister
Rev. 17:14 chosen with the Lamb

The term election is the Greek word "ekloge" (Strong's 1589). Vine mentions that it "denotes a picking out, selection."

Acts 9:15 Paul is chosen vessel (by God)
Ro. 9:11 Isaac's sons elected prior to birth.
Ro. 11: 5 election of grace. Again it is not of works
Ro. 11:7 Israel blinded - Gentiles obtained election
Ro. 11:28 Israel beloved - elect - for the Father's sake
I Th. 1:4 election of God
II Pet. 1:10 make your calling and election sure

The term elected is "suneklektos" (strong 4899). "elect together with." (Vine) The "tos" ending means a product is in view.

I Pet. 5:13 church at Babylon - elected together with you

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING ELECTION:

1. Good angels are elect.
2. Elect is something which God is vitally involved in.
3. Christians are the elect, however so is Israel future.
4. Isaac's children by Rebecca were elect prior to birth.
5. We are elect or chosen by foreknowledge.
6. Elect and chosen are not linked to predestination.

FOREKNOWLEDGE

FOREKNEW is (Strong's 4267) "proginosko." "to know before ("pro", before, "ginosko", to know) (Vine)

Acts 26: 5 Jews knew Paul before his conversion.
Ro. 8:29 Whom He did foreknow He did predestinate
Ro. 11:2 God foreknew the Israelites
I Pet. 1:20 Christ's death set before foundation of the world
II Pet. 3:17 Speaks of knowing before hand

FOREKNOW is (Strong's 4267) see above

FOREKNOWLEDGE is (Strong's 4268) "prognosis." Webster mentions "to know before." Vine tells us "a foreknowledge." The term prognosis in the English language means "foreknowledge." (Webster)

Acts 2:23 Christ crucified by Jews according to foreknowledge of God.

I Pet. 1:2 Elect according to foreknowledge.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. God foreknew the Jews.

2. God foreknew the Gentiles.

3. God foreordained Christ's death.

4. Foreknowledge is not always used in relation to salvation. (Acts 26:5; II Pet. 3:17)

5. Foreknowledge is linked to election. (I Pet. 1:2)

6. Foreknowledge is linked to predestination. (Rom. 8:29)

7. The Jews that crucified Christ were lost. Christ was delivered via foreknowledge, and they crucified Him. This seems to link God knowing a situation beforehand, and electing based upon that knowledge.

PREDESTINATION

PREDESTINATE AND PREDESTINATED are the Greek word "proorizo" (Strong's 4309). "Note: This verb is to be distinguished from "proginosko", to foreknow, the latter has special reference to the persons foreknown by God: "proorizo" has special reference to that to which the subjects of His foreknowledge are predestinated." (Vine)

Acts 4:28 God determined something beforehand to be done (context Christ before the judges). This is an aroist tense indicating that God did this at a point in time.

Ro. 8:29 Whom He foreknew He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ. (looks to be pre-salvation from context/this is aorist also)

Ro. 8:30 links predestination to calling, justification and glorification.

I Co. 2:7 The word that Paul spoke was "ordained before the ages"

Eph. 1:5 Predestined us unto adoption

Eph. 1:11 We have an inheritance because of predestination (aorist).

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING PREDESTINATION:

1. Christ and His death seemed predestined - at least events surrounding it. (Acts 4:28)

2. Predestination is linked to foreknowledge.

3. The Word was predestined, or set.

4. We are adopted as sons, by Christ because we were predestined to it. (Eph. 1:5,11)

Concerning foreknowledge the following have been spoken.

Dr. Bryce Augsberger past president of Baptist Bible College and Seminary in Denver, CO stated that those opposing his view would say that God did not predestine individuals to be saved, but that in His foreknowledge, He saw some of faith (a group,or class), and called them His elect. This would include Methodists, Pentecostals, many Baptists). Basically this would be followers

of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609).

In stating his view he said, "God foreknew that no sinner would accept Christ and so chose "many" to receive the gift of faith in order to secure His saving purposes. This would include Presbyterians, Reformed, many Baptists). This thought comes from John Calvin (1509-1564)"

What is your reaction to these two statements? First, I don't think that all that hold to the first are Armenians. Secondly, I'm not sure that the first group would specify that God foresaw a group. Rather He viewed the individual and his life in the future.

Loraine Boettner in "The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination" states, "Since God's foreknowledge is complete, He knows the destiny of every person, not merely before the person has made his choice in this life, but from eternity. And since He knows their destiny before they are created, and then proceeds to create, it is plain that the saved and the lost alike fulfill His plan for them;"

He goes on to say, "Foreknowledge presupposes [assume beforehand - Webster] foreordination.... The actions of free agents do not take place because they are foreseen but they are foreseen because they are certain to take place." (this seems to say that the decrees were before foreknowledge. This is a problem because the Scripture states that the election was based on the foreknowledge.)

Doesn't the first par. seem to say that God knew the outcome so He chose. How can he know the outcome if the choosing wasn't already done if He is going to be involved in it?

You can't foreknow something that wasn't done. For this position to be true, foreknowledge and choosing would have to be simultaneous. That is impossible because you can't foreknow until the choosing is done.

Is there a sequence to these items of decrees, foreknowledge, election and predestination? It would seem from Scripture that the last three are in order. Fit Decrees into the matter and you may be close to the answer.

SO WHERE DOES ALL THIS LEAVE US?

1. Foreknowledge is the crux of the issue it would seem. Since all we know is based on four verses we should be able to define it fairly accurately.

a. God foreknew all the redeemed.
b. God foreknew Christ's death.
c. God elected and predestinated based upon foreknowledge.
d. The word has the general meaning of knowing before hand.

It would seem that election took place in time, at the same time as Christ's death was planned. I believe that this would be among His decrees. This would state then that the decrees followed the foreknowledge. If not then He could not have foreknown and decreed Christ's death.

He had to foreknow to realize a need for redemption. Indeed, His planning for redemption proves the definition of foreknow that we want. HE KNEW BEFORE HAND THAT MAN WOULD FALL, THUS PLANNED REDEMPTION. To define foreknow in any other manner would be inconsistent with Scripture. As He foreknew the fall, the rejection of the Messiah by Israel, He also foreknew those that would accept Him if salvation were presented.

Chafer states, "The Westminster Shorter Catechism asserts that it is 'his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." Later, on the same page he mentions on his own, "The term decree of God appears first in the singular, since God has but one all-inclusive plan. He sees all things at a glance. For convenience, the separate features of this plan may be called the decrees of God; but there should be no implication in this that the infinite understanding of God advances by steps or in a train." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. 1, p 228)

It would seem that God has always foreknown all things, in that, He is omniscient and it is further to be assumed that He existed for maybe eons, OR SHOULD WE SAY FROM ETERNITY PAST, but that it is also logical that the Decree, which relates to man and his existence, was set at some time down the line from eternity past.

Chafer believes the decree to be eternal. "It should be observed that God formed His decree in eternity, though its execution is in time. The decree being eternal, all its parts are, in the mind of God, but one intuition, though in its realization there is succession." (Vol. I, p 228) However, in reference to his comment, "God formed His decree" we need to observe something. If it were formed then it is not coexistent with omniscience. It is not coexistent with His existence. It occurred later and cannot be eternal as God is eternal.

Thiessen states "By His foreknowledge God was fully aware of the fact that man would fall into sin and become utterly ruined even before He created him. Still He created him for His glory and purposed and planned a way of redemption when He 'chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love' (Eph. 1:4). This purpose is indicated in human nature and in the Scriptures." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 275)

Thiessen states, "Divine foreknowledge. If God could foreknow that man would sin without causing him to sin; if He foreknew that the inhabitants of Keliah would betray David into the hands of Saul before they had had the chance to do so (I Sam. 23:11,12); if Jesus could know that the fate of Tyre and Sidon, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, would have been different had they had the manifestations of His works which were granted to Chorazin and Bethsaida and to

Capernaum (Matt. 11:21-24); if God could foreknow that the Jews would kill Christ without causing them to do so and before He had created a man (Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:27, 28); then He can also foreknow what men will do in response to prevenient grace, whether or not they will receive 'the grace of God in vain' (2 Cor. 6:1, 2). The Scriptures teach that election is based on foreknowledge (Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:1, 2)." (p 156)

Thiessen also mentions, "Since mankind is hopelessly dead in trespasses and sins and can do nothing to obtain salvation, God graciously restores to all men sufficient ability to make a choice in the matter of submission to Him. This is the salvation bringing grace of God that has appeared to all men. In His foreknowledge He perceives what each one will do with this restored ability, and elects men to salvation in harmony with His knowledge of their choice of Him." (p 344, 345)

This would be a good recap of the foreknowledge position. What God foreknew may vary but basically this is it. God DRAWS people to Himself.

One last question might help you understand which position you would like to settle into.

God chose based on foreknowledge. Now, if he did not use foreknowledge, as in He knew before hand, then He chose with no knowledge of the people or the plan. That is impossible. You cannot choose without knowledge. I can't pick a car, if I don't know what a car is, or what cars are available to pick from.

Foreknowledge, as in knowing beforehand, is required by logic and is clearly stated in Scripture, so why do so many try to leave it out?

I would like to close this section with a thought from Spurgeon. "When Moses sang at the Red Sea, it was his joy to know that all Israel were safe. Not a drop of spray fell from that solid wall until the last of God's Israel had safely planted his foot on the other side the flood. That done, immediately the floods dissolved into their proper place again, but not till then. Part of that song was, 'Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed.' In the last time, when the elect shall sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb, it shall be the boast of Jesus, 'Of all whom thou hadst given me, I have lost none.' In heaven there shall not be a vacant throne.

"'For all the chosen race Shall meet around the throne, Shall bless the conduct of His grace, And make His glories known.'

"As many as God hath chosen, as many as Christ hath redeemed, as many as the Spirit hath called, as many as believe in Jesus, shall safely cross the dividing sea. We are not all safely landed yet:

"'Part of the host have crossed the flood, And part are crossing now.'

"The vanguard of the army has already reached the shore. We are marching through the depths; we are at this day following hard after our Leader into the heart of the sea. Let us be of good cheer: the rearguard shall soon be where the vanguard already is; the last of the chosen ones shall soon have crossed the sea, and then shall be heard the song of triumph, when all are secure. But oh! if one were absent - oh! if one of his chosen family should be cast away - it would make an everlasting discord in the song of the redeemed, and cut the strings of the harps of paradise, so that music could never be extorted from them." (Spurgeon, Charles H.; "MORNING AND EVENING"; Mclean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Co., p 42)

05450

ATONEMENT

Atonement in the New Testament is a translation of the Greek word "katalithozo" (Strong's 2643). It appears as atonement only once, in Ro. 5:11. The other appearances are translated reconciliation. Ro. 11:15; II Cor. 5:18; II Cor. 5:19.

In the Old Testament atonement was always related to the idea of a sacrifice being given to atone for sins of the people. It is used almost exclusively in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Only four other occurrences are found outside these three books.

There are two words translated atonement in the Old Testament. ("Kip-poor'" and "kaw-far'") The first comes from the second and the meaning is to cover. It is the word that is used in Genesis 6:14, "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch." Noah was to use pitch, or kawphar to cover the ark.

Indeed, is not Noah covering the ark with pitch and being saved, a picture of the Old Testament saint that sacrificed an animal, and the animal becoming a covering for the sin, to protect the saint?

The New Testament term is one which we studied under propitiation. The term is translated reconciling or reconciliation in the New Testament usually, and atonement only once in the New Testament.

Atonement is the paying of a price to bring man and God back together. The question of whom the atonement was for, is often raised.

Some see the atonement as only for the elect. The strong Calvinist would be in this group. Christ died only for those that God in His sovereign will did elect in eternity past. Others view Christ's work on the cross for the sins of the world - for all of mankind.

The abundance of Scripture seems to indicate the unlimited atonement is best.

John 1:29 Christ taketh away the sin of the world.

John 3:16 God loved the world.

John 6:51 Christ gave flesh for the world.

Rom. 11:12,15 Reconciling of the world.

II Cor. 5:19 Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

I Jo. 2:2 Christ propitiation for sins of the world.

II Cor. 5:14 Christ died for all.

I Tim. 2:4,6 Christ ransom for all.

Tit 2:11 Grace that bringteth salvation appeared to all men.

Heb. 2:9 Christ tasted death for every man.

II Pet. 3:9 God wants all to come to repentance.

(Pardington notes p 261 ff list more references if they are needed.)

It would seem from these verses that Christ died for the sins of every individual that has, or will live on this earth. The fact that many are lost shows that the work of Christ must be accepted to become effectual in the life.

There are some inadequate views of the atonement. We should look at these briefly.

1. REPLACEMENT THEORY: (Iraneus) Christ's obedience to God replaced the Devil's disobedience, and thus Christ conquered the devil. This theory does not deal with sin, however, and that is the problem that man needs cared for.

2. RANSOM TO SATAN: (Origen) Christ died to buy us back from the Devil. The problem with this theory is that the Bible nowhere mentions that we are Satan's, nor that we need to be bought back from him.

3. MYSTICAL THEORY: (Schleirmacher/a liberal) Christ took on a sinful nature. Just how making Christ sinful in nature cares for lost man's sin, I don't know. This theory does not deal with death nor penalty.

4. MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY also known as the BUSHNELLIAN THEORY: (Abelard) Death of Christ softens our heart to lead us to repentance. As we consider and meditate on the death of Christ our soul is moved to repentance.

5. HONOR, COMMERCIAL or ANSELMIC THEORY: (Anselm) Christ received honor and he didn't need it so Christ passed it on to us if we follow the Gospel.

The Roman Catholic church expands this thought and see grace as coming from this source. They feel that the Church Saints also had extra grace which went into a pool with that of Christ, where the person can come to gain grace, through the sacraments.

6. TRUE DOCTRINE: (God) The atonement must be manward as well as Godward. God's holiness demands sin be punished. (eternal torment) Christ died as our substitute for our sin. This affects both God and man. Man becomes correct before God, and God can see His creatures face to face.

Christ did all that was needed to bring man to God. We could not do it.

7. SOCINIAN: (originally set forth by Laelius & Faustus Socinus of Poland in 16th century. Today it is basically a Unitarian doctrine.) Only man has a problem. God is okay and when man gets it right all will be well. Man does this by his own will and works. Christ was an example for us to show how we are to be faithful to duty.

8. GROTIAN, or GOVERNMENTAL THEORY: God's governmental set up requires that the punishment be levied and carried out. This is what Christ was doing. It has nothing to do with God's nature.

9. IRVINGIAN, or THEORY OF GRADUALLY EXTIRPATED DEPRAVITY: (Set forth by Edward Irvin in England 1792-1834 and presently held by some German scholars.) Christ took upon Himself a fallen human nature and through suffering here on earth lived a perfect life and purified that nature. His death on the cross was His final reuniting the perfected nature with God. (This may be similar to the mystical theory that has already been covered.)

10. DRAMATIC THEORY: (Aulen 1879-1978) "Christ in His death gained victory over the powers of evil." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 309)

11. BARTHIAN THEORY: (Barth 1886-1968) "Christ's death was principally a revelation of God's love and His hatred of sin. (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 309)

12. SUBSTITUTIONAL OR SATISFACTION THEORY: This one is the correct one by the way. It was mentioned in number six previously. This view was set forth by Augustine, and

later Calvin. It is present in todays Reformed and Presbyterian theologies. "Christ the sinless One took on Himself the penalty that should have been borne by man and others." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 309)

SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT is a term we often use today. It describes the fact that Christ died in our place as a substitute for us on the cross.

This principle is seen in the Old Testament sacrificial system. The saint was to lay his hand on the sacrifice as it was slain. Ryrie states of this, "This meant transmission and delegation, and implied representation; so that it really pointed to the substitution of the sacrifice for the sacrificer...." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 287)

Pardington has more information on the theories if you want more study materials. Ryrie goes into great length on the use of prepositions in relation to the atonement, if you would like further study.

APPLICATION

1. Christ died for the sins of the world. THAT'S MISSIONS!

2. Christ died in our place. THAT'S GRACE!

3. Christ paid the price. THAT'S LOVE!

4. Jesus last words on the cross were these, "It is finished". THAT'S VICTORY!!

He was speaking of the work that God had given Him to accomplish on this earth! He did all that was required of Him. All that was required of Him was all that God had planned for Him before the foundation of the world.

Q. How do you as a believer react to what you have read in this series of studies? Has it changed your life one whit? Has it brought you under conviction about any of the overindulgences you allow yourself in the material realm?

Has it brought you face to face with the 2-3 BILLION people that have never heard the Gospel once. 2-3 billion people that we have discussed as being lost and without hope of salvation. Have you really faced that issue in your life? (In 1992 the world's population was 5 1/2 billion. The estimates tell us that half of these people have never heard the claims of the Gospel.)

Has it put you into prayer about the multitude of things that Christ provided to you when you simply trusted Him as your personal savior?

Has it made you think of the 30,000 missionaries that will be retiring in the next few years. Many missions were established and manned shortly after World War II when the Christian servicemen were coming home after seeing the needs of people over the world spiritually. Most of these people are in their 60's and 70's.

We only have about 5,000 appointees and applicants on the line today to replace those 30,000 that are coming home!

If you truly believe all that we have studied this semester, then there is no way you can put these questions aside. You must deal with them! To ignore them is to ignore the Lord, for Missions is what it is all about!

Theology books may seem to be a funny place to talk of these things but let me tell you something! Our schools and seminaries are geared for raising Pastors and Missionaries. They raise them in separate gardens and the two are only allowed to learn from one another those things that happen accidentally. If we don't start teaching pastors to be missions minded we are never going to have a missions minded church.

If we don't apply what we learn here in these studies to the program of God then we are wasting both our time and His.

If in your mind, Theology is not related to the ministering of that knowledge you learn here to the souls of men, then PLEASE stop wasting your time!

If the things you are learning in these books today aren't in your mind aimed at reaching the lost with the Gospel, you have a wrong concept of what is going on.

We have been studying the very essence of the Gospel. We have dissected it, we have chewed it up, we have inspected it and we have labored with it. We should have a good understanding of what Christ is sending us out to preach.

MAN is lost in SIN and God has provided SALVATION!

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO RELATE THIS INFORMATION TO YOUR PERSONAL LIFE? HOW ARE YOU GOING TO RELATE IT TO THE WORLD? HOW ARE YOU GOING TO FACE GOD IF YOU DON'T RELATE IT TO BOTH YOUR PERSONAL LIFE AND THE WORLD?

BACK TO GOD'S PLAN

"The day after the air raid which resulted in the demolition of the House of Commons chamber at Westminster, when we knew the worst, the thought was in millions of minds that after the war we must build that old historic house 'according to the original plan,' but alas! the old plan was

nowhere to be found. The prime minister confessed to the House that all possible research was being made and would be made.

"Away back in the year 1882 a famous architect was going over a number of old plans and distributed those for which he had no further use to his staff of young designers and draughtsmen. One of these young men who chose a plan and who is still alive today was recently listening in to a talk on 'Planning,' and the speaker reminded his listeners that old plans and old papers had acquired a new value as munitions of war and suggested that those listening in should immediately search their houses and turn in all old papers for salvage. The architect who in his youth had acquired the plan from his chief made search in his attic, and there amid the dust of the years, discovered he had in his possession something of great value which had long ago been forgotten. It was the original plan of the House of Commons! The good news was at once conveyed to the House, and the plan pronounced valid, and a great relief filled the minds of many people that in the period of reconstruction the House of Commons chamber would be rebuilt on the model of the old plan.

"There is surely a parable in this story. The world is in a terrible mess of trouble and disaster because the old plan of God's word and God's will has been lost or set aside. Men have either rejected it altogether or tampered with it. God's plan is the only solution! Nothing less will do. Let us seek out that old plan for the reconstruction which must follow war. Charles S. Rodenberg (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949)

I trust none of us mislay, or place in storage what we've learned in this section. We have the plan that millions need! How can we personally help in furthering God's program?

05500

ARMINIUS 1560-1609

Actually his name was Harmen. Arminius was a Latinization of it. Some authors mention him as Jacob or James. He was Dutch. (Thomas, W.H. Griffith; "THE PRINCIPLES OF THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979, p 245)

Steele and Thomas will be mentioned from time to time in this section. They have two books out which compare these two systems.

This is what Arminianism teaches however there are some differences with what Mr. Arminius taught. His followers set forth "his" doctrine to the church of Holland in 1610, but they were pronounced unscriptural in 1619. Some authors state that the true Arminianism is somewhat different from that presented at Dort. These thoughts were written by Hugo Grotius and others. It is called the REMONSTRANCE which is a presentation of reasons to oppose something.

Though condemned, the system of thought spread. Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645) introduced it into the Anglican Church where 100 years later John & Charles Wesley picked it up and used his thinking in establishing the Methodist Denomination. (George Whitefield also was involved.) I should make note however, Laud, I think was a minority and that the Anglican church for the most part was, and is calvinistic. Indeed, some list the Anglican 39 Articles as descending from Calvin's work.

The system teaches the following:

1. Free Will: Man is depraved, however not so badly that God can't help him find God. He is not slave to his sin nature, but can respond to God's drawing, or reject it. He is not forced against his will to accept God. The Holy Spirit will assist him if he so desires.

2. Conditional election: God chooses people on the basis of his foreknowledge that is he knew before hand that they would respond to His working through the Holy Spirit. He elected only those that He knew would respond to Him. This makes election dependant upon what man would do.

3. Unlimited atonement: Christ obtained salvation for everyone on the cross however this does not give everyone salvation. They must respond to God before this is effectual to them.

4. Resistable grace: God the Holy Spirit calls all that are to be saved unto God. That call, however is not compulsory. Man can and does reject that call of the Spirit, thus condemning himself. The Holy Spirit can do nothing without the free will decision of the person.

5. Insecurity of the believer: The standard Armenian today holds that a person can lose his salvation. This doesn't seem to be the original position however, as the Armenians when the controversy started stated that this needed more study. Indeed, some Armenians over the years have held to a very strict view of the Security of the believer.

The system views God as the instigator of salvation (the call) and man the receptor. Between the two of them they get the job done, so to speak. Man is given the choice between heaven and hell, between peace with God and turmoil, between God and the Devil. He may choose as he wills. (I wonder why anyone would not choose God!)

CALVIN

At a meeting with King Charles IX in 1561 the Calvinists claimed the term "reformed" for themselves. They wanted to say by this that they were more reformed than the Lutheran churches were under Luther.

Calvin set forth his views in his Institutes in 1536.

John Calvin supposedly invented an acrostic to refute the Armenians at the Synod of Dort in 1619.

It would be good to point out that Augustine held these truths 1000 years before (according to Griffith Thomas in The Principles of Theology, p 246).

Some of the many confessions that grew out of different countries where his followers were located are the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of the Synod of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith and in the Church of England the Anglican Confession, or Thirty-nine Articles.

His acrostic was as follows:

T. Total depravity of man.
U. Unconditional election.
L. Limited atonement.
I. Irresistible grace.
P. Perseverance of the saints.

Let us go through his points.

Total depravity of man: We are totally corrupt and unable to respond to God in any way shape or form, unless God does the moving. The strong Calvinist might even suggest that regeneration comes to the person, so that there is enough life within him to respond to the Gospel and call of God. Without this regeneration, it is utterly impossible for the person to respond.

Unconditional election: God chose the elect based on nothing but His sovereignty. There is nothing that the man can do at all. He is totally unable to help himself.

Limited atonement: Christ died on the cross for only the elect. Christ's work provided all that was needed for the salvation of man.

Irresistible grace: The grace that God extends cannot be rejected. The person must turn to God. There is a call to all to be saved which can be, and is often rejected, however for the elect there is an inner calling which cannot be resisted.

I MUST OBSERVE FOR A MOMENT! The terms "to come freely and willingly" that the Calvinist uses, are hilarious in this discussion! If he cannot resist, and if he cannot respond, and if the Holy Spirit is doing it, and if the man can do nothing except respond THEN how can they use "freely and willingly"?

Perseverance of the saints: The saved person cannot lose their salvation. They are forever saved by the power of God. Since this salvation is based on the power, election, provision, calling and

work of God, how can it fail. Once the person is a child of God, there is nothing that can separate him from His God.

There is another system that has never been set forth with an official title. It is a system that is held by many theologians.

While in a college full of strong Calvinistic professors, some of the students, including myself, became dissatisfied with what was being taught. The professors found that there was a lack of acceptance of their doctrine, so they proceeded to teach Calvinism in every class, in every chapel, and in every other opportunity they had.

The result was that the dissenters were very frustrated. I finally wrote an open letter to the faculty asking that the Calpush be stopped. I included a poem of humor, and signed it A. Calmenian. Since, I have used the term to describe what I believe to be the proper mix of Calvinism and Arminianism to be.

CALMENIANISM

1. Total depravity: Man is totally depraved.

2. Conditional election: God chose and elected based on His foreknowledge of what a person would do if placed in a certain set of circumstances leading up to the point of a decision about Christ.

3. Unlimited atonement: Christ died for all mankind as John 3:16 states. Christ made universal payment for all of mankind, however we must remember that Christ's death saved no one. Only applying that work will save.

4. Grace:

Desired grace: God has revealed Himself within man and through nature according to Romans 1. This revelation if responded to would, I assume, lead to further revelation, and ultimately a confrontation with the cross of Jesus Christ. (In other words the drawing that brings the person to the decision.) Moving men to an effective faith in Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Common grace is grace that is extended to all of mankind - rain, sunshine, etc.

Convicting grace is grace that convicts man of sin and judgment. This can be resisted even if believed;

Confessing grace which brings the person to salvation and is irresistible.

5. Security of the saints: Saved cannot lose their salvation. This view allows for logically

bringing election and freewill together. By free will it is meant that the person has a free choice when he decides for, or against Christ. It is also indicated in Scripture that the person would not choose Christ except for the work which the Holy Spirit has been doing in the life.

CALVIN AND ARMINIUS CONSIDERED

These thoughts are not designed to prove my view, or anyone else's view, but are presented for your thought and consideration. I make no condemnation of these men, nor do I want to try to judge them in anyway. I merely want to observe some facts and draw from these facts some possible conclusions.

These conclusions may or may not be true, but I think they are worth considering when we are going to study and comment on two men's theological systems.

Calvin studied under the humanist Guillaume Cop at the University of Paris. He also studied law for awhile at the university at Orleans. Then came Calvin's conversion. To the astute mind that looks at things from the cause and effect point of view, you must wonder if Calvin's back ground wasn't very heartily affecting his theological studies!

Indeed, Mr. Carins gives comment to one occasion which might help us to visualize this possibility more easily. "Forced to leave France in 1534 after he had collaborated with Nicholas Cop, the rector of the University of Paris, in an address that was tinged with Humanistic and Reformation ideology, he went to Basel." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTUREIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.)

His "Institutes of the Christian Religion" was put out for the first time in 1534-36. It was not into it's final form until 1559. However, Calvin himself states that the work that he added to it was additions and enlargements - not change of any major approach. This came out when he was 26 years old. Fresh out of a humanist and law education and conversion. There is little doubt that humanism was a factor in his thinking!

"In the first edition of this work, not expecting that success which the Lord, in his infinite goodness, hath given, I handled the subject for the most part in a superficial manner, as is usual in small treatises." "...In every succeeding one the work has been improved by some further enlargements. But though I repented not the labour then devoted to it, yet I never satisfied myself, till it was arranged in the order in which it is now published;" (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTUREIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.)

If he felt free to mix his thinking in the early days then you must see the distinct possibility of it later in life. His humanistic training would influence his thought most of his life.

Carins further mentions the fact that his first book is very plainly influenced by Luther's Catechism. He is a man being influenced on many sides.

It seems to me that anyone converted from the thinking of humanism might well over react in his thinking where man / God relationships are involved.

Carins mentions that Arminius studied at Leyden and Geneva under Beza. Mr. Beza, if you have studied Calvin, was the man that took over the banner when Calvin died in Geneva. "Theodore Beza took over his [Calvin's] work of leadership in Geneva." (Carins p 338) If Arminius studied under a staunch and strong, freshly cultured Calvinist, is it not somewhat possible that his theology might well be tainted with a pendulum swing of reaction also, and in the other direction?

Carins mentions (p 338) that Arminius came under great opposition from his colleague Francis Gomar, and as is seen later in history with others that opposed his teaching. What does the underdog usually do when opposed? Dig in, hold on tight, and look for further proof that he is right. This would not necessarily make for an open mind when looking into Scripture for proof of one's beliefs.

It seems to me that we may well have in Calvinism and Arminianism the two extremes of theological thought that are back swings to humanism. This may well be why today we have most conservative theologians somewhere in the middle - Calmenians.

APPLICATION:

1. When you study these two men be sure you temper what they say with their backgrounds. Indeed, when you study anyone maybe you should look at their backgrounds.

2. Indeed, when you listen to someone, temper what they say with their background. To allow you to do this let me tell you my background. I was raised in a Christian Church. I did not hear the Gospel in that church. I received Christ in a Fundamental Bible church. I went to college at Western Bible Institute for two years. The faculty were staunch Calvinists. Indeed, they took several weeks to pound Calvinism into the students minds. Chapel sessions as well as in many of the classes. Out of this I was very frustrated because I had just studied the Word of God to find the answers to these questions and now they were telling me I was completely wrong. I then attended two years at an Independent Baptist College which was also very Calvinistic. Now you know my back ground. Maybe my study of the Word was based on some over reaction, however I don't think so. My study was done before anyone had told me what they thought to be the proper belief.

3. When you get tired of looking at backgrounds and trying to figure out just what is affecting each author you might try going to the Word of God and see what He thinks. HE HAD A PERFECT BACKGROUND UPON WHICH TO DRAW, WHEN HE SPOKE!

4. Is it any wonder that a middle of the road position which mixes the two systems has come on the scene? Maybe, should we say a system which stems from many pendulum swings over the years to a more Biblical accounting of what the Word of God says?

CONCLUSION

In the dedication of his "Institutes" to "His Most Christian Majesty, Francis, King of the French and his Sovereign" he states, "But our doctrine must stand, exalted above all the glory and invincible by all the power of the world; because it is not ours, but the doctrine of the living God, and of his Christ, whom the Father hath constituted King,..." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTUREIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.)

This man, as I am sure did Arminius, believe what he taught was the very best they could do with the Scriptures, and that what they believed was the truth that God had revealed.

I trust that you will consider what you have read in this section and come to the point that you will center your studies on the Word of God and use the commentaries, and theologies, and the other books as tools to assist you and to check you in your studies. Do not look into these books for your answers but look into THE book. Do not look into these books for your truth but look into the Book of Truth!

THE DECREES

I will include a brief listing of the positions concerning the decrees. Most theology works have further information, if you would like further study.

Rightfully expressed, most feel that God had only one, over all decree, but that for our ease of understanding we break it into several decrees. Four lines of thinking as to the sequence of decrees are to be found. INFRALAPSARIAN, SUBLAPSARIAN, SUPRALAPSARIAN, and ARMINIAN. The first three are to be found in the Calvinist camp.

The term "lapsarian" comes from the idea of the fall - the lapse.

SUPRALAPSARIAN

Those holding to this sequence would usually be the Ultra or High Calvinist. They would place the order of the decrees as follows:

1. Decree to elect some to be saved and to reprobate all others.
2. Decree to create men both elect and non-elect.
3. Decree to permit the fall.
4. Decree to provide salvation for the elect.

5. Decree to apply salvation to the elect.

INFRALAPSARIAN

Those holding to this order are usually moderate Calvinists.

1. Decree to create all men.
2. Decree to permit the fall.
3. Decree to provide salvation for men.
4. Decree to elect those who do believe and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.
5. Decree to apply salvation to those who believe.

SUBLAPSARIAN

Those holding to this order would be classified as moderate also. There is little difference between the Infra and Sub. That difference being that the Sub. place the decree to elect after the one to allow the fall.

1. Decree to create all men.
2. Decree to permit the fall.
3. Decree to elect those who do believe and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.
4. Decree to provide salvation for men.
5. Decree to apply salvation to those who believe.

ARMINIAN

The Arminian view is as follows.

1. Decree to create all men.
2. Decree to permit the fall.
3. Decree to provide salvation for men.
4. Decree to elect those who do believe and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.

The election that they speak about is based on the foreknowledge of God. That is the foreknowing of "human virtue, faith, and obedience" (Chafer Vol. III, p 182) The election in the Calvinist camp is based upon God's choice only.

5. Decree to apply salvation to those who believe.

05550

STANDING AND STATE

This study will be a bit abbreviated due to the depth to which we could take it. I will list topics, references and a few comments followed by some application. This section will cover standing, state, and then a comparison of the two.

STANDING: THE RICH KID

"The two doctrines of Christian standing and daily life or state merge into one important truth, hence may be treated here together.

Standing, as distinguished from state or daily contact with Christ, is a reference to Christian position - the unchangeable and perfect work of God for the believer, while state refers to the changing and imperfect condition of his soul from moment to moment. Faith secures standing, but adherence to all the laws governing a spiritual life must secure daily benefits for the soul."

Dr. Chafer comments in closing, "All that enters into the believer's experience after he is saved - divine training and development - is to the end that he may be more conformed in his state to what he possesses in standing from the moment he is saved." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947, Vol. VII, p 293)

We've all heard of the big muscle man fellow that can whip five guys at once in a fight. Now, imagine this man after he's had a few drinks. He begins bragging about his abilities and strengths. As he gets drunker and drunker he becomes weak - dizzy and disoriented. Finally as he's leaning against the wall for support, he is bragging about his ability to whip every one in the room.

His standing is that of a very strong man - he can beat several fellows at once. His state is - poor - sick - dizzy - unable to stand up - about to pass out.

Now, His state doesn't change what he really is, but it doesn't make him look like he has that standing.

Standing is the believer's place before God, provided by the work of the cross. State is the walk of the believer in this life.

STANDING: God has given us certain things, and they are ours no matter what we do in this life.

Rom. 5:1,2 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." We stand in the grace of God almighty. Grace is all around us. To bad we don't act, and live like it!

I Cor. 15:1 "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;" Our standing finds it's origin in the Gospel of Christ that we heard, and accepted at salvation.

STANDING/TERMS USED:

In Christ: We are in Christ's body, the church (invisible). We are an integrated part of His organism, His body. (Rom. 8:1)

We are in Christ and as a result, there will be no condemnation. We stand before God as if already glorified.

Because we are in Christ, we have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (I Cor. 1:30). These things are done in God's mind but we have to wait for these things for a time - His time! He will bring these to pass in their completeness at His own time.

We are a new creature. Think back on your pre-salvation life. Remember what you were. Now, what are you at this point in time? There should be a change (II Cor. 5:17).

We will be changed physically at the rapture (I Cor. 15:51-57).

We have all spiritual blessings awaiting us. These too are partially unfulfilled to us, but not to God. The blessings we have today may have nothing to do with these promised blessings (Eph. 1:3).

With Christ: We are crucified with Christ. He lives in us. This is not obvious in our state, but it is true (Gal. 2:20). Can you fathom this doctrine? This doctrine of Christ living IN us! That is similar to me finding a slimy smelly garbage can to live in!

Our life is hidden with Christ in God. We are to seek things above (Col. 3:1-3).

We Sit in heavenly places: This is obviously still future. We see promise of our resurrection! (Eph. 2:6)

THE FACT OF STANDING: Many things are done and are ours through our standing.

1. The believer is redeemed: Eph. 1:7; I Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:30.

2. The believer is justified: Rom. 5:1; Rom. 4:25; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 3:19-28.

3. The believer is translated: Col. 1:12,13; Eph. 2:6.

4. The believer is sanctified: I Cor. 1:2.

5. The believer is in God's family: John 1:12.

6. The believer has an inheritance: Eph. 1:11.

7. The believer is sealed: Eph. 1:13.

8. The believer is glorified: Rom. 8:30

APPLICATION:

How do we use all of this information?

Let's recap.
We're part of Christ
No condemnation
Wisdom
Righteousness
Sanctification
Redemption
New creation
Blessings
Heavenly eternal dwelling
Forgiveness
Inheritance
Sealed
Glorified

All of this is made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ. All of this plus more is tied up in the gift of God in Rom. 6:23. All of these are ours at the point of our salvation.

In light of what He has prepared for us, shouldn't we have a walk befitting our future position. This should be our example to prepare us for our future with God.

We truly are rich kids! We should act like it at our Fathers feet in our thanksgiving and praise.

When we really comprehend what we have in this standing we will.

Realize just how wonderful God is.
How blessed we are.
How much we owe God for sending Christ to die for our sins.
How much we owe Christ for dieing for us.
How really sinful we are when we place ourselves first.
How much God really loves us.

How we have nothing whatsoever to be proud of.

He has given us everything we have. As we really realize how worthless we are He will begin using us more and more.

STATE: A ROSE OUGHT TO BE A ROSE!

God is full of decisions for us to make. First of all He tells us we are a sinful lot, and on our way to eternal Hell. We are worthless and worthy at the same time. We are worthless to Him, but we are worthy of His wrath and judgment because we are sinners.

Then He gives us a choice. He tells us that Christ died for our sins and that we can go to heaven. We now have a choice. HEAVEN OR HELL. What is that choice based on? A choice. A choice to accept Christ, or to reject Christ.

After we take the logical choice and accept Christ then we are told in Scripture that we are the children of God. We have many new gifts given to us. We have seen these in our study of standing. We are redeemed, justified, forgiven, glorified etc.

BUT We still have another choice to make. How are we going to live in the future? This leads us to state.

STATE: What, who and why we are in this life is our choice and this becomes the state in which we exist.

Phil. 2:19,20 "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state." This pictures Paul's concern for how the believers were living.

I have a standing - I'm a son of God. I am His child as I stand before Him, however I am in a miserable state. I'm sinful at times. I'm rebellious at times. I'm lazy at times. Let's face it, I'm not much of a son at times! I'm not much in my state even though I am a son of Almighty God in my standing.

STATE/TERMS USED:

In the World: Phil. 2:15 We are to be blameless, harmless children of God without rebuke. We do these in a crooked and perverse nation to be shining lights.

Titus 2:12 We're to deny ungodliness, deny worldly lusts, live soberly, live righteously, and live Godly, IN THIS WORLD!

Walk in Him: Col. 2:6 The context shows that we should live a life centered in Christ.

THE FACT OF STATE:

1. The believer should walk by faith: II Cor. 5:7 This is fact - not a request or an option! We are to live by faith.

2. The believer should walk in love: Eph. 5:2 We should walk in love, or live our life and base it on love.

3. The believer should walk in light: I John 1:5-7 In short our walk should be centered in God. God is light and we are to walk in light. This means we should check with God about everything we do This means the buying of a house, of a car -- every area of life.

4. The believer should walk in newness of life: Rom. 6:4-11 We are to have a change of life. Instead of serving sin we can turn our backs on it and walk in our new life with God. This doesn't only mean the lying, drinking, covetousness, immorality etc. It includes the pride, the gossip, the self esteem and the self righteousness. ALL SIN!

5. The believer should walk in the Spirit: Gal. 5:16 What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? It means a life with Him in control.

How do we do this? By allowing Him to control our lives - every aspect of our lives. We need to constantly try to allow Him to exhibit His fruit in our lives. Gal. 5:22,23 Mention this fruit.

A spiritual king of the mountain contest. Who is it that will control your life - YOU, OR THE HOLY SPIRIT?

6. The believer should walk worthy of his vocation: Eph. 4:1-3 This includes: lowliness, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another in love, and trying to keep the unity of the Spirit in a bond of peace.

7. The believer should walk circumspectly: Eph. 5:15 Walk as wise not as fools. Verse 16 "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." In short if you use your time for Christ properly you are wise, but if you use your time improperly you are a fool. Our time on earth is for God's purposes, not our own! Are you wise or a fool?

8. The believer should walk in Christ: Col. 2:6 We've already looked at this one. It tells us to center our life in Christ - 3:1 tells us to set our aims on things above!

9. The believer should grow in grace: II Peter 3:18 Grow in grace. We, as sons of God, are sons because of God's grace. We then should grow, or mature as children grow - into adulthood. "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior...." Part of the maturing process seems to be from the Word of God.

Point of interest: Apostles, prophets evangelists and pastor teachers are for the educating of the saints. Now, What if a pastor, at the leading of God prepares lessons, or sermons that certain Christians really need, or maybe the Christian has told the pastor he needs it and that person doesn't show up for that lesson or series. I believe that person is responsible for the knowledge he missed if it was an unnecessary absence. We can't grow as Paul says, unless we are learning, be it at Church, or at home.

APPLICATION

When the child of a very important person is seen, or read about most people are very alert to see if they are up to snuff.

When I was in high school everyone's eyes were upon the pastor's son. They wanted to see if the son reflected the father.

I was quite surprised at President Fords daughter and son. The son admitted to smoking marijuana and the daughter had her mother's permission to try sex before marriage. Miss Ford also requested a song that is, at best, suggestive to be played before the President of the United States, the Queen of England, and other dignitaries. This does not reflect well upon the parents.

A Christian that has outward sin in his life is no different in a spiritual sense because he is reflecting poorly upon God his Father.

WE ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ALMIGHTY GOD! We should act like it! If God truly be our Father, then we truly should try to conform our walk to a walk similar to Christ, our example!

We covered a verse earlier - let me quote it again. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation to which ye are called."

If, today you are a born again Christian, you have an holy calling from God - a holy vocation - you are the son or the daughter of Almighty God.

Paul begs us to live like it. When you go to the home of someone you know is quite important how do you want your children to act? You hope they are on their good behavior. You want them to be at peace with one another - to be helpful - to be, or act somewhat intelligent.

God is trying to impress the unsaved world with His children. He is trying to show the unsaved that His family is worth being a part of! He wants us to be on our good behavior!

The question is this, are you a proper child, or an embarrassment to your Father?

State is a personal choice for the Christian. You may not approve of the way I live. Maybe you

think I'm wrong in some area of my life. That is between myself and my Father. I choose my state for myself, and you choose your state for yourself.

The point is this: We should all be before God planning our state. He will show us what He wants our state to be if we will ask Him. This state will always, let me emphasis ALWAYS be in line with the Scripture and always upward toward service and holiness.

He will never tell you to go downward in your spiritual life! He may give you a choice, but never say God told you to detract from your spiritual life!

Once, while we were between churches I didn't really feel like trying another new church so threw a prayer to God and came up with the fact that we shouldn't go to church that morning. GARBAGE! He gave me a choice, and I said no to Him. He didn't tell me not to go to church!

State is the believers chosen place and practice on the earth.

If we are committed to God, our STATE becomes His chosen place and practice on the earth for us. If we are not committed to Him then we do as we please. May each of us worry about our own states half as much as we worry about everyone else's state.

STANDING AND STATE COMPARED

STANDING	STATE
1. In heaven Eph. 2:6	On the earth Phil. 1:1
2. It is perfect Heb. 10:14	It is imperfect Phil. 3:12-14
3. It is eternal Heb. 10:14	It is till death
4. It is changeless Heb. 10:10	It is changeable I Peter 3:18
5. We are sanctified I Cor. 1:2	Yet to be sanctified I Cor. 3:1-3
6. Result of one act Acts 13:38,39	Result of many acts II Cor 5:9,10
7. Justification by faith	Justification by works

Rom. 4:1-5 James 2:21-26

JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD JUSTIFICATION BEFORE MAN

8. It assures salvation It determines reward
I Thess. 4:13-18 I Cor. 3:11-15

9. In it resurrection is past Resurrection is future
Eph. 2:5,6 Phil. 3:20,21

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CONCLUSION

Realizing that salvation is something that takes place in a moment, we must also realize that there is a sequence of events. As a house is built one phase at a time, and each phase depends on the prior, so salvation is built one concept upon another. Without this sequence, there cannot be salvation. For example you cannot have salvation until the step of belief has been made.

When I was teaching, the final test for this section was to graphically present this process for the purpose of making overlays for an overhead projector.

If you want a good review and challenge, take the following topics and place them in chronological order graphically.

CALLING HEIRS
ADOPTION FALL
UNDERSTANDING FAITH
SIN BELIEF
ACCEPTANCE CONFESSION
SEPARATION SANCTIFICATION
HOLINESS GRACE
ATONEMENT PROPITIATION
REDEMPTION JUSTIFICATION
SALVATION RECONCILIATION
REGENERATION RENEWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
RIGHTEOUSNESS FORGIVENESS
ADOPTION SECURITY
GLORIFICATION INTELLECT
WILL SENSIBILITY

REPENTANCE CONSCIENCE
MEDIATION OBEDIENCE
LORDSHIP PERFECTION
STANDING STATE
SUBSTITUTION TEMPTATION
GOD'S WILL FOREKNOWLEDGE
PREDESTINATION DECREES
ELECTION CHOSEN
SIN NATURE IMPUTED SIN
NEW NATURE OLD NATURE
PERSONAL SIN PUNISHMENT
RESURRECTION QUICKENED
BODY SOUL
SPIRIT BEGOTTEN
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST IN THE HEAVENLIES

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GLOSSARY

CALLING INVITATION
HEIRS RIGHT OF BEING A SON
ADOPTION BEING MADE SONS
FALL FROM INNOCENCE TO SIN
UNDERSTANDING GRASPING KNOWLEDGE
FAITH TRUST IN THE UNSEEN
SIN MISSING THE MARK
BELIEF KNOWLEDGE ACCEPTED
ACCEPTANCE ACTING ON BELIEF
CONFESSION AGREEING WITH GOD
SEPARATION WALKING GODLY
SANCTIFICATION SET APART
RIGHTEOUSNESS HOLY LIFE
HOLINESS SET APART
GRACE GIVING WHAT ISN'T DESERVED
ATONEMENT MAKE RIGHT
PROPITIATION SATISFACTION
RECONCILIATION BRINGING TOGETHER (CHANGE)
REDEMPTION PURCHASE
JUSTIFICATION DECLARED RIGHTEOUS

SALVATION SAVED FROM
REGENERATION MAKE ALIVE
RENEWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT REBIRTH
FORGIVENESS PUTTING AWAY
SECURITY IMMOVABILITY
GLORIFICATION FINAL STEP TO ETERNAL JOY
INTELLECT MAN KNOWING
WILL MAN DECIDING
SENSIBILITY MAN FEELING
REPENTANCE CHANGE OF MIND
CONSCIENCE MAN JUDGING
MEDIATION GOING BETWEEN
OBEDIENCE MINDING THE FATHER
LORDSHIP BELIEVERS RELATION TO CHRIST
PERFECTION FUTURE HOLINESS
STANDING HOW GOD VIEWS US
STATE OUR WALK
SUBSTITUTION IN PLACE OF
TEMPTATION DESIRE TO SIN
GOD'S WILL HIS DESIRE
FOREKNOWLEDGE KNOWING BEFORE
PREDESTINATION SETTING THE END RESULT
DECREES GOD'S PLAN
ELECTION CHOICE
CHOSEN SELECTED
SIN NATURE BENT TOWARD SIN
IMPUTED SIN OURS IN ADAM
NEW NATURE BENT TOWARD GODLINESS
OLD NATURE BENT TOWARD SIN
PERSONAL SIN DISOBEYING GOD
PUNISHMENT JUST DESSERTS
RESURRECTION NEW ETERNAL LIFE
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST/THE CROSS SUBSTITUTIONARY SACRIFICE
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST/HEAVEN ATONEMENT
OUICKENED RENEWED
BODY MATERIAL MAN
SOUL MIND AND INTELLECT OF MAN
SPIRIT ETERNAL PART OF MAN
BEGOTTEN BORN OF

ECCLESIOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE CHURCH

I undertake this study realizing that I have limited experience in pastoring a church in person. I do bring with me to this work the realization that I have been in local churches for twenty-five years and have observed many things over those years.

These observations have impressed me with the trouble, the problems and the anguish that can come within a church. I have also realized that many of these items could be bypassed if the church was operating under a Biblical form of church government.

I am aware that all churches feel their forms of government are "Biblical," but since there are multitudes of forms out there, SOMEONE MUST BE WRONG! Some feel that the Scripture is general enough to leave room for all forms of government. This does not really make good sense if the Bible is REALLY our rule for faith and practice. This is very similar to the church's view of divorce and remarriage today. We declare unabashedly that the Word is our only rule of faith and practice, yet there is a multitude of views as to whether a person can be divorced and remarried. The views run from no remarriage to remarriage for any reason. Now, can all those views really come from the same standard of faith?

It is my purpose to look at the Word of God to see what It teaches on the subject of the Church. I personally believe that most church government systems are designed around personal desire and the need of the day with a few proof texts added in to make it "Biblical."

I trust that this study will concentrate on the Biblical, and not the "Biblical." We need to understand what God wants in our churches, not what we want propped up by His Word.

sld 8-30-91

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH

In our day and society, does "Church" communicate what the Scripture presents when It speaks of church? I doubt it.

Years ago I wrote my dissertation on church renewal and some comments I ran across were very relevant to our study. Many realized several years ago there were some problems in the church. It is sad that we must report that the great renewals of those periods have not changed the church as a whole. There have been individual churches that have made some serious attempts at change and have had a measure of success, however the general condition of the church in the U.S.A. has not changed for the better, but for the worse.

Renewal has the idea of renewing something that is lacking. If you renew a car you go through it and repair or replace all problematic parts and components.

Some have called for the resurrection of the church. Resurrection was a drastic request in the 1970s. Though the term was drastic then, RESURRECTION may be a good term for the church today. At the very least we need a reanimation of the church!

Today little is being done in the church and reanimation would correct that. We need to become active in the local church!

Renewal has been likened to the rearranging of chairs on the deck of the sinking Titanic. Renewal just has not been successful.

When I was in the Navy, we had occasion to meet a ship of the British Navy with the same name as our ship. I was on the USS Cavalier and it was the HMS Cavalier. Some British sailors mentioned when talking about painting their ship, they never chipped away the old paint. They just painted over the old. On US ships all old paint and rust are chipped away and anti-rust paint is applied, then the color coat. The British sailors mentioned that on one of their ships the rust had continued to work over several years to the point that the metal was completely gone. They discovered the problem when a man fell through the deck. The rust had been doing its work in a certain spot for years and finally had eaten away all of the metal and had left the layer upon layer of paint and there was no strength left to support the people above.

The church is akin to this in many people's minds today. It looks good on the outside but is rotting on the inside. Let us consider some problems that are quite observable in the church of our recent past and up to our own day.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES INCONSISTENT: In the late 1970s a church in Mid-Nebraska split over the issue of allowing a negro/white couple into the fellowship of the church. Some were willing to have segregation within their church.

In the late 1980s we attended a Southern Baptist Church in North Carolina. The smell of cigarette smoke was throughout the church. They raise tobacco so there is nothing wrong with it, even though it is killing the church membership.

We preach against divorce in the world, yet it is a very prevalent problem in the church. We need to be consistent in our beliefs and lifestyles.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES IRRELEVANT: A missionary to Zambia tells of a man dying of starvation only a few hundred yards from the mission compound where the big discussion was what to do with left over communion bread. Today half the world awaits the bread of life and we are too busy eating the bread of this life.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES INCOMPETENT: When we were on deputation to go to Ireland, our children were concerned about some things we might not find in Ireland. One of our children asked if we could buy Coke there. I told them that I was sure that we could, because

Coke is all over the world. The realization of my comment struck all of us. Coke is everywhere in the world, yet we were still trying to get the Gospel to the lost in Ireland.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES ISOLATED: Geographically most of the work is being done in our own country. Geographically most of the money spent on missions is being spent in this country. Temporally we are isolated to the 11:00 service. Personally we are isolated by the fact that we allow the pastor to do everything.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES INANE: In a church in Denver I suggested that we glue chorus sheets into the front of the hymnals. This suggestion would have to go through three committees. The music committee to get the sheets, the finance committee to pay for the sheets and glue, and the building committee to okay the gluing of the sheets into the hymnals.

HOWEVER! ALL IS NOT LOST! I finally saw a Christmas program that caught my interest because it had a message that was clear and understandable this year! The teenagers in a local church youth group wrote and produced it.

Why do I bring up these comments? I have seen many steps downward over the last few years. If you are going out to perpetuate this type of church, then I believe that you shouldn't bother. Either get out there and start a life giving church or go find a dead church where you can rot away. WE DON'T NEED ANY MORE DEAD OR DYING CHURCHES. THERE ARE TOO MANY POOR CHURCHES ALREADY!

This is a study of the church and I trust that it will produce within you an excitement about what the church is supposed to be like so that you can go out and reproduce it so it can reproduce other living churches! I trust that we will find the Bible's view of the church and see how it fits into God's plan, and then I trust you will go out prepared to help mold and shape lives into this scriptural style of church. Allow the studies to challenge your thinking about what the church is and what the church is to be doing. We may challenge what has always been. We may challenge what has always been taught. We may challenge what has always been believed. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO BE OPEN TO THE WORD AS WE MOVE ALONG AND ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE CHALLENGED.

WHAT IS "THE CHURCH?"

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH The church defined.

Everyone has self-concept, or what they think they are and their value to others. We all have some idea of what we are to ourselves.

What is your concept of the church? What good is the church to you as a Christian? What good is it to the unsaved? What is the main function of the church in your life?

May I introduce you to some concepts of church in the Christian world today? The National Association of Evangelicals has built sewers in South America. I was told recently that a church in this country was spending a million dollars to build a gym for the youth group. How about the congregation that was going to build a million dollar church because they were tired of carrying hymnals in and out of their rented building. Many nominal believers see it as a front for their religiosity.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Is it worship? Is it learning? Is it evangelism? Is it helping others? Is it teaching? Is it missions? Is it praise? Is it growth? Is it fellowship? Is it counsel? Is it giving? Is it help? Is it prayer? Is it God's work?

THESE ARE PART OF CHURCH, OR AT LEAST SHOULD BE! THE QUESTION IS, "IN YOUR CHURCH ARE ALL OF THESE THINGS TAKING PLACE?"

What offices should a church have? Deacons, deaconesses, elders, board members, trustees, pastors, evangelists, teachers, physical plant engineers?

What type of church government should a church have? Ecclesiastical, congregational, dictatorial, one board, two board, elder rule?

Who can be a member of this church? What are the qualifications? Baptism, salvation, testimony, good life, a business in the city? Consider these things a few moments before you go on.

NOW THAT YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH, WE WILL CHECK THAT WITH THE SCRIPTURES AND SEE WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE OR RETAIN IN YOUR CONCEPT. We trust that it won't be too painful.

II. THE CHURCH DEFINED

Just what do we mean when we talk about the church? Do we mean a building? Do we mean a group of people that listen to tapes from a man in another state? Do we mean an organization? Just what do we mean?

To see the Biblical idea of the church you must see two items of business. First of all the church is a universal body made up of all believers no matter what color, shape or breed they are. This universal church will make up all those that are raptured when the Lord returns for His Church. Secondly, there is the local aspect of the church. The local aspect is the body of believers that calls themselves a local church. This local aspect of the church will be the emphasis of this study.

Another way of distinguishing between the church universal and the church local, is found in the terms "organism" and "organization." The Universal Church is an organism or a living body that has its life in its Head Jesus Christ. The local church is an organization to control, guide and feed the local gathering of believers in a certain geographical location.

Before we begin this look into the local church we should take a brief look at the Church Universal. We will look at this aspect in more detail later in the study as well.

When Christ spoke to Peter about building His Church in the Gospel Christ was speaking of the Universal Church, His church, His Bride to be. This Church is comprised of only believers, and He is the only one that knows the true extent and membership of that body of believers.

There will be believers from many denominations, organizations, and fellowships of our country. There will be believers from areas where there is no organized church.

These people will be those that have accepted Christ's work on the cross as a substitutionary payment for their sin. These people may be from any group or church as long as they have that one thing in common - that free salvation that is in Christ alone.

The Universal Church met only once in the past as a complete body and that would have been on the Day of Pentecost when the church began. We will meet in mass in the air at the Rapture, and then will attend the marriage feast of the Lamb together. That should prove to be a time of pure joy as well as a time for some surprise concerning those that are present. Many will attend that we probably could not have associated with here on earth due to their life styles and doctrine, yet there we will have pure and complete fellowship, not only with one another, but with the Lord.

We are automatically baptized into the Universal Church when we become Christians. We are placed into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. We then identify with that body when we are baptized with water. The water baptism should be tied to a local church as the deliverer of the ordinance, but the act is the identification of the person with Christ and His body, the Church. Taking of church membership then identifies us with a particular local church.

Some have suggested that when we speak of the church universal we capitalize the word church and then when we speak of the local church we use a small letter. This will not be followed in this study for it seems an item more of tradition than necessity. The local church should be made up of people from the universal church so the distinction is not needed.

A good study that we won't attempt to get into on this subject would be to take all occurrences of the word church and determine which are speaking of the universal and which are speaking of the local church. I find many times that pastors use the references interchangeably and this ought not be done. At times what is true of the local church is true of the universal church, yet at other times there may be differences.

To sum up our study thus far, we have seen that the church local, is a part of the Church Universal. All local churches make up the universal church. All local churches also should be made up of only believers from the universal church. The local church governs our activities in this life and the universal church will be our place for all of eternity.

The universal church is composed of all those that have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. The local church is a body of believers that have gathered for specific purposes. Those purposes will be discussed shortly.

There are those that teach that where two or three are gathered you have a church. The Lord mentions that when two or three are gathered that He is with them, but He never declares that to be a local church, nor do any of the New Testament writers. This is not to detract from the fellowship that we can have together in small groups, but there is a difficulty in two or three practicing communion when they are not an organized church.

Some suggest that the book of Acts shows that in the early days of the church there were meetings in homes, and these fellowships comprised the functioning of the local church at Jerusalem. The item that is usually left out is the fact that the apostles were overseeing the functions of the church. This is very clearly shown in chapter six when they called for a new office of deacon to serve the church in a specific manner.

It is also to be suggested that the breaking of bread in the early part of Acts is not easily shown to be the Lord's table observance. It could just as easily be the breaking of bread in a meal. The other side of this coin is the possibility that we might see in the Acts that the believers were commemorating the Lord's death each time they gathered to eat. That might have application to our own potlucks and get-togethers. It might well be if we were concentrating more on His death we might be closer to Him and our service to Him.

In defining the Church there will be five aspects to the local church which we want to look at. First, it was organized, second it was made up of believers, third it was a Spirit filled group of people, fourth it was the deliverer of the ordinances and finally, it was in a geographical location. We do not want to expand our definition further at this point. We need to understand these five points of our definition before we go on to look at the purpose of that body - the edification of the saved and the evangelization of the lost. Those two purposes must be an integrated part of the church, or it is not really a church, but the five points are really the definition as opposed to the purpose.

a. Organized: Just how do we know the early church was organized? Many things could be offered as proof of this point. The apostles were over the church. The people came to the apostles with problems in chapter six, and again we see in chapter fifteen there was a council to settle a dispute of doctrine. Later in the New Testament we see that Paul gives instruction concerning the elders and deacons, the ministers of the church.

It might be wise to set the stage for this study by stating that we are not pushing organized church, or organizationalism. The study will look at what the Lord had in mind for His local churches. There will be an attempt to show what the New Testament shows organizationally and go no further. There was organization in the early church, but we are quick to point out there was LIMITED organization.

b. Comprised of believers: The church is comprised of believers only. This is clearly seen in the Scripture in Acts two when the church was started. Only believers were present and only believers were baptized into the Body of Christ. Later in Acts the idea of belonging is linked with that of accepting Christ. The book of Second Corinthians shows clearly that the believer is not to be yoked with non-believers. This is applicable to the church membership in that the logic that Paul used in this text precludes lost people in our relationships or in the church (II Cor. 6:14-18).

It is easy to observe in many of our churches today there are non-believers in membership where they ought not be. Indeed, there are lost people in places of leadership in churches today. This causes no end of difficulties for that particular church. How can a church be directed by its Head, Jesus Christ, if there are lost people in places of leadership? ILLOGICAL! The communication link is broken.

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CHURCH DEFINED (CONTINUED)

c. Spirit filled: The Spirit filled the believers on the day of Pentecost and we know from our study of the Holy Spirit that He indwells each believer in this age. The New Testament tells the believer to be filled with the Spirit as we gather together for worship and fellowship (Eph. 5:18-20). (The filling of the Spirit makes reference to the fact that the Spirit is in control of the believer and not the believer controlling himself.) If every believer is controlled by the Spirit of God, then they can be properly lead of the Spirit to do the will of the Head of the church, Christ. If part of the body is not controlled by the Spirit then there will be limited, if not impaired, control of the body by Christ.

d. Deliverer of the ordinances: In this point we do not want to bring about visions of the Roman church that dispenses grace through the sacraments, but we do want to help the reader to understand that the ordinances are not for bodies of people other than the church. The church should be the center of the ordinances. It is not to say that the pastor must be the only one involved in administering the ordinances either. The church leadership is to be overseeing the dispersion of the ordinances. Any lay person can be involved in the ordinances as long as the leaders have control of that involvement. We were pleased that one of our sons was baptized by a layman in the church. The church leaders had allowed the man to baptize his own children and they decided that he might as well baptize everyone that Sunday. This is perfectly acceptable.

The ordinances are two: The Lord's table and baptism. These topics will be covered later in detail, but at this point let us only mention that baptism is by immersion and that it is not an extension of grace or favor. It is only a sign of the believers' rebirth. The Lord's table is an observance which brings our mind to the death of our Lord on our behalf. These two are to be observed under the authority of the local church, and are not to be a part of individual worship.

e. Local geographical location: The church was started in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost and then spread throughout the known world. The fact that it was linked to geographical locations is easily seen when we look through the index of our Bible. Paul wrote to the church at Rome, Corinth, Thessalonica etc. James wrote to believers that were scattered, but the emphasis of Scripture is on local assemblies.

We want to move on to the church and its purpose. We have already mentioned that the overall purpose is the evangelism of the lost and the edification of the saved. Beyond these two points there are many things that the church is to do, but this is the central thrust for the church.

As the believer mixes with lost people in their everyday life they will ultimately witness of their Lord and lead someone to the Lord. At that point the new believer should be introduced to the local church where the church will begin to train them in the things of the Lord. The training is to the end that the new believer will be well grounded, but also they will be sent out to do the work of the Lord.

In a real sense the church is an educational institution. In fact - one man's opinion - if the church in this country were doing its job, there would be no need for Bible Institutes, Colleges and Seminaries. The believers would be properly trained in the church, and then they would go out to do the work they were given to do.

The term "church" in the Bible is usually the Greek term "ekklesia" which means called out. The term is used of the children of Israel as they were in the wilderness, and is also used of secular assemblies of people in the book of Acts (Acts 7:38; 19:32; 39). Thus when we use the term church we are obviously talking about called out people and not a building. This is a group of people that is called out of a larger group of people, again showing the "saved" aspect of the church membership (Acts 15:14).

This is probably the most important item - the church is people NOT a building. Often times when we talk of church, the building is the concept that pops into our mind, yet that concept is in error. God is not interested in buildings, but in people. Buildings are not wrong if they are NEEDED AND UTILITARIAN IN NATURE. Many buildings today are products of a person's or group's pride and ambition.

Even more than people, we are speaking of God's people, a very special people. These are people that have great meaning and value to God, thus we ought to bear that in mind when we talk about them! We are indeed God's people, a peculiar people called out to serve Him and Him

only.

Some view the church as something new - a new kid on the theological block - so to speak. This is true in that the church's organizational structure is something that is newly revealed in the New Testament however the church is only an extension of the Lord's overall program.

We must realize that God has a kingdom plan in action throughout the ages. His thought was for a kingdom for Himself. This is seen in the Old Testament in all of the prophetic information concerning the kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom will be the culmination of all that God is doing with man. The church is not something that was thought up by the Trinity on the spur of the moment when Christ "goofed and got crucified." The church is not a substitute program. The church is an extension of the program that was in progress. Christ mentions the kingdom in mystery form. I suggest a study of that thought and its relationship to the church. Christ was sent to finish provision for the salvation program, and He will return to finish the kingdom aspect of the overall program of God in the future.

The church is not a title for some new group, or some new movement. The Church is God's called out ones of this age as Israel was in the Old Testament.

Paul mentions that the Gentiles are grafted into the program because the Jewish people have been set aside for a time. We will see more on this when we delve into the Eschatology section of our study. The church is something that was planned before the foundation of the world just as the plan of redemption was planned, just as the plan for Israel was planned.

WHAT THE CHURCH IS NOT:

a. The church is not the Old Testament way reworked or renewed: All Old Testament and New Testament saints are redeemed but: 1.) The sacrificial system ended in Christ. Gal. 3:24-26 tells us that the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to faith. We are no longer under that Old Testament schoolmaster but under the blood of Jesus Christ. Heb. 5:9-10 tells us that Christ became the author of salvation by His suffering. 2.) The Church Age began with the work of the cross and Christ upon it.

b. The church is not Denominations: Denominations are not mentioned, nor even hinted at, in the Scriptures. What is a denomination? Webster mentions, "a religious organization uniting in a single legal and administrative body a number of local congregations."

Are Baptists a denomination? Some may be considered a denomination, however not all Baptist groups are denominations. The "Southern Baptists" and the "American Baptists" are denominations, however the "Conservative Baptists" and the "Regular Baptists" are associations. The difference between them is the organization behind them. The latter groups are loose associations of INDEPENDENT CHURCHES GOVERNED BY THEMSELVES! Now I might add that the Southern Baptists claim they are independent churches, though at last report they still

were required to maintain certain ties to the overall organization which seems to fit Webster's definition.

The denominational churches are governed to a certain extent via the denominational structure. The churches support that structure by agreement of being a part of the denomination.

A denomination may require giving, may set up schools, may help select pastors for churches, may have their own publishing arm, may require churches to follow their curriculum and may manage the local church and what it does.

Are Lutherans a denomination? There are several groups that make up several separate denominations of Lutherans. Are Presbyterians a denomination? Yes they are. There may be more than one in this group as well.

SO THE CHURCH IS NOT, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Christian Science, Catholic, or any other organizational structure.

You might wonder why I take time to cover this topic. Have you ever read the "TRAIL OF BLOOD," a book that describes only certain Baptists as the only real, true believers? They hold to the fact that if you haven't been baptized by one of their men that was baptized by someone that was baptized by someone that was baptized by someone that was baptized - etc. clear back to John The Baptist, then you aren't properly baptized, and the thought often is that you may not really be going to heaven. These are sometimes called Landmark Baptists.

Others aren't quite that strong. I attended two Baptist colleges. At one of them a friend was talking with me and he mentioned the "Baptist distinctives." I asked him what they were, so he listed them for me. They were Biblical principles that all of us would hold to. I said, "Yes, those are good principles but they are Biblical distinctives." "No! They are Baptist distinctives." I said, "Yes, Baptists hold to them, but they are Biblical distinctives!" "NO! THEY ARE BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES!" I said, "How do you like the weather?" We removed ourselves from the subject.

We might also add that the church is not the ecumenical movement. Three Lutheran groups have now merged. Another Lutheran group and the Episcopalians are trying to merge. The Catholics want us all to come back to Holy Mother Church. The Charismatics of all sorts want to get together. This is not the bringing about of the Body of Christ, this is the bringing together of Christians and non-Christians in an unholy mess of doctrine they all say they can live with.

c. The church is not the Millennial Kingdom: The Kingdom is yet future and will be set up by Christ the Lord. Some in the past, and some in this time, believe that we can get the earth back to the pre-fall condition and allow the Lord to come set up His kingdom. NOT SO! The Lord is capable of setting the date of His coming. Indeed, it has been set from the foundation of the world, and nothing we can do on this earth will change that date.

d. The church is not a Sunday School: The Sunday School started in 1780 in Glouster, England by Robert Rakes in a kitchen. It WAS NOT IN 40 AD IN THE UPPER ROOM ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST! Mr. Rakes started the Sunday School to teach poor children to read and write, and he used a Bible to do it. In 1824 the American Sunday School Union brought the concept of the Sunday School to the church.

In all of the good that Sunday Schools have brought to us we must remember they are not inspired. Many believe there are some problems with Sunday Schools, and I would like to alert you to these possible problems.

(From "EMERGING PATTERNS IN CHURCH EDUCATION" by Kenneth O. Gangel in Christianity Today; July 1973 p 5)

1. "It offers a conscience - salving, though inadequate, alternative for parents who neglect Christian teaching at home." 2. "It has focused too much on children and too little on adults." 3. "It may have so emphasized evangelism that it has neglected nurture." 4. "It too often is used as a substitute for a total church program of nurture."

A number of years ago a friend took a church in Nebraska. There were two separate buildings. The church met in one building and the Sunday School met in the other. He accepted the call to the church and began talking to his board about making some changes in the way the Sunday School was operating. He was promptly informed that the Sunday School was not his business. He was the pastor of the church. The Sunday School had its own board and superintendent that took care of their program. Another friend took a small work in Denver. The group met only for Sunday School. It took him several months to add a ten minute teaching time at the end of the Sunday School activities.

Paul never started with Sunday Schools, nor with kids. He always started with the adults.

e. The church is not Israel: Saucy declares this point, "The New Testament never confuses Israel and the church. As opposed to the church, which is a religious body composed of individuals from all nations, the term Israel retains its reference to that people which came physically from the loins of Abraham." (Taken from: "THE CHURCH IN GOD'S PROGRAM"; Saucy, Robert L.; Copyright 1979, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 70) This is a good distinction, yet I believe that it leaves out the proselytes that came to God through Israel in the Old Testament. These too were from all nations, even though they identified with Israel. They were considered Israelites, even though they did not come from the "loins of Abraham."

Is there a better statement of distinction? Let's try. The church is that group of people who are related to God through belief and faith, since the cross, as opposed to Israel which is that people that were related to God through belief and faith prior to the cross, responding to the promise of God to Abraham. Though similarities may exist, the two are distinct and are separate from one

another.

Some would have us believe that the two are the same. Some bring forth Rom. 9:6 as proof that Paul viewed Israel and the church as the same. "Not as though the word of God hath taken no effect. For they are not all Israel, who are of Israel...." If you examine the context it will be clear that this is not showing that some of the people in the church are also Israel - it is showing there is spiritual Israel and physical Israel.

Those who view Israel and the church as the same normally do so to place their followers under the law and the promises of the Old Testament economy.

The two are separate! 1.) The book of Acts portrays men of the church speaking of Israel separately from the church. Acts 2:22 "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:" (See also Acts 3:12; Acts 4:10; Acts 5:21; Acts 5:31; Acts 5:35; Acts 21:28.) 2.) Paul viewed them as separate. He, a man of the church, speaks, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, they might be saved." (Rom. 10:1) He distinguishes between "brethren" and "Israel." In Rom. 11:1 he declares himself, a Christian, to be a part of Israel, making a distinction between the two. Paul in I Cor. 10:32 mentions Jews, Gentiles and the church as separate units. 3.) The fact that the term "Israel" appears only approximately twenty times between the end of Acts and the beginning of Rev. is indication enough that Israel is to be kept separate from the church. 4.) Israel is a nation while the church is a body, an organism, and an organization. The church is never referred to as a nation, yet this is the term used of Israel over and over again in the Old Testament. 5.) God at this time is dealing with and through the church WHILE Israel has been set aside and is not active with, or for God.

It must be readily admitted that the two are similar. The term "ecclesia" is used of both groups of people. We have seen that the term is applied to Israel in the wilderness in Acts 7:38, while also in Acts the term is used of the church (Acts 14:23). Indeed, the term is related to the church 112 times in the New Testament.

Why is it important to view the two as separate? To mix the two will lead to the promises and ordinances of the Old Testament being applied to the church and the blessings of the church being applied to Israel.

It will lead to misunderstandings in the area of future things. For example, who are the people that will be governed in the Millennium? If Israel and the Church are the same then both will be in the Millennium. If they are different then only Israel will be in the Millennium.

If they are actually the same then Paul was not able to communicate well, for he certainly shows a distinction between the two in his writings.

Results of mixing Israel and the church shows up in the teachings of: 7th day Adventism, British

Israelism, Mormonism, and Covenant Theology.

f. The church is not big business: Years ago a religious temple in downtown Denver occupied only a tiny part of two city blocks. Also on the property were several high rise commercial buildings. Two city blocks in downtown Denver - reportedly tax free because it was a part of the temple property. Other cults and isms are noted for their total or part ownership of large corporations.

g. The church is not what many have made it: Bruce Shelley in his "THE CHURCH: GOD'S PEOPLE," mentions a list of some myths of the modern day church meaning. He declares that the church is not just fellowship, not just invisible, not just doctrinal, not even a building, nor denominations, nor is it an influence on society. It is much more than many try to make it in our day and age. It is something special and unique in all the world, and we keep it to ourselves all too often, not extending invitation to it to those around us.

To recap, the church is not: The Old Testament sacrificial system, A denomination, The Millennial Kingdom, A Sunday School, Israel, Big Business, Fellowship, or Doctrine! By the way, it isn't a building either! As we rid ourselves of the false ideas, maybe we can focus on the facts - what is the church? It is people - specifically God's people.

STUDY SUGGESTIONS:

1. List all of the occurrences of the term church and determine which are speaking of the universal church, local church and in some cases you might find that the reference speaks of both aspects of the church.

2. Look at the five points of our definition of the church and find other scriptural passages that prove the definition that we have set forth.

3. Attempt to find other passages which show the church's purpose is edification and evangelism.

FOR DEEPER STUDY

1. Read through the November 1989 issue of Moody Monthly. It is very interesting where some of our traditions came from.

2. See appendix one for a constitution for a church that follows the multiple elder form of government.

3. Request a copy of Radio Bible Class' booklet "WHO QUALIFIES TO BE A CHURCH LEADER?" and read it. Great for ideas! (Radio Bible Class; Grand Rapids, Michigan; 49555-0001)

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WHAT THE CHURCH IS

Introduction:

We have seen that the Greek word translated church is "ecclesia." It is translated in the following manner: 1.) The "ecclesia" of a self-governing Greek city. Acts 19:32, 35, 39, 41. 2.) The Old Testament "ecclesia," or gathering of national Israel. Acts 7:38. 3.) The New Testament "ecclesia." I Tim 3:15,16.

There are around 112 more references to the New Testament Church, both visible and invisible. The meaning of Church, or the type of called out group, is determined by the context of the passage. "Ecclesia" comes from two terms, "ec" meaning out, and "clessia" meaning called.

In the New Testament usage there seems to be the idea of the people knowing they belong to the group that is called out. This does not require membership, but certainly allows for the possibility.

Membership in our day is a very real need. There is a need to keep the local assembly pure. If you have unsaved in the membership, you have the possibility of those unsaved becoming church leaders. This is not good! "Church" does not necessarily guarantee there are not unsaved present. In many of our mainline denominations entire congregations are probably unsaved. Even within Bible believing churches, we can accidentally allow unsaved into the fellowship. This is never on purpose and is always regrettable.

Let us try to define the term church. What is "church?" What are the minimum requirements to call a group of people a church?

May I suggest a definition? The church is the invisible union of all believers in this present age that manifests itself through local assemblies committed to the edification of the saints and the evangelization of the lost.

A complete study of the term church would be suggested for the student that would like to do further research. We will only list some of the highlights of such a study for your present consideration.

1. The church is Christ. Col 1:24
2. The church is a feeding place for believers. Acts 20:28
3. The church is showing God's wisdom. Eph. 3:10
4. The church followed the apostle's doctrine. Acts 2:42

5. The church is set apart to God. I Cor. 1:2
6. The church will be raised and glorified. I Cor. 15:52
7. The church attests to, and serves Christ. I Pet 1:15
8. The church is an assembly of people. Acts 7:38; Matt. 16:18
9. The church seems to be involved in worship.
10. The church is catholic/universal. Col 1:6; Rev 5:9; Eph. 2:14-24
11. The church is subject to Christ. Eph. 5:24
12. The church prayed. Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5; I Tim. 2:8
13. The church has the ministry of reconciliation. II Cor. 5:19
14. The church had leaders. Acts 14:23; 20:17; I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5ff
15. The church was ministering or giving. Acts 11:29,30
16. The church is the fullness of Christ. Eph. 1:23
17. The church sang. Eph. 5:19
18. The church baptized new believers. Acts
19. The church was gifted. I Cor. 4:17; 12:28,29; Eph. 4:11-16; Acts 1:26; Rom. 12:7; I Tim. 4:11; 6:2
20. The church had all things common - voluntary. Acts 1-6
21. The church sent out missionaries. Acts 11:13; 13:1 ff
22. The church is of Christ. Matt 16:18
23. The church is of the living God. I Tim 3:15
24. The church is the holy temple of Lord. Eph. 2:20
25. The church is a fellowship with those of like mind. I Pet 2:9
26. The church is the Bride of Christ. Eph. 5:25
27. The church is the body of Christ. Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:12
28. The church is the dispenser of the mysteries of God. I Cor. 4:1
29. The church has a head - Christ. Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18,24
30. The church is believers. I Cor. 1:2
31. The church is God's elect. Rom. 8:33
32. The church observed the Lord's table. I Cor. 11

So, "The church is the invisible union of all believers in this present age which manifests itself through local assemblies committed to the edification of the saints and the evangelization of the lost." These local churches are involved in many ministries.

THE CHURCHES BEGINNINGS

Just when did the church begin? This is a question that has been debated by many. Some suggest the day of Pentecost, others go further back to the sending of the disciples in Matt 10:1, 7-10. Some suggest that John the Baptist started the church, while others suggest that it was when Christ breathed on the apostles in John 20:21,22. The covenant theologian would view the church as the same as Israel and as such would not see a beginning of the church - only the beginning of the covenant with Abraham.

Hyper-dispensationalists would place it later than Pentecost while differing on just when it began. Some place it at Acts 10:44,45 when Cornelius was converted. This dictates that only Gentiles are in the church. Some indicate Acts 13:2,3 at Antioch, and some even go beyond the book of Acts for the beginning of the church.

The most widely held view in fundamental circles today would probably be the day of Pentecost view. (Acts 1:4; 2:41)

Let us consider some facts. The Lord saw the church as future in Matthew 16:18 which certainly places it after John the Baptist. The resurrection and ascension were essential to the founding of the church (Eph. 1:19-23). We see in Eph. 4:7-12 that the spiritual gifts were also linked to the ascension, thus we must assume that the beginning of the church was after the ascension. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was yet future in Acts 1:5 thus indicating that the church was yet future there as well. The baptism of the Spirit seems to be linked to the beginning of the church, for it is at that point that the believer enters the body of Christ (Acts 2; 11:15-16; cf. I Cor. 12:13).

In answer to the Hyper-dispensationalist we must refer to the above arguments and ask for logic in their thinking. Christ has made provision for salvation and is seated with the Father - a perfect time to take the next step toward the completion of the Father's plan of the ages, the beginning of the kingdom in mystery form, the church. If Gentiles were required for the beginning of the church why didn't some of the writers of Scripture mention it? The fact that the ministry of the Spirit to the Gentiles was the same as that to the Jews would indicate there was no need to wait for them. (Acts 2; cf. 11:15,16)

The fact that the Lord told the believers to wait in Jerusalem indicates that He had something very special in mind before they continued their work.

The only reason to place the start of the church post Pentecost is so you can eliminate the need for baptism and the Lord's table as church ordinances in this day and age.

NEW TESTAMENT PICTURES OF THE CHURCH

In the New Testament, we have pictures, or figures of the church that are of interest to us:

a. The Body of Christ: The Church is pictured as the body of Christ many times in the Bible. Christ is pictured as the head of that unified body as well. (I Cor. 12:12, 14, 18, 21, 27, 28; Eph. 1:22,23; 3:6; 4:4; 4:12,16; 5:23,30; Col. 2:19-25; 1:18-24; Rom. 12:4; Eph. 5:23,24; Gal. 3:28).

b. A building: The Church is pictured as a building and we are part of that building. (Eph. 2:19-21; I Pet. 2:11; I Cor. 3:9-17; II Cor. 6:16; I Pet. 2:5-9; Eph. 2:20-22; I Tim. 3:15)

c. Bride of Christ: We are also going to be the bride of Christ in the end. We are being prepared

and He will one day come for His bride. (Eph. 5:25-27; II Cor. 11:2,3; Rev 19:7)

d. The Flock: We are His flock. He has placed undershepherds over us to feed and guide. The idea of the shepherd and flock portrays a beautiful picture of His care over us. (Jn 10; I Pet 5)

Other pictures include Branches: Jn. 15; Kingdom of priests: I Pet. 2, Rom. 12:1, Heb. 13:15,16; New Creation: I Co. 15:45, Rom. 5:19; Co-heirs: Heb. 1:2, Rom. 8:17; Harvest: I Co. 15:23; Servants: Col 4:1, I Cor. 7:22

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Salvation followed by baptism, is seen in Acts 2:41 as an integrated part of being added to the Church. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Acts 2:47 is presented at times, to show that baptism is not a requirement for Church membership. "Praising god, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." This text only records additions to the body and is not meant to be a process for membership.

Spirit baptism is the mode of entrance into the universal body thus it is logical that water baptism would be the mode of entrance into the local Church. (I Cor. 12:13) The texts in Acts dealing with the topic usually see baptism as preceding the adding of a person to the body.

A true conversion in the book of Acts immediately made the believer want to state they were separating themselves from Judaism, and they were identifying with the Messiah that had come.

There are no other requirements listed for Church membership. There are many other items that people require, but the Scripturalness of requirements other than salvation and baptism should be inspected very carefully.

Some question whether the idea of Church membership is valid. To these it is submitted that even if you do not have a membership or listing, you should have some sort of system whereby you assure that the majority of your Church is Christian. If you don't then you will have unsaved people in leadership. If they become a majority in the body, they can control your Church organization as well as buildings and all that you might attempt to do.

It is Biblical, to most, to have Church membership, and it is logical even if you reject the Biblicalness of the idea.

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

The organism, or universal Church, is shown in Eph. 2:19 where it is stated, "So then you are no

longer strangers and aliens but you are fellow - citizens with the saints, and are of God's household." We are a part of a household made up of all believers. One of the pictures that we looked at previously was the idea of the body of Christ. In that figure we can see the idea of the body, or Church, being a living organism. (I Cor. 12:12; Eph. 1:22-23)

The Universal Church is seen in Scripture as the entire family of God - all those that truly believe. Entrance is gained via the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.

Rather than spend a long time on this subject let it suffice to just list some characteristics of the universal Church, and the reference where the idea is found.

Its membership is diverse, but we have a common dependency. I Cor. 12:12-31

The Church is seen as God's dwelling place and temple. Eph. 2:21-22; II Cor. 6:16

It is also seen as God's flock. I Peter 5:2-4

It is obvious that Christ is vitally involved in the Church since He is the Head. It is also clear that the Church is His (Mt. 16:18). It is Christ that taught it's first leaders (John 14-16 and the gospels). It is Christ that sent the Holy Spirit to empower it (Acts 2:33; Jo. 16:7). It is His ascension that set the stage for His headship over the Church (Eph. 1:20-23). It is His gifts that edify the Church (Eph. 4:8-11). It is His work that will prepare the Church (Eph. 5:26-27). He is preparing the Church for the rapture as the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25-32; I Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 19:6-9). Finally as we have seen, it is His body (Eph. 1:22-23).

THE LOCAL CHURCH

The local Church is that body of people in a local area that have organized for fellowship, edification and evangelism. This local concept is seen in several of the introductions of Paul's books to the believers at specific locations. This concept is also seen in the calling of the elders of Ephesus to meet with Paul in Acts 20:17. Many of the doctrines that we follow in the Church today are drawn from the books that Paul wrote to local Churches in local areas. The organization of the Church is seen in many verses where the officers are mentioned. I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5 ff; Acts 14:23.

II. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

1. Edification of the saints: Ephesians is a key book to this idea of the edification, building up, or maturation of the saints which is one of the main purposes of the Church.

Eph. 4:11-16 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"

12 "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"
13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"
14 "That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"
15 "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, [even] Christ:"
16 "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Let us list some characteristics of the Church from this text:

Certain men are gifted, certain men are given to the Church, edification, body concept, unity of the faith as a goal, knowing Christ as a goal, perfect man as a goal, fulness of Christ in the people as a goal, maturity as a goal, solid in doctrine as a goal, speaking truth, speaking in love, growing to be like Christ, and the body is to be FITLY joined together.

NOW, if we were to work on those items only in many Churches, we would have a full time job for many years!

It seems that Paul is depicting a cycle that is never ending. That cycle begins with the Church leadership training the Church members to do the work of the Lord. The members in turn as they are doing the work of the Lord lead unsaved people to their Savior, and introduce them into the Church where the Church leadership trains the new members to do the work of the Lord, etc. (see also II Tim. 2:2). This is a Biblical system of training, and education, yet many Churches would rather function on the basis of the Pastor can do it all, while we soak up all of his good messages.

The early Church functioned as Paul describes it and reached the known world in one generation. It must stir your imagination to envision a Church in the U.S.A. that began functioning as they ought. That is the one and only way that we will ever reach the world for Christ!

2. Evangelization of the lost: As we have already seen, edification will ultimately lead to the evangelism that is the second purpose of the Church. This is pictured for us by Paul in I Thess. 1:8 which states, "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing." (See also Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:18-20)

Some suggest other things that should be a part of the Church, but these actually fall into one of the purposes that we have been discussing.

Let us just list some of these other items:

Show love for the Lord. Rev. 2:4, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

Incite one another to love and good works. Heb. 10:24, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works,"

Care for the needy, do good works, and many others:

preaching praying singleness of heart
helping witnessing sharing
teaching counseling sending
testifying teaching baptizing
organizing serving fellowship
study worship singing
giving praising testifying
sharing helping praying
study

Another good study that we won't delve into, is to read the book of Acts and list characteristics of the Church. Some items of interest from the book of Acts concerning the Church:

They obeyed the great commission (1:8)
They were Christians (1:14)
They were organized (1:15-26)
They were empowered (2:1-14)
They were preaching (2:15 ff)
They were baptizing (2:41)
They were fruitful (2:41)
They were living rightly in all of their activities (2:42-46)
They were powerful (2:43)
They were sharing (2:44,45)
They were praising (2:47)
They were persecuted (4:1-4; 5:17-28; 8:1-3)
They were bold (4:5-12)
They were united (4:32)
They were sacrificial (4:32)
They were holy and pure (5:1-11)
They were dedicated unto death (7)
They were forgiving (7:60)
They were spreading the Gospel (8:4 due to their scattering)

They reached the known world in their own time! Today you have over half the world to reach in your generation. My generation cannot do the task! My generation has for all practical purposes failed to reach our own generation. That is a very sobering thought if you can allow it to sink in!

Take a moment to draw a picture in your mind. At the top is God the Father, our caretaker. It is His will that we follow, and it is Him that we glorify. (Matt. 6:25-34; 12:50; John 14:13) A little lower and to the left you have a block marked God the Holy Spirit. God gave the Spirit for direction, comfort and power. To the lower right of God we have God, the Son. He is our savior, and is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23).

Below the Father, we have a long rectangle labeled the Church that reaches down to a picture of the earth. The Church is the link between the trinity and the world. Without that link there is no way that the World can know of the salvation that God has provided.

GOD
THE
FATHER

GOD
THE
HOLY SPIRIT

GOD
THE
SON

C
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WORLD

If your picture is complete you have a cross connecting God with the world, which is quite appropriate. I would take liberty to use a quote that I have heard many times over the years, The Church is not Church unless "ur" in it. The Church cannot do the complete job that God has given it to do unless every believer is active in the Church. The individual is key to the evangelization of the world! God has chosen man to be the communicator of His truth (II Cor. 5:20).

Christ commissioned the apostles - and us - as believers to go to the world. (Matt 28:18-20)

A number of years ago I came across some statistics concerning missions. (Ruth Johnson in "THE YEARS BETWEEN" I believe it was a tract)

Of 50 missionary commitments
38 never reach Bible school leaving 12
4 drop out of Bible school leaving 8
4 drop out when a field opens leaving 4
1 drops out before leaving, leaving 3
3 reach the field
1 will drop out during the first term
1 never returns for the second term
1 continues in missionary work.

Of the one that continues we must draw our mission directors and home personal.

Shelley in his book mentions, That the Church lacks zeal. he goes on to mention that many misunderstand the message. You can listen to many preachers of our day and realize that this is true. The Gospel message has so many additions to it that the lost person is confused by the confetti. He mentions, "Christianity without a mission, like fire that does not burn, is a contradiction in terms." (Shelley, "THE CHURCH: GOD'S PEOPLE"; p 113)

More to the point may be this - you call yourself a Christian. Are you a contradiction in terms?

Our reason for living is to glorify God, and our purpose as a Church is to evangelize the lost so they might be trained to do the work of the Lord.

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III. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

BASIC TYPES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT THAT ARE USED TODAY

There have been several types of church government developed over the years. These forms of government have some verses in the Bible that seem to back them up, but these systems normally overlook the plain teaching of the Bible and fail to deal with all the texts.

We will just introduce the reader to these systems of government and allow them to evaluate these on their own in light of the coming study on church government.

It is assumed that if the Bible does teach one form of government then that would be the system that the Lord would bless the most. Do not mistake this for a mass call for change of church government, but it is a challenge to consider this study and see just what the Bible does teach on

the subject. If you find yourself in a church that has a government that contradicts what you see, don't leave because you now have "the revelation." Consider what might be done to bring about change in your particular church. If you are in church leadership, don't call for total, immediate change. We will consider some further cautions later in the study.

1. THE EPISCOPAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This form of government is seen in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church. Some sources list the Roman Catholic Church however I would class it as separate.

This system can be diagramed as seen below.

BISHOP

ELDERS

DEACONS

PEOPLE

Apostolic succession is the teaching which says that the apostles passed on their power and authority to others who passed on that power and authority to others, etc. until the successors of today. The Roman Church holds to this thought and this fact may be why some list them in this category. Episcopalian high Church people also tend toward this belief system. The Landmark Baptists in the Independent Baptist movement hold to a succession back past the apostles to John the Baptist.

The Episcopalian system started in the second century. They have a college of Bishops who are the superior clergy. They have pastors that are inferior clergy and the people only obey what comes down from the top. The denomination owns all property and can control the congregation via their investment in that property. This opposes the thought that what we give to the Lord is the Lord's. If a congregation feel led to build a building, then that building cannot belong to the organization of Churches, but it is God's.

The low Church people view the bishop as nice but not necessary. This is not uncommon in Church history. The people of the land and the working class often reject the authorities that attempt to place themselves over others.

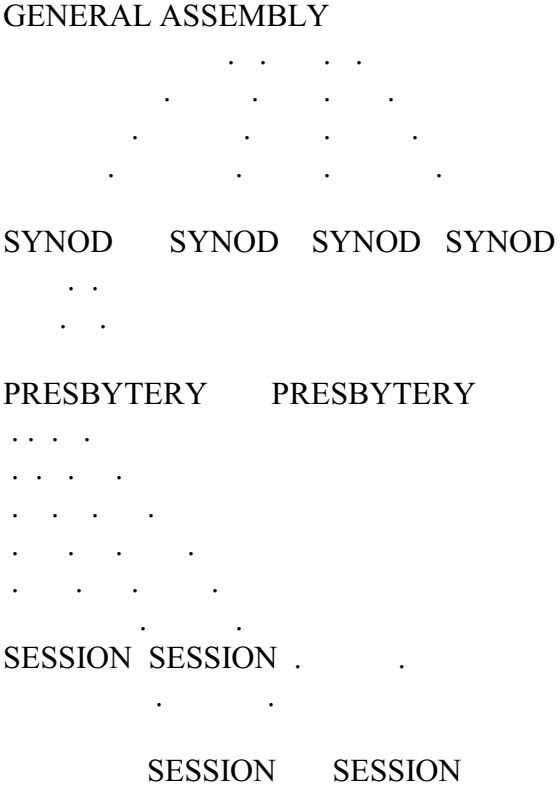
2. THE FEDERAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This system is found primarily in the Presbyterian movement. Calvin developed this form from his study of the scripture.

The session is composed of the pastor and elders of a local Church. The presbytery, made up of representatives of the Churches, rule a given district of Churches. The Synod owns and rules a larger district of Churches. The General Assembly is over all Churches. The denomination owns

the property.

The people can have control over their Church through their representatives to the presbytery. They also wield some control over the denomination via their representatives.

The Bible teaches there was leadership. The federalist assumes that the apostles have a counterpart in our own day and age, which translates into their hierarchy. This is true in all of the systems that have a superstructure of organization.



3. THE CONGREGATIONAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This system is usually used by Baptists, Evangelical Free, Disciples of Christ, and some Bible and independent Churches. (The Conservative Baptist Association is going toward the eldership rule form which we will see later.)

The Congregationalists make no distinction between elders and deacons. Indeed most have only deacons. If they see the position of elder it is usually the pastor and he being a single elder unless there is need of extra outside staff members which would also become elders. They hold to Christ Being the head of the Church, as well as the priesthood of every believer.

They hold that no group of men should have authority over the local assembly which translates

into a rejection of denominations and the previous forms of government.

The independent assembly owns and controls their own property.

The pastor is ordained and administers the ordinances within the local Church. The deacons are to see to the welfare of the Church.

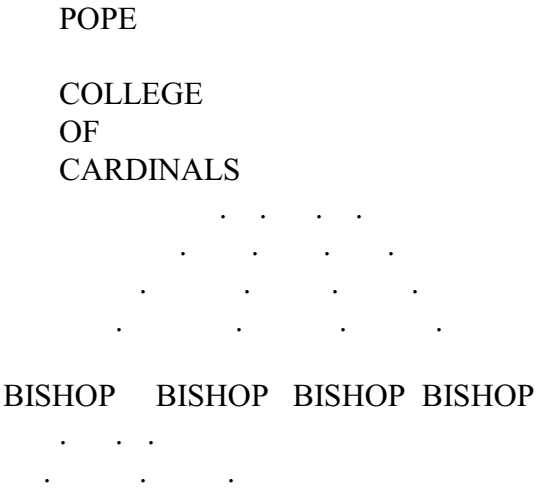
The congregation elects the officers and votes on major items of business. As the Church grows in size this voting usually is curtailed to more major expenditures/changes to save on the time involved in large lengthy discussions.

We will give some of the items of proof which they submit in support of for their system The scripture views the Church as responsible for things I Co. 1:10; Phil. 1:27; The fact that the whole Church is pictured as helping select officers Acts 6:3,5; 15:2,30; II Co. 8:19;

The fact that the whole Church is involved in discipline Mt 18:17; I Co. 5; II Th. 3:14ff; The pastor is the single elder Rev 2-3. ("angel" There is much discussion as to the meaning of the term angel in the letters to the Churches and there is little proof that it is the SINGULAR PASTOR of the Church.); elder is singular and deacons is plural I Tim. 3:8-13 (However, we must point out that Phil 1:1 mentions both in the plural! We might suggest a look at the number of plural appearances of elder as opposed to the singular references to the same term in appendix two.)

4. THE PAPAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This is the Roman Catholic system.

They have Cardinals, bishops, and Priests which have differing authorities as you descend down to the priest, local leaders and finally to the congregation. The Roman Church owns and controls all properties.



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LOCAL LOCAL LOCAL
PARISH PARISH PARISH

5. THE NATIONAL CHURCH FORM OF GOVERNMENT: The Church of England is the official Church of the land. This is true of the Lutherans in Scandinavia as well. The state has a Church and the head of the state is also the head of the Church. Leaders are appointed by an agency of the state. It has been the norm in much of history that these Churches are dead, ritualistic Churches that minister to a very few. The masses enter the Church only for infant baptism, their wedding and then their funeral.

6. THE NO GOVERNMENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT: Some believe they run with only the Lord as their government, yet if they have any planning or program at all they have government of some sort. Some go as far as to reject the idea of membership, constitutions, and doctrinal statements. Instead of these "forms" they allow anyone in regular attendance to vote on all issues and claim that the Bible is their doctrinal statement and constitution.

It has been my observation over the years that these Churches often produce a lot of believers that are very alive for their Lord, yet the Churches usually do not continue in existence for long. As they get bigger and grow, organization usually comes to some extent. Those Churches that do not grow often disband, scattering their people into traditional Churches where they often inspire some of the dead Christians to get involved.

7. THE ELDER RULE FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This is a newer system that is closer to the Biblical form, but it has a few difficulties that are becoming evident. The system teaches that the elders are the paid staff of the Church and they run the Church. Their term of office is for life if they decide to stay.

This allows for much control of the people by one or a few men who have their Bible training.

The fallacy of this system is that in the Bible the lay people were the Church and the elders were lay people, not seminarians. The idea of a congregation forming a Church and setting up a building and then calling someone that institutes this type of government is not pleasant for the congregation. Indeed, there have been many Churches split over the issue in recent days.

ELDER

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DEACONS

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CONGREGATION

This form of government is similar to what you will be seeing in this study. The difference being that the elders are lay men with the option of having a paid teaching elder that is called from outside the Church. This is not to say that the teaching elder cannot come form the ranks of the lay people however.

8. THE ELDER FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This type of government is something that is growing in popularity though there are few congregations operating under such a system. This form of government has some advantages which will become evident as we go though our study.

The system will be shown in brief at this point and then it will be developed as we continue.

The key to the system is that the elders are over the deacons and both boards are over the congregation. The congregation does have control over the boards. They can communicate with them, they are involved in the choosing of the leaders, they are involved in the financial end of the system, in that they are the final say on large expenditures.

There is an emphasis on the qualifications of the leadership. They are to fulfill the Biblical qualifications before they are appointed to a position. They are also chosen from men who "desire" the office.

This dictates that the Church is being led by "spiritual" leaders as opposed to leaders that may or may not want to be in the position and may or may not be spiritual.

The elders are basically the spiritual leaders of the Church and maintain general oversight of the assembly. The deacons are in charge of the physical aspects of the congregation and its properties. The system must be based on qualified, spiritual leaders to operate properly.

CHRIST
THE
HEAD

ELDER ELDER ELDER ELDER ELDER ELDER ELDER

DEACON DEACON DEACON DEACON DEACON DEACON DEACON

CONGREGATION

Within this structure the "pastor" or teaching elder is one of the elder board. He may or may not be the chairman of that board. You will notice that under Christ you have the entire congregation and this is the crux of the system. All believers in touch with their God and in tune with one another to function as a body.

Before we continue, let us look at some things that seem to be required in the Bible for the Church, and the different groups involved.

Here is a series of things that the scripture shows concerning Church government. It may not be an exhaustive list, but it will give several items which must be incorporated into a Church constitution to make it as close to Scriptural as possible.

CONGREGATION:

1. The congregation is involved in the choosing of Church leaders:

Acts 6:3-6. The leadership asked them to select out qualified men to be set aside to serve. This is specifically the first deacons. The apostles then took those set forth - prayed and laid on their hands.

We have no indication of how the elders were selected in the New Testament times. Paul appointed elders in the Churches that he planted. Since we have no process in Scripture for elders, it would seem logical that we should use a method consistent with the selection of deacons. The qualifications are set forth very clearly in the New Testament for these leaders with the key being, the elders desire, which we will see later.

2. The congregation was involved in Church discipline: I Cor. 5:1-8 They were also involved in the man's restoration in II Cor. 2:6ff.

3. The congregation was told to obey the elders. Heb. 13:7, 17

"Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life:" 13:7

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable

for you." 13:17

Some today are adding the idea of the Old Testament "Lord's anointed" to these two texts and teach that the layperson is not to interfere with what God is doing through His appointed men - pastors.

Let us observe some things that are presented here.

a. Obey and submit. This is the context of the word they have been giving forth. There is a responsibility for the congregation to listen to the word and to follow it. The last part of verse 17 shows that the elders are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. This is illustrated for us in Ezekiel where the priests are rebuked for misleading instead of feeding the people.

b. The "remember" of verse 7 probably is tied to the sharing of verse 15 which probably is monetary gifts to the ones that minister the word.

You might observe that "do good" is equal to sharing so you might remember money isn't all that counts.

c. The congregation is to consider the elders' manner of life as an example.

d. The term "them" in both verses shows plural, not singular elders. There are to be plural elders in a Church.

4. The congregation is to discipline elders if there is sin. I Tim. 5:19,20

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SCRIPTURE AND LOGIC CONTINUED

There are also some logical things in which the congregation should also be involved.

1. Large expenditures or major changes in direction of the Church.

These are logical in the fact that if they all oppose the major expenditure and don't give to it how can the leadership hope to accomplish it? If they are opposed to the change, again there will be no support.

The idea of the priesthood of the believer is very active in this area. If the congregation is opposed to an item that the boards have determined to do, then there is one body or the other that

is not really tuned into the head of the Church - Christ.

2. Since every believer is a priest before God then it is logical that congregational input to the leadership should have some power of direction unless it is clearly against Scripture.

The leadership should find direction for the Church by proper use of the Scriptures. If the congregation is in opposition then it is up to the leadership to show from the Scriptures why they are correct and the congregation is wrong.

ELDERS:

The elders seem to be the spiritual side of Church leadership.

1. They should first of all DESIRE the office of elder: I Tim. 3:1, mentions, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

If there is no real desire, how can there be a real drive to do the job as it should be done? As I observe human beings, I see the person who desires to do something usually is successful. It is also observable that if there is no desire there is hardly ever success.

Why do we place men in places of leadership when they don't want to be in those positions?

2. It is a good work to be desired: I Tim. 3:1 Some might feel that if a person goes after a position in the Church that he is seeking status and position. Not so! God set the standard through Paul and God says that He desires leaders that desire their work!

3. Some of the elders teach: Heb. 13:7; I Pet. 5:1-4. Not all need to be teaching but all should be "apt to teach." The idea of Eph. 4 is that the Church leaders are training the people to do the work of the Lord and some of those leaders are teachers.

4. Some are paid for their ministry: I Tim. 5:17,18. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the grain; and, The laborer is worthy of his reward."

This ties the elder to the rulers of Heb. 13:7,17 by the way.

This is not to say that he must be paid. It says that he should be given honor. The verse also mentions eating as part of the thought.

In many of our smaller Churches around the country the people have little money to share with their pastor, but they do have produce and meat from their farms and ranches. Many pastors know just how helpful these things are when the salary is small, and this is a perfectly

permissible part of "honoring" an elder. This isn't to say that a mechanic couldn't do something in his line or a TV man in his. There are situations where a congregation cannot pay and this is all right. The elder will serve on a voluntary basis or leave. Many pastors today work full time to serve their congregations. Indeed, this is more to the scriptural end of things. The FULL TIME paid pastor is a relatively new thing. The elder of Paul's time was one that did it as a sidelight to his normal work. It may be that we should get back to this sort of standard. It would give the teaching elders more freedom to step on toes. A paid pastor often views his security of job along with his toe stepping and as a result uses foam rubber shoes. (see I Cor. 9:7 also)

The elder is not to be in the position for the money. I Pet. 5:2. I fear many today are in this very situation of seeking money, and I believe they will suffer lose when the Lord returns to reward His people. I Pet. 5:4.

5. There are more than one: I Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7,17; Acts 20:17.

Some set forth the Revelation messages to the 7 Churches as addressed to the pastors of the Churches as proof there is only one elder. Rev. 1:20, "..The seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches...." and 2:1, "Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus...." and the other Churches' introductions are to the angel of the Church.

The first problem is that very few scholars are sure what the angels are. Are they angels, are they representatives, are they pastors, are they ....? We don't know for sure. It is just as possible that it is the teaching elder from each Church. We can draw nothing about numbers of elders from these texts.

6. The elders are to direct the Church:

By oversight: Acts 20:28.
By rule: Heb. 13:7.
By example: Heb. 13:7; I Pet. 5:3.
By shepherding: I Pet. 5:1-4 "oversight"
By feeding: I Pet. 5:2 (directing is not in the context, however the proper feeding from the word will bring about leading and directing.)

7. They are not to be as "lords" over the congregation: I Pet. 5:3 In short they are not to be dictators, and they are not to think to highly of themselves. There might be a side to this thought for the congregation as well. The congregation should not think to highly of their leaders either. Not to say they shouldn't look up to them, but to hold them high may encourage the leader to raise his own thoughts of himself to high.

8. They are held accountable for their people as a shepherd: Heb. 13:17.

Any man taking the position of elder should consider this item of business for some time before

taking on responsibility. When a man takes on a position of elder he also takes on the responsibility of the office for the people. This should never be done quickly.

9. They are to be examples: Heb. 13:7 It should be obvious they should be "good" examples! It is shocking to me that some Churches now are asking that prospective pastors give permission for the Church to get a credit report on the prospect. This tells me that those Churches have had one or more poor examples in their past. It also shows a basic mistrust of all pastors - brothers in Christ - which is inappropriate.

10. They are to feed the sheep: Acts 20:28 Now to feed sheep the shepherd must find some food. Many pastors are preaching sermons that have absolutely no nutritional value what so ever.

11. They are to take heed for the sheep: Acts 20:28 There is an element of watching for their safety. This may require warning them from time to time. This might be done from the pulpit of possibly in some cases personally. The warning must come if there is danger.

12. They are selected from the congregation: Acts 14:22-23 This is where Paul returned to the Churches that he had started and ordained elders. Some say there were probably Jews well trained in Judaism in the congregations and that these are the ones that were ordained. I would tend to agree however they were lay people in the Church. Today we have many lay people that are quite well prepared to lead in Bible studies and are capable of leadership. If a person has been in a Sunday school class regularly for many years he has all of the training in the Bible that he needs. He might need some teaching courses to help him understand the "how to" of teaching, but even this should be in place if he has been awake in the past.

13. They were ordained: Acts 14:22,23 There seems to be an approval system of some sort in the ordination process for Paul exhorted Timothy to lay hands quickly on no man. I Tim. 5:22

Scofield note 2 on page 1306 sums up the elder very nicely. Read it if you can get a copy. (Scofield, C.I., "THE NEW SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE"; New York: Oxford University Press, 1967) He is clear that there was a plurality of elders, and that they were to rule, teach, guard the Word, oversee the church, etc.

We have seen that the elders are to care for the flock and seem to be concentrating on the spiritual side of things. We need now to move on to the office of deacon and its responsibility.

DEACONS:

The deacons seem to be the physical side of Church leadership.

1. They were designated originally to serve tables or the idea of distribution to the needs of the people Acts 6:1ff. They may have had responsibility for money and the purchase of food etc.

2. Stephen, one of the first deacons is later stoned for the sermon that he preached before the Jews (Acts 7). Preaching deacons are not wrong. Indeed, in many Churches the deacons do the ministry at the rescue missions in cities. If they have the ability, they should be given the opportunity. We will see more concerning the spiritual gifts later, but we might mention at this point that the elders and deacons do not have all the gifts. There may well be a teacher that is not a part of the Church leadership, and that teacher should be teaching. God gifts the local assembly with the gifts that are needed for the work that He has for the GROUP to do.

3. Epaphras was a praying giant of sorts Col. 1:7; 4:12. He is called a servant which is the term for deacon. History tells us that he was a deacon in his Church. He was a messenger as well, so did work for the Church.

It should be remembered they are responsible for maintaining the physical aspects of the Church ministry, but this is not to say that the congregation and elders shouldn't be involved in "cleanup day" if at all possible. This would be part of the elders example. Indeed, the thought in our current mentality is that if there is someone specified for a job then heaven forbid that I get involved. For example, if a Church has a janitor the people automatically can't clean up a mess - that is the janitors job! Not so! All believers should get involved in any way they can.

While teaching at a Bible Institute, I was honored to know a man that had a unique concept for living and serving. He felt that if he saw a job that needed doing, it was his job to do. He practiced this principle, and you never knew what you would find him doing next. Anything from planting flowers to vacuuming the floor.

More could be said of Deacons, however most governments recognize this office. The only difference would be they should not have the heavy spiritual leadership they have in most Church government systems.

In keeping with what has been given previously there are many things that each group is to do.

Logically speaking there are some other things that the groups should do for the operating of the Church.

1. The elders are to give general direction to the Church however, within the confines of the congregations dictates.

Example: If the congregation is determined to be evangelistic, then if the elders decide that an evangelistic campaign is needed, it would be the congregations place to do all they can to assist in the work. If the evangelist that the elders have hired is a rank liberal then the congregation should say no and let the elder board know they are all for the campaign but with a good evangelist.

2. The elders should oversee the deacon board and it's activities. Not to dictate what they do but

to make suggestion of direction and to keep tabs on their activities, making sure they are following the desires of the congregation.

3. The Deacons should assist the elders in carrying out their desires for the Church. If the elders plan the evangelistic campaign then the deacons will be responsible for housing, feeding, and paying the evangelist, as well as many other details.

4. The Deacons should be able to have input into the elder board concerning the direction of the Church and be able to share what they hear from the congregation.

5. The congregation should have input to both boards concerning needs and desires. This should be available on an informal basis with the members of the boards or possibly through written notes to the chairmen of the boards. A congregational meeting from time to time for exchange of information should be used to open communications among all three groups.

6. The deacons should have a certain latitude in spending for the upkeep of grounds etc. Large expenditures should be submitted to the elder board for presentation to the congregation.

This would indicate a need for monthly meetings of elders and deacons for mutual business and information.

A safeguard between boards might be to have a representative of each board exchanged to the other board to be a non-voting member and each reporting to his own board of the activities of the other. This would be a good check and balance to the operating of the boards.

7. There is an overall need of SPIRITUAL - TRUSTWORTHY leaders as well as a SPIRITUAL, TRUSTING CONGREGATION!

IV. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Elder (or bishop) We have included a complete Scriptural listing of the terms elder, elders, deacon, and deacons in Appendix two for your convenience.

This term has five Greek words which show the different aspects of the office.

1. "presbuteros" or elder: This term is used in reference to the Old Testament elders that were in place in the Jewish form of religion during Christ's time. Matt. 26:59; Mark 11:27.

It is used to show an "older son" Lu. 15:25; of officers of the Church - elders Acts 14:23; 16:4; in reference to elders in the heavenly scene Rev. 4:4; 5:14; and of older women I Ti 5:1. In light of the Old Testament concept, it may well relate to age in years as well as in spirituality.

2. "episkopos" or bishop (Used five times in the New Testament): Acts 20:28 "the Holy Ghost

hath made you overseers"; Phil. 1:1 shows the office with deacons; I Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:7 shows the listing of qualifications for the bishop; I Pet. 2:25 pictures Christ the shepherd and bishop or overseer of our soul.

These two terms ("presbuteros" and "episkopos") are used of the same office. Titus 1:5 elder and 1:7 bishop. Some submit that bishop pictures the functioning of the office and the term elder is the title of the position. The elder then oversees or bishops the group of believers.

They also ruled I Tim. 5:17; taught the truth Tit 1:9; and took care of financial things Acts 11:29,30. This shows that the elders have some control of the financial end of the Church. Since they seem to be the general oversight of the body then they probably should have ultimate say concerning money.

3. "poimeen" which literally means to pasture the sheep: It is used of a sheep type shepherd Matt. 9:36; 25:32; of the pastor teacher in Eph. 4:11; and of Christ the shepherd of our soul I Pet 2:25.

4. "kerux" a preacher to a congregation: I Tim 2:7 shows that Paul was a preacher; II Tim. 1:11 indicates that a preacher may not be a teacher; II Pet 2:5 tells us that Noah was a preacher.

5. "didaskalos" teacher: Rom. 2:20; I Cor. 12:2; Eph. 4:11; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5

We now need to consider the question, "HOW MANY ELDERS?"

Since the early Church met in homes some believe that the plurality of elders was in each house Church. Each assembly had plural elders. Others hold that the plural elders are to be viewed as the elders of several Churches within a city, each assembly only having one elder. Thus when the plural is used the author is speaking collectively of all of the singular elders from the individual Churches in a specific location. (If there were ten house Churches at Jerusalem, then elders would mean the ten pastors of those ten Churches.)

Rev 2-3 would be cited to show this and they would hold that the angels of the Churches were the elders.

The text which shows Paul returning to the Churches which he started deals with elders in the plural and in the time frame indicated it would seem unlikely that he started more than one Church in each town thus indicating that each assembly had more than one elder. Indeed Acts 14:23 states, "And when they had ordained elders in every Church...." Another text that seems clear there were plural elders is James 5 where it speaks of calling the elders (plural) of the Church (singular).

B. Deacon is the Greek term "diakonos." It is translated servant 20 times and minister 7 times. The usage seems to indicate a concentration on the temporal, secular and social care of the

Church Acts 6:1-6.

It was a specific office rather than just people who were serving for we see in Phil 1:1 they are linked with elders, "with the bishops and deacons:"

Acts 6:1-6 shows the first deacons and the selection process while I Tim 3:8ff lists their qualifications.

C. Deaconesses: This is a controversial topic of discussion if you would like to start a good argument in some circles. Some say Titus 3:11 speaks of a 3rd office, that of a deaconess. It seems better, however, to the unity of the text to call these wives of deacons to me. Verses 1-7 speak of bishops, verses 8-10 speak of deacons, and verses 12-13 speaks of deacons. Why break into a list of qualifications for one office to insert qualifications for another and then revert to the first office?

The only other indication that it was an office is Romans 16:1 where Phoebe is called a "servant" and this is the word "diakonos." This need not prove an office, for Paul may just have been telling the reader that she was a real servant.

We don't really have any solid proof that it was an office or that it was not an office. Let it suffice to say, find your own feelings and act accordingly. If you have an office for deaconess then have them be qualified in a similar manner to the deacons. If you do not feel comfortable holding to an office of deaconess then don't have one.

May I suggest, however that you have women that do the work of a servant in your Church. You don't have to call them deaconess but allow women that desire to serve the Church to do so. The local Church would be hard pressed to function if it did not have some good old servants that love to do for the Church!

LEADERSHIP CONSIDERED

Heb. 13:7 "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life:" Heb. 13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you."

Are we bound to the New Testament principles of organization?

IT'S CULTURE YOU KNOW!

Does it matter if we are not following this form of government?

Churches have been working for centuries in all different forms of government which seem to

work adequately.

Whether God specifically blesses a Church that is following a scriptural form of Government or not would not be provable, though It has been observed that some that shift to the Biblical form of government do blossom.

It would seem logical however, if God has specified a certain system then He would bless those that follow it. It would seem that we would want to be as close the New Testament principle as possible.

Possibly some practical applications of the duties of the offices and congregation would be of help in understanding the outworking of this system.

The elders would give general oversight which would include setting goals, standards and desires for the Church. They would be responsible for seeing to it that the Church is being built up and educated properly. They would be there for helping the congregation with spiritual problems and questions. They should make up a good portion of the teaching staff in the Church. This includes not only the youth but the Sunday School as well. I can't envision a better Sunday School staff than the elder board of a Church. They are the spiritually mature part of your Church so why not use them to edify the saints?

The deacons on the other hand, would be the overseers of the building, grounds and the congregations needs. The congregational needs should include financial, physical and mental. If there is a problem in the way the Church looks, then the deacons should care for it. The deacons are usually given a fund of money they can use for the beneficent needs of the congregation. They would organize and supervise work days, and see to it that the building and grounds are kept. They would gather and care for the collections of the Church, and see to the proper use of those funds, under the eye of the elder board.

The congregation can just sit back and let the officers do all the work. Correct? probably true in many Churches, but not correct. The congregation should be involved in prayer for the congregation, they should assist the officers in any way they can, and they should be ministering to one another. They are the witnessing arm of the Church and should be bringing new converts into the Church.

WARNINGS

1. Do not - I, repeat do not go out and try to change the first Church you come to, into an elder form of government!

2. Think about the things that we have spoken of in this study. Chew on them. Put them on the shelf awhile - then think and chew some more. As an old timer once told me, "Chew and spit." Look this information over and consider it and refine it and then when you are sure that you are

on Biblical ground begin to act on the conviction that the Lord has set in your mind and heart.

3. Study this out for yourself and be sure that what has been set forth is correct.

4. Pray loads before doing anything more than think and study.

5. If the Lord would seem to move you toward change in your Church, DO NOT - I, REPEAT DO NOT go to your board and say we are going to change the Church government. They will ask you to find another Church.

6. If you are a pastor and want to begin moving toward change, pick a book of the Bible that will allow you to step off into Church government at times in your lessons and sermons. Acts would probably be good. Just teach what you have found scripture to teach. As time progresses you will probably see some in the Church that will start tracking with you. Let this be their decision to change. Let them suggest a good study on the subject. If the people don't pick up on it step lightly and move forward. Quick change is NOT the answer! There have been Church splits because men have gone in and instituted change before the people were ready for it.

We need to move onto the important part of our study of officers and examine their qualifications and qualities. There are Biblical standards that the officers were to meet and we should be asking the leaders of our Churches today to have those standards in place in their lives.

We will look first at the Biblical qualifications, and then we will look at one man in the Bible that gives a few of the qualities that Church leaders should have. Both qualifications and qualities are important.

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A. QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

As we approach our study of the qualifications for Church leaders we should remind ourselves of two texts. I Timothy 3:1-14 and Titus 1:6-9. Please take time to read these texts before you proceed.

We will look at the Timothy qualifications first and then we will look at the Titus standards.

Vs. 1. "This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

Q. So if we are being so Biblical in our Churches, why don't we have bishops? The office of a bishop is a good work. (overseer New American Standard Bible same as the elder of the Church.) This is the Greek word "episkopos." It has the idea of taking the lead and care of the sheep.

In New Testament times the Churches had elders Plural. Usually, one was in overall charge. As I view the Scriptures, the elder is the highest office of Church leadership. The pastor is an elder if you have a hired pastor. The spiritual leadership of the Church is in the elders.

Some Churches call the pastor elder, and the deacons are the board of the Church. Some have the elder as pastor, the deacons as spiritual leaders under the elder, and a trustee board to care for the material items of the Church.

As we discuss elders I am in my mind speaking of the pastor and board. The teaching elder or pastor should be an integrated part of the elder board and the deacons should be separate from them. The deacon board then is the part of Church leadership that cares for the material end of things.

Paul mentions the desire of a good work in one verse and uses six verses to show the spiritual qualifications for the work.

As you think of this verse just how would you describe the man who "desires the office of bishop?" What does the term desire communicate to you?

The term desire seems to have the idea of really exerting effort toward something that you want or want to do. Something that you work for, or something for which you will give of yourself.

It would seem that this thought would eliminate most Church government ideas where the men are nominated from the floor, or nominations in any manner. The desire would indicate to me that the man really wants to do this ministry and lets others know of that desire. It would require that those in charge be knowledgeable of this desire as well. As they see the desire then they should evaluate the possibilities of this man taking on the position.

Evaluation should be made on the basis of what we will be seeing. The qualifications seem to require more than just a "yes" when asked to take the position. The evaluation should include the man that has the desire. He should be honest and open as to his qualifications in all of these areas before he looks to seek the position. He should also be open to the input of the leadership as to the needs of his life. They may see some failings that he needs to work on.

This idea is shown very nicely in relation to the workmen of the tabernacle in Ex. 36:2, "And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:" God moved the men to minister.

There are fifteen to seventeen qualifications depending on the translation of the Bible you use.

Vs. 2 "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;"

Just a side note before we begin the list, we might submit that all of the terms in this listing are masculine. The term overseer and all the adjectives are in the masculine. This would be a strong indication that women are not in view when it comes to the office of elder.

This is becoming more and more important in our day and age. There are many Churches moving toward the use of women in leadership. I have observed a number of women as chairperson of pulpit committees as well as on boards of Churches.

1. blameless: "above reproach" according to the New American Standard Bible. (This will be abbreviated with "NASB" from this point forward.)

Literally it is "not to be laid hold of" - the type of life that no one can lay charge against or gossip about. This is nearly impossible because the gossiping person will always be about their business. This idea of blameless would mean that the man lives a life that leaves little to gossip about. Many pastors are beset by nasty rumors. A 50 year old bald, overweight, and not very good looking pastor resigned his Church few years back to start a new Church elsewhere. The rumor was that he left because of a girlfriend up in the sand hills. A part of this sort of situation is for the congregation to see to it that the gossips are stopped as soon as possible.

Blameless should be not only in the Church but with the lost as well. In seeking leaders this may require talking with neighbors and co-workers to find out how the man is viewed by the lost people that he associates with. This can be done by mail or in person. It should be a good indicator of the persons true spiritual walk.

Some have suggested that this means that the person must have had a blameless life from childhood. I asked one of these people if that meant that a converted drunk could not become an elder. He replied that this would be true. To those I submit Gen. 5:21-22 which tells that Enoch did not walk with God until he had his first son. This man was translated because of his walk with the Lord. "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:" Surely a converted drunk can walk with God as well.

He should have a very good testimony in the community. Someone that is respected. Someone that isn't in trouble or behind on his bills.

2. husband of one wife: This is literally a "one woman man." There have been several interpretations set forth over the years for this phrase:

a. Married to the Church (Roman Catholic).

b. Prohibition of polygamy. This was held till 325 A.D. and is very much a part of the thought of the text.

c. Prohibition of unmarried overseers. There is little evidence that this is the case, although having a family and the congregation being able to view his control of it would be of great help in evaluation.

This is a serious consideration in many situations, but not necessary in all situations.

I Tim. 4:3 mentions that some of the false teachers were suggesting celibacy as something to be desired. "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Paul mentions that these are doctrines of devils.

d. Prohibition of divorced overseers. There is some discussion on this thought, though I think most conservative people hold to this being a prohibition of the divorcee due to the fact that he has not ruled his house well if he has failed in his marriage.

e. Prohibition of a widowed deacon remarrying. (Paul says marriage is okay after the loss of a spouse however, so this position would not fit.)

f. One other possibility has been taught in recent years. "Not a loose type man," or "a one woman at a time man," which of course allows for divorce and remarriage of elders. This is a recent addition to the menu of excuses to skirt Scripture and allow people the freedom to do as they please rather than as the Lord directs.

A "one woman man" is the idea of this phrase. That is one for life at a time. If his first mate dies and he remarries, he would be eligible.

A man that has been divorced has not had a properly functioning family and is not eligible. Some suggest that a divorcee that was remarried after he was saved would be eligible. This would depend on how you view the Lord's teaching on divorce and remarriage. He seems to leave the impression that those that remarry are involved in adultery. Since adultery is intimate relations outside of the bounds of marriage it would seem to be a continuing thing. It doesn't seem logical that a Church would want a man in the position of elder, which was in continuing adultery.

3. vigilant seems to have the idea of being self controlled. Someone that is not controlled by outside influences. The term is also used in I Tim. 3:11 (sober) and Titus 2:2 (sober). The elder should be someone that is on the serious side about what he is doing. He should be in proper control at all times. One that is of this nature will be open to see problems arising, to see trouble as well as see good things coming and good things to do.

The American Standard Version adds orderly - as opposed to disorderly. I have seen some Church leaders that were about as messy as messy could get in their offices. A messy office often reveals a messy mind. When in Bible College I needed to talk to the president of the school

so knocked on the door. I heard a lot of shuffling and groaning from inside the office. Finally the door opened part way. I could see through the door that the floor, shelves, and desk were covered with little piles of paper. I told the president that I needed to speak with him. He asked me to wait for just a minute. Some time passed and finally the door opened just enough for me to get into the office. What I hadn't seen through the crack was that the rest of the office was also covered with little piles of paper. The delay in allowing me in was due to the need to clear a path to a chair at the other end of the office. We were seated at opposite ends of the office surrounded by paper. He apologized and explained that he was cleaning his desk off. He had not filed papers for some time and he was trying to finish the task. He was in need of some organizational skills.

By way of comment we might mention that women can be a witness just by keeping their houses orderly. The home atmosphere reflects the home attitude.

The idea is that this elder should be orderly in life rather than a person who is known for chaos.

4. sober is "prudent" in the NASB and depicts someone that is fully rational or well balanced. This word also is translated discreet. Being careful how your mind runs seems to be the thought. ("sophron" = Titus 1:8, sober; Titus 2:2, temperate)

An elder with a messed up thought pattern will be leaving himself and his Church open to problems. If he is constantly thinking of money or women, there will be an improper balance in most of what he does. He should be stable in mind. He is not easily swayed by error or false doctrine.

5. of good behavior or "respectable" as the NASB translates it. An elder that can't keep his hands off the women is taboo. We were in a Church were one of the men was always hugging, patting women on the back and generally being touchy. Some of the women felt uncomfortable with the way he was. Some of the husbands also felt uncomfortable. There was nothing wrong with the man or his behavior, yet the actions detracted from the congregations view of him.

He must have a proper lifestyle before his fellow believers and the world or community.

6. given to hospitality or willing to share their home with people.

In the New Testament there was a great need for this in the Church. Visiting Christians would not want to stay in taverns and inns with all the brawling and drinking, so they would turn to the believers of the community for housing. There also seems to have been itinerant preachers that needed a place to stay. (III John 5-7)

I was told of a couple that was a member of a small Church in the midwest that in seven years since the pastor had come to town they had not been in his home, though they had entertained the pastor and family in their own home several times.

Some pastors on the West Coast will not even offer to house and feed missionaries that are coming for meetings.

The elders home should be open as much as possible to Church members, visitors and the unsaved as well.

One pastor of a Church where we had visited a time or two came running out after Church to catch us before we drove away and invited us to dinner on a certain night. We were excited until we arrived and found that it was a demonstration dinner for a new cook ware. We had to sit through the sales pitch, and endure the atmosphere which we would not have chosen. This was not hospitality.

7. apt to teach "able to teach" according to the NASB. This text does not teach that an elder should be teaching, however it would be a good idea. An elder should be willing and wanting to teach within his assembly, if there is time in his schedule. This is not only in Sunday School, but in Bible studies, the pulpit, etc.

This is the only skill in the list and it should be noted that preaching is not required. This qualification not only portrays an ability but it also includes desire. If a person desires the office, then they should be known for their ability to teach before hand. If a person cannot teach, don't write them off, train them!

Some in recent day try to redefine this to mean teachable. The thought is not in the text, though the idea is not a bad one for the elder! Anyone in leadership should be open to the idea of learning from others. If the elder is closed to new teaching, then he will not be open to being corrected if he should have problems.

Vs. 3 "Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;"

8. Not given to wine or "not addicted to wine" NASB.

The thought is not long alongside wine. He should refrain from alcoholic beverages. Drinking is not acceptable to the Lord, the Church or the world.

We have always taken a strong view toward drink of any kind. This is partly due to the fact that I was very close to alcoholism as a young man. I also see drinking as a very poor testimony to anyone that might know of it. Even within my own home, I have no desire to even have alcohol in the house. I would trust that this would be your view as well.

I spoke with a pastor in the midwest that had confronted a member whose house some teenagers had stolen liquor from, about his involvement with alcohol. The teens were in an accident

because of the drink. The attitude of the member was, "Pastor, you get lost! What I do in my own home is my business and not yours!"

9. No striker or "pugnacious" NASB.

He is not to be given to acts of physical violence. This term is derived from a word meaning to flatten. Not taken to the fists to settle disputes. He should be able to settle things peaceably and quietly.

I was in a Church service one evening when the pastor finished his service with, "Does anyone have anything to say or add?" One of the women of the Church challenged him slightly on one of his points. She did not push the subject but one of the board members did. He pushed it until he was on his feet and he and the pastor were arguing, somewhat heatedly. They did not come to blows over it, but the appearance was not much better than blows!

In our society there is the thought that the elder should not be a striker with words. Words can be just as devastating as blows from a fist. The elder should control his temper and actions as well as his tongue.

10. "but gentle" NASB adds this term but it is not in the KJV. It seems to have the idea of being kind toward others.

These two (no striker/but gentle) hint that the outward demeanor or appearance at all times should be on the meek side, and not of the aggressive nature. The elder should have his demeaner under control at all times. This requires that he be walking with the Lord at all times which will normally require a daily - early morning quiet time, and some periodic adjustments throughout the day, to his spiritual life.

11. not greedy of filthy lucre or "free from the love of money" as the NASB translates it.

The Church should watch for their pastor. They need not make him rich, yet they should watch for his welfare if they are going to have a full time pastor. The pastor should also look to the welfare of their congregation. If they see that the Church is struggling, then maybe a part time job would be the answer. Don't let money control your life because it will ultimately control your Church as well. Greedy has the idea of really desiring the money. Spending time trying to figure out ways of getting money.

The term filthy lucre is up for some discussion. Just what does it mean? Is it dirty money, or is it the idea that the greed for money is filthy, or is all money filthy? The thought of money being filthy has some real possibilities, because it tends to pollute so many people. Actually the term filthy is left out of most translations. Even the New King James leaves it out. This would indicate that a strong desire for money is all that is meant. This seems to be even stronger in that

any desire that is above normal is wrong. The elder ought not be in the ministry for money nor indeed, be in love with money. A well balanced budget will help keep this problem away from the pastor.

The pastor that is willing to work outside the Church is probably one that desires to shepherd.

I recently heard of a pastor that took a Church and for several years kept hitting on the board for raises. Several a year, until the board had to ask the man to leave.

Someone spoke of a Church in the midwest which had two pastors receiving $77,000 a year total. The Church was growing but the Church did not want to build at the moment. The pastors refused to do two services on Sunday morning because they wanted their way. This is not logical and it is putting the Church in a bind if they decide to go ahead and build before they feel they are able.

12. patient is in the King James but not the NASB. It seems to indicate the idea of being able to wait for things to come to pass. Wait for the Lord in all things. Don't get in a hurry. Don't be extravagant or radical in anything (Except God and His program). He should show patience with all people including the membership! This means the nasties, this means the meanies, this means the gimmies, this means the sickies, this means the problemies, this means the normalies. Again this is going to take the quiet time and adjustments of the spiritual life that we mentioned earlier.

By the way these things aren't hard, for the Holy Spirit automatically brings many of these about when we are controlled by Him. The fruit of the Spirit are as follows: (Gal 5:22-23) "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

13. not a brawler or "uncontentious" according to the NASB.

Don't go looking for arguments. You'll find enough without looking. This probably extends to the thought that he is willing to give up his rights in a problem. This is not easy for us in our self centered, my rights society, but the Lord asks this of His Church leaders and we should ask the same of our Church leaders.

14. not covetous which seems to include all things. This means money, things, other Churches, others attendance, etc. Being content with what God has given you and not your neighbor. God is quite capable of giving you what He wants you to have.

Vs. 4 "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"

15. One that ruleth well his own house or someone that controls his house and family well. He achieves obedience of his children in this way. Stands as head - runs it as head. Having a chain of authority with him at the top. The man should be able to control his children. If his children

aren't saved and turn out bad it is not a disqualification in this area, unless he has neglected the family spiritual training. He should be able, however to control the children. Their salvation is up to God, and their life's decisions are theirs.

One pastor that I met had one good son and one poor son. The poor one was rebellious to a point - didn't care for Church - long stringy hair - very rough type. Didn't turn out a pride and joy BUT, he was under subjection. One look from his father and foolishness or wrongdoing was stopped. He was always in Church. He seems later on to have turned out okay. He bothered some people, but they were not seeing the whole story - only the outward trouble. Before you condemn a pastor for a bad teen see if he has him in subjection. This is the requirement - not that all kids turn out as super saints. The result of a good pastor is not 100% spiritual on fire Christian children.

The father can only teach, guide and exhort. He is to stand before the family as its leader and guide. (Ruleth is the Greek word "proisteemi" - Strong's number 4291) and is seen in Rom. 12:8 as ruleth; I Thess. 5:12 as "are over"; I Tim. 3:12 and Titus 3:8,14 where it appears as "to maintain." Subjection is the term "hupotagee" (Strong's number 5292) and is seen in II Cor. 9:13 as submission to the Gospel; Gal. 2:5; I Tim. 2:11 as women learning in subjection.)

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QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERSS CONTINUED

The thought of "children" is not necessarily that of a small child. The term is used of young to old. (Matt. 9:1-2, man; Matt. 2:18; 3:9, children under two; Rom. 8:16, adults are children of God; Col 3:20, children obey your parents; I Ti 1:2, 18, Philemon 10, Onesimus.)

Vs. 5 "(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)" This shows the why of verse four.

The term house may imply, as well as controlling the family as the context speaks of, but also the material things. Some Christians today are deadbeats. This ought not to be so.

Vs. 6 "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

16. Not a novice or not a new believer. This should be evident, yet Paul seems to feel that it is important.

The indications are that this new believer when given authority would be lifted up with pride. Indeed, the problem with young men that are given high positions is pride quite often. The text is not limited to age, but to maturity in the Lord. An older man that is immature could well fall

into pride also.

Paul usually appointed elders on his return trip through towns, thus it would seem that this spiritual maturity was with reference to the maturity of those around the elder. He might not have to be very mature in Christ if most of the people were new converts and very immature.

The elder should be mature and knowledgeable enough in the word to "teach" those he would shepherd. Many automatically view a young person as not mature enough to pastor a Church. This may or may not be so. I have seen some young men straight out of college that have more sense, wisdom and maturity than many older men who I have seen in the pastorate. Judge the man on his maturity and not on his age. This is what Paul tells Timothy in 4:12 where he says, "Let no man despise thy youth...."

The thought of "lifted up" seems to be related to raise smoke or to blind with pride as smoke blinds those that are close by.

I think that I can truthfully say that I have met very few pastors that come across as being proud. Some may be underneath, but on the surface I see very few. I do see many arrogant men in pastorates. Some thing they are better than they are, but when it comes to the idea of being proud of their position, I think most know they are there because of God's desire and know that pride is inappropriate.

It would be interesting to know why so many take this qualification so seriously when they fail in other areas.

Vs. 7 "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

17. good report to non Christians (my paraphrase). We had a pastor many years ago that didn't spend much time around my father, yet my Dad held the man with a very high regard. I met a doctor from that town many years after both of us had moved away and the doctor asked me of the pastors whereabouts. He wanted to see him after many many years. That pastor had a good report with the nonbelievers of that town.

Other pastors (many, I fear) in business dealings are very blunt, bold and blusterous. They expect super deals and super service. These do not have good report with non Christians. I was told of a pastor in a small town where business people hated to see come into their business establishments due to his caustic behavior.

Lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. To be the man that does not really have the good report with the world is to be in the middle of the snare of the devil. There will be little that the person can do in the community or even the Church.

We recently heard of a man that pastored in a small town were the people had the rule of no soft drinks in the school auditorium - even during sporting events. He thought that was a dumb rule and entered the auditorium with a coke. The public was not impressed with his "freedom to drink coke!" The man was not able to minister to the town folks and it left a black mark against the Church that hired him.

I would like to break here for a comment or two about the elders wife. The deacon's wife is mentioned in the coming text and has some qualifications laid out for her. It struck me as to why the elder's wife did not have qualifications?

I must admit that from time to time I waver in my thinking as to whether there was an office for deaconess. This lack of qualifications for elders wives would indicate that the thought of the text is that wives of elders and deacons have no qualifications, and the text speaks of another office. This is quite possible.

There are five qualifications in Titus that are not here and I would like to cover them briefly.

a. "not self-willed" which indicates a man that is willing to give in a conflict. He is willing to bow to what is right. This is not only with men, but must be a part of the man's spiritual life. He must be willing to bend for the Lord.

b. "not soon angry" indicates that anger may be around, but it takes an awful lot to bring it to the surface.

Patience must be long and when it is worn out there may be anger, but even if there is anger it is controlled and it does not lash out. It is anger that can be beneficial in a compulsion to do what is needed to be done in a proper manner.

I recall in a board meeting watching for an hour, or so, as the men involved, wandered around not knowing where they were going. I finally in frustration began talking and evidently the tone of my voice carried with it a hint of anger. I was not angry - just very frustrated at the waste of so many men's time. I gave direction to the meeting though the chairman would not.

c. "a lover of good men" shows that the elder should be an enjoyer of those that walk with the Lord. This means to love even when there are some faults around! Many pastors miss this one because they can't handle someone else in the limelight. The elder should gather around himself some good men for training and fellowship.

d. "just" means just what it says. Just is the God we serve, and just must be the elder or elders that we serve. Just in all of your dealings be they with saved, lost, nasty, cheaters, etc.

e. "holy" is the idea of set apart for God's use. The man of God must be set aside for the Lord's use and must have a life fitting that thought. I can't imagine trying to attend a Church where the

pastor was known to be in sin. It is illogical for any pastor to feel that he can continue on in his office and be living in sin.

There is one other phrase in Titus, one that is of importance. Verse 9 states, "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught...."

This means that the Church determines if what he holds is proper. Not only what he holds, but what he has been taught. There is a difference. A man might hold what you hold, but have been taught other things that might crop up in his later life and ministry.

A pastor in the Midwest had been taught in a school that held other than proper doctrine. He seemed straight as possible when he was hired as pastor. He was influenced by some other pastors that he knew and as he pastored and studied some of his wrong doctrinal teaching began to make sense to him and it filtered into his preaching and over a few years he had led the entire Church from a position of fundamental, dispensational Christianity to a nondispensational position and out of the fellowship of Churches that the Church had been in.

Don't just check what he believes, but check what he has been taught. If he comes from a questionable seminary, then the questionable may well surface someday. Be very careful!

Vs. 8. "Likewise [must] the deacons [be] grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;"

"Likewise" would indicate that the deacons will have qualifications just as the elders had. These are required and not optional.

The deacons have to do with the material side of the Church, but can be involved in spiritual as bold witnesses. One of the first deacons was Stephen and we know that he was soon preaching and giving his life for the Lord.

Within the material ministry there can be a spiritual ministry as well.

Can you think of a way that you could minister spiritually within the context of material ministry? a. Working with someone on a building allows for interpersonal relationships and a time when the deacon could well get into witnessing, counseling or just encouraging. When the pipes break in the winter and someone is struggling to get them fixed, an encouraging voice could be just what the worker needs. b. Sharing of funds or help from the Church with poor or needy will be a prime opportunity to share the thoughts of the Lord in encouragement or witness. c. In asking for help from members of the Church you are allowing others to serve their Lord. It may well be the start of their desire to go on into Church leadership.

1. Grave: Grave seems to indicate they are mature and act like it. It relates to the fact that his life brings about the respect of the people. This is a positive term followed by negative terms.

The negative may qualify what is meant by the positive term. This does not mean that he must be void of a sense of humor, but that he controls his sense of humor very carefully.

2. Not double tongued: Telling two different stories would be a similar idea. This includes, I think, saying you'll do something and then not doing it. In short the person would have to be classified a liar and this is not consistent with good leadership. How could you ever trust what the man said?

There is in our day the idea that telling only a part of the truth is equal to telling the truth. When a person leaves out part of the information to lead another to think something other than the truth, then we have what should be called a lie. Many today give only the information they want you to have - that is not being truthful.

3. Not given to much wine: This seems to be the thought of addicted to wine. This in its context was a call, not to abstinence, but to moderation. Wine was a common beverage at the time, but to indulge overly was definitely wrong. In our own day the problem of alcoholism is rampant and the need to drink wine for liquids in the body is not true. We have good clean water available and there is no need to drink wine.

Raymond in his book mentions, "If an individual by drinking wine either causes others to err through his example or abets a social evil which causes others to succumb to its temptations, then in the interests of Christian love he ought to forego the temporary pleasures of drinking in the interests of heavenly treasures." (Raymond, "THE TEACHING OF THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE USE OF WINE AND STRONG DRINK"; New York: Columbia University Press, 1927 p 88)

We are all "free" to drink now and then, but we are not free to do so because in our day and age we need to limit our Christian liberty in this area so that we are not a stumbling block for others.

4. Not greedy of filthy lucre: This indicates that the deacon should be in the office because of a call and/or a desire not because of money. When I told my father I was going to be a preacher he said, "Well, I guess there is money in that!"

Vs. 9 "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."

5. Holding mystery of the faith in a pure conscience: I Cor. 2:7-10 indicates this is those things revealed to the Church age saints. (hidden before) In a pure conscience - how could you honestly preach if your conscience wasn't clear about what you believed? There are times when situations arise that force the minister of God to chose between what his conscience tells him and what the world or the Church asks them to do.

It is very difficult to decide due to the fact that when you go with your conscience, those around you will very seldom understand what you do. They may even become verbal in their

disagreement with you. Your conscience must be God's conscience and then you know that your decision is correct.

Vs. 10 "And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [found] blameless."

6. They should be proved or tested: "ALSO" indicates that the bishops are also to be proved. This is done in the local assembly and not by a group of pastors called in from here and there to examine a young man to see if he's worthy. The thought of ordination is not in this text. The elder and the deacon are to be people from the assembly and as they live and work in the local Church the Church leadership and people will know the type of person they are. Acts 13:1-3 shows this concept in action. "Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

No examination can guarantee how a man will build a Church. A man I knew that was a part of God's calling me into the ministry could have passed any test I could have given him. He was a good pastor and good preacher, he was an encouragement to my life, he was a Dallas student, and all that knew him felt that he was good pastoral material. A short time later he fell into liberalism. Not that he had bad teaching, but he began reading wrong teaching and began believing the things that he was reading.

7. Let them be deacons because they are blameless: Again the idea of blameless. The testimony of Church leaders is critical to the Church as well as to the Churches witness. Anyone that cannot live up to the standard set should excuse himself from his duties immediately.

Vs. 11 "Even so [must their] wives [be] grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."

Enough has been said as to the deaconess/wife controversy. The fact that the information is inserted at this point in the context would indicate that these are women that are involved in the ongoing ministry of the Church. If you have women involved in the ministry that do not come up to this standard, then they should be asked to remove themselves from the ministry they are involved in.

"not slanderers": Literally "not devils" which should indicate the thought that a slanderer is working for the god of this world and not the God of the believer! I think that we all know what a gossip can do to a person or a Church. They can ruin many years of good work in a single mouth full. A pastor we knew was accused by one of the women in the Church of making obscene phone calls. She had no proof and there were very few that believed her, but within a few months that man's ministry was ruined in the town and he was forced to move on for the

Churche's sake.

"soberminded": Again the thought of controlled mind and manner would seem fitting. The mind of someone controlled by alcohol would be the contrast. The idea of temperate or moderate in things would be involved also I would think.

"faithful in all things": In her marriage, her Church work, her mothers role, and everything! She should be faithfully doing the things that she is involved with, and doing a good job at it. If she can't do the good job in all areas of home life, then she probably shouldn't be involved in the Church, for her home will suffer.

Vs. 12 "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."

We are now back to the deacon's qualifications again.

8. Husband of one wife, ruling children and houses well: These are the same as for bishop which we have covered.

Vs. 13 "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

9. Great boldness: This good standing is obviously in God's eyes, then the Churches and families eyes but there is a certain standing before the community that is enjoyable for the deacon and beneficial to the Church itself.
In fact a deacon doing his job appropriately will give a good standing to the God that he serves. Oft times in obituaries the man's community and Church activities are included. Some European mortuaries used to include a detailed report of the man's activities in life.

More importantly is the "great boldness" that comes with serving. As we serve we gain confidence in what we are doing, in the fact the Lord can use us and we become more confident to do more and more things for the Lord. If you have good standing in the Church and community, you will have confidence and boldness.

Vs. 14. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

These verses show the reason for this letter being written. Paul is writing to tell Timothy how to conduct himself and Church business.

I would like to ask a couple of questions that might bring the reader to draw some conclusions to our study. The questions will have some possible answers included.

Why are so many pastors leaving their Churches and missionaries leaving their fields today?

1. They know they miss the mark set here. (often not entirely their own fault. Many times they have never been forced to look at the listing and evaluate themselves before the Lord as to their qualification.)

2. Some cannot live on the salary. This may be due to their expensive taste, or it may be to the small salary. Some Churches feel that their pastor is a servant and he should suffer for Jesus. So, they help him suffer. Most Churches today are doing quite well for their pastors if not to much. Some do all they can and the pastor works on the side. This is not the best, but it works well if needed.

3. Many are grossly dejected because of the coldness of Christians concerning Christ's work, and the non-Christians toward the gospel.

Why are the pastors kids always some of the worst kids? (Or are they just viewed as the worst?)

a. They are always under a microscope.

b. The other children are always more perfect than the pastor's kids.

c. It is not unnatural for a child to stand against authority, even in their parents. This must be treated for what it is so they learn that it is not correct.

d. The father quite often neglects his own household. This is why it is good to have a board, and a pastor that will respond to one another. If the board sees a problem coming, they can advise the pastor.

e. The wife may also be overburdened with Church activities to the point that she doesn't take proper care of the children. The pastor should be watching this and correct it if need be. With a list like this maybe you should be praying that your pastor have these requirements in place, and equally important, that he stay on the straight and narrow.

We see here in I Tim. 3 that the Church is organized and has leaders. This is a stiff standard to live up to. I personally know of only one Church that requires their elders and deacons to consider their qualification before accepting office. There are probably more, but I know of only one that has it as an integrated part of their constitution.

They take several months to go through a qualifying process which includes:

1. Letters to neighbors and fellow workers as to their spiritual life.

2. Talks with the spouses by the existing board.

3. A time of consideration of each qualification. This is a study of the word, a time of prayer and a talk with the board, then they move on to the next qualification. This usually takes a week or so per qualification.

4. A time for the congregation to respond with negative and positive comments about the person.

5. A time of congregational prayer.

6. A final talk with the board.

If a person does not qualify they are asked to work on the areas in which they are lacking and try the process the next year. At the time we left that Church there had been no one that took office the first time through. Each found areas they felt inadequate in. It is easy to say, "yes, I qualify for this," but it is another to consider it seriously before the Lord and your fellow man!

Is there a different standard for the pastor and the average Christian? Is this a standard for only the elders and deacons? I would submit that this is the standard for every born again believer. Each and every one of us should have this as part of our goal for our spiritual life. The term goal is the difference. The list is a goal for most believers, however the list is a requirement for the elders and deacons of the Church. These things should be in place when they take office.

Most of these terms used as qualifications for leadership appear elsewhere in scripture as goals for every believer. We won't go into a detailed study of these, but will list the terms and some references for the reader to consider.

Elders:

blameless: I Tim. 5:7

husband of one wife: Rom. 7:22

temperate: Titus 2:2, I Tim. 3:11, I Pet. 5:8

soberminded: Tit 2:2, Titus 2:5, I Tim 2:9

given to hospitality: I Pet. 4:9

apt to teach: not used of all Christians

not given to wine: This should be obviously one for all believers even though the Scripture does not use the specific term in relation to all believers.

no striker: Used of the elder only, but the principle applies to all. I Pet. 3:11 we're told to seek peace - turn the other cheek. Etc.

not greedy/lucre: Heb. 13:5, I Tim. 6:10

patient: Phil. 4:5

not a brawler: Tit. 3:2

not covetous: Heb. 13:5

one that ruleth house: Eph. 6:1-4, The Proverbs, "rules" entails husband-wife relationship Eph. 5:23

not a novice: only usage of this term however all Christians are called to maturity by Paul, I Cor. 3:3, II Pet 3:18, Gal. 6:1 speaks of spiritual Christians

good report: II Thess. 1:10 Paul and others had a good testimony which helped convince Thessalonians. Rom. 12:18 live peaceably with all men.

Deacons

grave: Proverbs calls us to honesty, Phil. 4:8 calls all believers to think on things honest, Titus 2:2 calls old men to be grave, II Cor. 13:7 is not the same word, but calls for honesty

not double tongued: only usage of the term, John 8:44 may relate.

blameless: I Cor. 1:8

When you call a pastor consider these biblical qualifications not other qualifications such as good with youth - good preacher (not required of pastor teacher) - good illustrator - good looking - good dresser.

The Biblical qualifications should be in the pastor so that he can be an example to the other Christians so they can be maturing toward this list.

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B. QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP

Qualification may not mean quality

We can see some of the qualities that should be a part of church leadership by taking a few moments to look at Epaphras. He appears very few times in the Scripture, yet there are many qualities that can be seen in these references. (Col. 1:3-8; 4:12,13; Philemon 23. Another reference that might give meaning to Epaphras is Acts 20:28.)

I would like to give a short introduction to this study to set the stage for the thoughts we need to have. Let's say that you want to buy a car. Let's say that you have enough money to buy any car that you want. Let's say that you are setting out to buy that car of your dreams. Let's say you are standing before the car salesman and you are about to tell him just what you want him to order. Let's do that for a moment and let ourselves be worldly for a moment. Yes, I'm telling you to be worldly for a moment. ONLY A MOMENT!

What kind of car is it? What color is it? The salesman has a list of all the possible options -- what are you going have him put on the car? What radio will you have? On one of the news magazines they showed cars with stereos in them that cost more than the car. What engine will you get? What color will you order?

Now that the dreaming is over let's think for a moment. If you had the money, if you had the desire, if you were committed to having this car, would you accept delivery of a Maroon Chevette? NO!

If you were to set down a list of qualifications and desires for your church leadership, would you settle for something less than you ordered?

You say no, but I believe that many churches today are accepting a standard that is much lower than they desire!! Either they are accepting less than they want, or else their desires are far from Biblical.

The Word gives a great number of QUALIFICATIONS for church leadership and we all hear of these from time to time taught from Timothy and Titus, however the word also sets forth some Godly men as examples of some of the QUALITIES that these men should have.

In this study I would like to explore some of these QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP with you. I would like to look for a few moments at Epaphras. NO IT IS NOT A SKIN RASH!

Epaphras was a man of God that the Holy Spirit moved Paul to include in the Biblical record only so very briefly. He is mentioned only three times - only five verses deal with Epaphras yet we can see within these few verses a real man of God.

INDEED, WE WILL SEE A NUMBER OF LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

Colossians is a book written by Paul during a stay in Rome under Roman guard. It was written about the same time as Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians. We want to look at the first few verses.

In the passage we see that Epaphras was a soul winner (vs. 5). The indications are that he had given these people the Gospel. He may have started the Church. Some think that he may have heard Paul when Paul was at Ephesus in Acts 19:10.

Not only was he a soul winner, but he was a teacher or discipler (vs. 5-7). We see here a pair of qualities which need to be used as a path to maturity for new believers.

Many of the evangelistic organizations today suffer in this area. They lead the person to Christ but never bother to teach them anything of the Christian life nor do they bother to lead or direct them to a sound church. In my own life, the man that led me to the Lord did not attempt to disciple me and as a result, I went into the Navy and became a typical sailor. I often have wondered how my life might have been different had I been taught some of the basics of the faith.

We see that he was also a faithful Minister (vs 7). One who held the body of believers as important - always there to help - to minister to needs - not far off or unapproachable.

He was a servant (vs. 7). This man was a servant of Christ. "A servant of Jesus Christ is one who has been bought with a price and is therefore owned by his Master, on whom he is completely dependent, to whom he owes undivided allegiance and to whom he ministers with gladness of heart, in newness of spirit, and in the enjoyment of perfect freedom, receiving from him a glorious reward." (William Hendriksen, "EXPOSITION OF COLOSSIANS AND PHILEMON"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1964, P 191)

This man was a servant of Christ "ON OUR BEHALF" Some translations read "your" but the concept is the same. He served Christ to THEIR benefit. He wasn't in it for what he could get or be. We met a man in Oregon that was planting a church. He was making his living pumping gas. He worked at the gas station and worked with the church for eight years. The church was his life and all that he did was to further the church. He was in it so that he could benefit those he ministered to. In this case Epaphras was ministering to Paul in prison so he was benefiting

Paul.

We have four qualities so far (soul winner,teacher/discipler, faithful minister and servant). You might ask, "what is the difference between qualifications and qualities?" Qualification has the idea that the person has the abilities that make him appropriate for the job at hand. Qualified is the idea, while quality has the idea of the type of person that is in view. What he is like with people, how he relates to problems, or the nature of the person. Good qualifications relate to the ability to come to a standard, but qualities relate to the quality of person that is under consideration. Let me give you a couple of examples. We had a maroon Chevette once. It had the qualifications to be a car but its quality was questionable. It had four wheels, a motor, a body, seats etc. but the dealer had it more in the first 90 days that we did. There is you see a difference. It qualified as a car, yet it was not a quality car. (To be fair to the Chevrolet Co., We put 180,000 miles on our Chevette before it was totalled by a big Caddy that suffered NO damage.)

Let me illustrate the distinction that I am making in another way. While in the service I was the only experienced electronic technician on the ship. Indeed the only tech. One day we received fourteen men just out of electronics school. Our ship was only allowed five or six men, so I decided that I would have it made with this many men under me. Not so! These men were qualified as technicians -- they had passed all the tests at school indeed some of them had very high grades in their classes. However, the quality of workmanship was very poor --- in fact within a month the ship was a total mess electronically. We went into the repair yards for a few weeks and it took me every spare moment to get all of the problems cleared up. QUALIFIED? YES - QUALITY? NO, NOT FOR MANY MONTHS!

Epaphras seems to have been boastful of his church (vs. 8 "also declared unto us your love in the Spirit"). He had been speaking to Paul of his church and its GOOD POINTS! We were in a small church in central Oregon a few years ago that we have spoken to many of our friends about. It was a church that had an over abundance of talented, excited, dedicated people. I could mention the fact they met in an upstairs, that it was to small, or the fact they didn't have a piano but I didn't. I always tried to emphasize the positive, for it was a very uplifting experience to have been in the church. The positive was what was on Epaphras' mind. Indeed, if you read the rest of the book you will find that the church had problems which Paul addressed. Epaphras was excited about his church. He was telling others of his church.

Our church people today need to get hold of this one! Dwell on the positive. Do you tell others of your church? Are you making declarations about the great people there, or do you dwell on the problems?

Let's turn now for a moment to Col. 4:12-13. We see that Epaphras was a local boy ("one of your number"). Why haven't we taken this idea to heart in our Churches today? When we need someone to work with the youth we so often look outside our own assembly. A Church in the midwest took one of their own as their youth man. Why not? They are used to the pastor, they

fit right into the fellowship, and the kids know them already. They are already accepted in the community. You know their life, their doctrine, as well as their faults!

The New Testament Church operated for the most part on people from their own group. All Church leaders came from within, not from without. Not only for youth workers but why not for pastors or elders as your Church government dictates? Train the men of your Church so that when the pastor moves on you have a home grown replacement on line. Send him to college if you need to. Some would complain that when he is trained he might go someplace else - so what you've trained a man to serve God. Train another! You don't need to finance him totally, but help as you can.

One Church in Oregon that we've been to has laymen that are so trained by their pastor they can, and do go out to fill the pulpits of Churches without pastors. Their pastor is committed to training his people to do the work of the Lord as Ephesians 4 tells us to do!

Epaphras was committed to Christ (Bondslave - "servant of Christ"). He had placed himself at his Lord's disposal for his Lords use. When I think of servants of God that were sold out I always think of Stephen in Acts 6:24. He was a deacon, but he soon preached to the Jews and finally died at their hands in Chapter Seven. He was sold out to serve Christ.

Paul seems quite impressed with this man. Phil. 23 "Epaphras my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus"; Col. 1:7 "minister of Christ," "dear fellow servant"; Col. 4:12 "Servant of Christ."

I fear that commitment is a passing thing in our society and in our Churches. I have in recent months heard of several men turning down Churches because of financial deficiencies in the Churches pay package. Finances should be involved in deciding if God is calling you to a Church, but it should not be the deciding factor. Someone in chapel while I was at Frontier School of the Bible mentioned a man that was leaving his Church because he wasn't making enough. His salary was $48,000 a year.

Epaphras was thoughtful. He knew that Paul was writing to them so he ask him to greet them for him. This shows a certain amount of feeling toward the people. Epaphras must have liked the people and felt that he wanted to greet them. God is interested in men that are interested in their people - TRULY INTERESTED!!

He was a prayerful man. Paul didn't need to mention this in his letter, but he was impressed enough with Epaphras' prayers, to encourage the people on with the fact that someone was praying for them. One of the encouragements we've had over the years is knowing that so many are praying for us! We used to send out more than 200 letters to enlist the prayers of the saints when we were missionaries - we needed it!

Paul, to the best of my knowledge mentions no one else as a prayer. He was impressed! By the way can you imagine going to prayer in a prayer meeting with this man and Paul present?

Let's look at his prayer life for just a moment or two.

CONSISTENT: "always" - specific choice to do it on a regular basis. Luke 18:1 "Men ought always to pray and not to faint"!

SPECIFIC: "for you." I ran across something in a Theological Journal awhile back. "A story is told about an old pastor who every Saturday afternoon could be seen leaving his study and entering the Church building by the back door, and about sundown he would be seen going home. Someone's curiosity was aroused enough to follow one day and watch through a window. It was in the days when the family pew was an institution of the Church. The old pastor was seen to kneel at each pew and pray for every member of the family that was to occupy it on the Lord's day. WHAT A PRAYER LIST! He called each member by name as he poured out his heart to God for his flock. His was a ministry of power and his people reflected the grace of God on them. Blessed is that Church which has such a praying Shepherd." (from Bibliotheca Sacra; P 60; Jan-Mar 1979, Dallas Seminary) We need people committed to pray for the people they minister to!

I ran across a quote from Charles Haddon Spurgeon that relates well at this point. "The minister who does not earnestly pray over his work must surely be a vain and conceited man. he acts as if he thought himself sufficient of himself and therefore need not appeal to God. Yet what a baseless pride to conceive that our preaching can ever be in itself so powerful that it can turn men from their sins and bring them to God without the working of the Holy Ghost."

I was at a Church in the northwest where the pastor was preaching on commitment and in his invitation he mentioned that he had prayed for each one in his congregation before the service.

I had spoken in a small town Church in the midwest and the pastor insisted on filling my gas tank. He filled the tank and we talked for awhile at the station. We said goodbye and he started walking toward his house. I told him I'd take him home. He said, "No, I'd rather walk." I insisted - he said, "No I'd rather walk - I know the people along the way home and I like to pray for them as I walk by their house. Some of them are lost and I want to pray for them."

That is the type of men we need in our pulpits today!

SINCERE: "striving" This word comes from the athletic arena - it is used of the athletes intense effort in reaching for the prize. It is used of the "agony" of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane (Luke 22:44) just before his arrest.

I watched the iron man triathilon a few years ago and they showed a woman that was near the finish line. She couldn't control her legs and couldn't walk so she ended up on her hands and knees crawling across the finish line - that is agony! This term "strive" is the term from which we gain our English word "agonize." It was more than just a five minute quite time. He was agonizing over these people!

PURPOSEFUL: "that ye may stand" It has been said, that if the Church is ever going to be victorious it will have to learn to advance on it's knees. PRAYER IS NEEDED TODAY TO SAY THE LEAST!

We see that Epaphras had a concern. He was very concerned with their need of maturing.

He was sincere. Paul knew that this man was on the level -- he wasn't just putting on a front to impress the folks. Some Christians I meet today - Church leaders - are so caught up in their airs they don't listen to the answers you give to their questions. This is quite evident when you answer the same questions twice in your first conversation. I recently overheard a conversation between a leader and a not so regular attender. The leader would ask a question and in the middle of the answer the leader would be interrupted and then when he returned to listening to the man he would ask another question. The man had not finished his first answer. This went on for about four cycles and finally the man walked away. The leader was not at all interested in the man - only in pretending to be interested.

We had a missionary over for dinner. He would ask a question and as you paused between sentences of your answer he would ask another question on another topic. A couple of times I went back and finished an answer then answered the next question in the hope of his picking up on what he was doing. He didn't.

Some today feel a lull in the conversation is a mortal sin. Personally quiet is not all that bad at times indeed sometimes it is appropriate.

I recently heard of "Leather Man" in the eastern part of our country. He was a man of the past. He was a man that never talked to anyone. He wore a heavy leather outfit and would not take help from anyone. He would eat from time to time when people offered. He had no known past and lived in caves in the wilderness. He never was known to speak yet people, both children and adults would walk out to his camp and just sit with him by the hour. SILENCE IS GOLDEN AT TIMES!

In Alaska one of the Indian tribes enjoy just sitting around in a circle in silence. They enjoy one another without talking.

I sense also there is one more quality in this man. He was MISSIONS MINDED. He was on the forefront of missions. He was working with Paul and seemingly involved in Church planting.

I fear many today fail to see past the end of their own lives when they look at the harvest fields. Few today are directing and leading their Churches toward missions. Many are stunting their Churches growth and prosperity by stunting missions.

Missions is to be a vital part of all our lives. If you aren't praying for, and supporting missions then you aren't in the mainstream of God's program - you are on the outskirts and many Churches

there are on the outskirts!

Epaphras was a man of many qualities! The book of Philemon (vs 23) tells us that he was a prisoner with Paul in Rome, so we can see that he was committed to his Lord - all the way.

As I review his qualities the two that stand out most are the qualities of prayer and concern for his people. He was concerned about the people in his Church as well as the people in nearby Churches. The other Churches mentioned are Laodicea and Hierapolis. These two cities and Colosse formed a triangle. They were only a few miles apart. (about 12) He had probably met these people - maybe had taught them indeed, may have started the Churches.

In Colossians 1:7 the term for deacon (minister) is used of Epaphras. He evidently was a deacon at his Church. History and tradition indicates that he went on to become an elder there at Colosse and later was martyred there.

I'm told that his name means "lovely" a shortened form of Epaphroditus meaning "handsome or charming." A fitting name for such a man of God.

SOUNDS LIKE THE KIND OF GUY THAT YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE AROUND YOUR CHURCH! RIGHT?

So many Church leaders today are qualified yet I wonder how many of them are of this quality. This was a layman and he had these qualities! One of the first elder qualifications is "if a man desire the office." Many Church leaders are not there because they DESIRE the office.

We do not have prayer warriors in many of our pulpits today. We do not have concerned men in many of our pastorates today.

When I told my father that I was going to become a minister he said, "Well I guess there's good money in that." At the time I thought yes, in the liberal denominations but not in the fundamental circles. Today I feel that it is coming into fundamental circles. I fear that the ministry is becoming an occupation to many young men. Not a bond slaves life of service for his Lord with his Lord's people, but a job and career.

Peter gives a proper picture of an elder in I Pet. 5:1-4. You should read it sometime.

Epaphras had many qualities. Indeed these qualities should be aspired to by all believers, but they ought to be resident in all of our Church leadership! In the years to come I trust that you will look for men of prayer, men of concern, men of service, men of Christ, men who are desirous of being a shepherd.

Recently I saw an interview of a shepherd here in the western U.S. They ask him of his life and he described the small wagon that he lived in month after month and the danger that he faced to

protect the sheep. He spoke of the long months of crying over the loneliness before he finally got used to it. They ask him why he was a shepherd. His reply was this, "The sheep needed to be cared for and I chose to be a shepherd."

We need men in our pulpits and our board rooms that have chosen to be shepherds -- men who desire to care for the sheep. May your future shepherds be so dedicated. May your future shepherds be so concerned.

Christ is pictured as a shepherd in the New Testament. May our shepherds be like our heavenly shepherd!

We must take our application one step further before we close. If you were to compare YOUR life to that of Epaphras how would YOU compare? Paul chose the term "SERVANT" for Epaphras, if Paul were writing about you today could he use the term "servant" of you?

Can you in your own mind say, "My life is a God-used life."? If you can't say "Yes" then you need to spend time getting to know your Master and seeing what He wants you to do.

06100

V. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

What are Ordinances? Orders that are an annoyance? Orders? Religious rite?

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary mentions, "1 a: an authoritative decree or direction: ORDER b: a law set forth by a governmental authority; specif: a municipal regulation 2: something ordained or decreed by fate or a deity 3: a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

We won't take time to look at the term in scripture because as near as I can tell the term is not used in conjunction with any of the ordinances that we accept, nor any that are suggested. The idea of the term is similar to the accepted definition today. An item which is legally required to fulfill your position as a citizen or member of an organization.

Some might suggest the word "sacrament" as a synonym. This is not acceptable in that the term sacrament usually conveys the thought that grace is being transmitted to the person involved in the ordinance. This comes to us from the Roman Catholic Church were baptism, communion, marriage, etc. are all sacraments and they all confer grace upon the participant.

An ordinance never has grace linked to it in the idea of the Protestant Church. Grace is not offered, extended, nor received. The person at the same time should never be involved in an

ordinance if they think that grace is involved for they do not understand the ordinance properly.

Ordinance is something that is prescribed as a part of the normal local church life. The universal Church is to be a part of those ordinances, yet the universal Church cannot participate in fully in the ordinances.

Most feel there were two ordinances provided to the Church and they are baptism and the Lord's table.

Samuel Fisk in the article "IS FOOT WASHING FOR TODAY? in the Baptist Bulletin Oct. 76, (Regular Baptist Press, Shaumburg, IL) lists some items we might consider as we think about Church ordinances.

1. He mentions that an ordinance must be a command of Christ.

2. Mr. Fisk mentioned that the ordinance must be directly related to truth in the gospel and closely related to the believer's salvation.

3. An ordinance must be something that was given for the Church universal, not just individual believers.

4. An ordinances should also be something that was practiced by the New Testament church.

5. An ordinance should be something that was for not only the early church, but was something that was meant for the ongoing, growing Church.

These seem good, but may have been arrived at by looking at the two accepted ordinances and determining what an ordinance is based on what is observed in the two.

There are other suggested ordinances that we might take a look at before we move on to baptism and the Lord's table.

FASTING:

Fasting is considered an ordinance by some Plymouth brethren and a few Baptists.

We will not take time to look at references, but let us list some of the things that we know about fasting.

1. Some suggest it is used as a reminder to pray for a specific item. The hunger will remind you.

2. Others feel that the time usually spent eating should be given to prayer.

3. It is usually linked to prayer in the Scripture. However, the term can be used simply of "no food." (Mk 8:3)

4. The disciples and the followers of John fasted.

5. It gives proof of the sincerity of the individual that is praying.

6. Fasting is used heavily in the Old Testament in relation to remorse or contrition. It seems to be used that way in Acts 9:9 when Saul was waiting for the Gospel after the road to Damascus. Otherwise, the New Testament does not necessarily have that connotation.

7. Christ fasted for forty days and nights.

8. Fasting is not an item that is commanded nor is it one that is prescribed for the Church. The indications are, however that fasting is not wrong and indeed it is for the Church age if an individual would desire to become involved in it. (Acts 13:1ff mentions the Church leaders fasted before they sent Saul and Barnabus out; Acts 14:23 mentions that Paul fasted after he had ordained elders in the Churches; Acts 27:33 seems to be the context of not being able to eat rather than a religious fasting - Paul is speaking to the sailors of the ship that had been shipwrecked; I Co. 7:5 indicates that fasting is for this age, in that he mentions married couples involved in fasting and praying; II Cor. 6:5 tells us that it was one of Paul's practices, though some may indicate that this was referring to Acts 27:33 and the shipwreck.)

From my vast acquired knowledge and experience, I will mention a few other points.

1. There are missionaries that fast once a week, and it is a time of prayer for special needs.

2. I know of no pastor that fasts, yet I might add I don't know that many missionaries that do. I will also add, that fasting is not the type of thing that a person advertizes. It may very well be something they desire to be special between themselves and their Lord.

3. Fasting, by those that I have talked to, never leaves a person hungry as such. They might notice their stomach is feeling differently, but it is not hunger. Usually people mention they never miss the meal, but tremendously enjoy the fellowship with the Lord.

I would encourage you to consider fasting as something special, usually for a certain item of concern in prayer. I might illustrate by telling of what one day of fasting resulted in for one couple. A missionary couple was placed before a large Church as an item for prayer and fasting. The congregation gave their lunch time over to prayer, and committed themselves to pray as the Lord brought the item before them.

The next day the missionary was able to schedule a meeting with a man that he had been trying to meet with for two years. The couple was informed they had been given a large sum of money to

be divided monthly over a number of months. The couple was informed that their Church had decided to meet concerning supporting them.

Fasting may not always produce such nice results, but you may be assured any special time given to the Lord will be a blessing.

Revival is linked to fasting at times in history. Jonathan Edwards for example fasted three days before he preached his great sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," which moved many people to repentance and salvation.

Though I do not see that fasting is an ordinance, it is plain that it is for today as the believer is led. It is an item which has not gained wide usage in most circles to my knowledge, though it probably should.

FOOT WASHING:

John 13:4-17 is the text to consider.

"He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe [them] with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also [my] hands and [my] head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash [his] feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for [so] I am. If I then, [your] Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Why do we not practice this act of foot washing?

If we accept the thoughts of Mr. Fisk, then we see that the foot washing is outside the qualifications set forth. In verse 7 the Lord told them they didn't understand what He was doing. If this was to be an ordinance it would seem that the disciples would have explained the item more fully at a later date if it were to be an ordinance or even common practice among the apostles. None of the Scripture writers mention the explanation of all this.

Some suggest I Tim. 5:10 as a possible foot washing text. It however seems to be related to good

works and if this is the case then many other New Testament "good works" would become ordinances, especially those listed in the passages immediate context. (See the underlined phrases.)

10 "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."

Christ was not instituting an ordinance when He washed the apostles feet, but rather he was setting an example and showing them that humility was needed in their future thinking.

In short this means that Christ led the perfectly humble life and in his coming He had lowered Himself. The idea of washing the feet instead of the whole body depicts the thought of cleansing of sin not the whole process of salvation again.

The Timothy text, by the way mentions that a widow washed the feet of the "saints" a general term. The foot washers normally practice the rite in separated groups - men with men and women with women. If they were going to use it as a proof text, they would have to have the women wash everyone's feet.

The statement of the Lord, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." in John 13 may prove to be a problem, in that if foot washing is to be done and we don't do it then we are lost to hell. That would place a higher importance upon foot washing than any ordinance. There is no "work" that we can refrain from that will cost us our salvation. This would indicate that this is indeed, not an ordinance. There is no indication in all of the New Testament that the foot washing was to be carried on in the future.

In my own reading, I have not found any indication that any major group of history practiced it as an ordinance. Indeed, the early Church did not seem to practice it. So, might we say that foot washing is not an ordinance?

May we say that foot washing is not to be done in any form in our day? No, for there is nothing wrong with it if the person wants to use it as a sign of humility and service, yet it seems that the time and effort might be better spent in the actual serving to the good of someone. We do not really need to wash feet in our society as they did in the Lord's era.

"After bowing, greeting, and kissing, the eastern guest is offered water for washing his feet. Wearing of sandals would naturally necessitate foot washing, but it is often done when shoes have been worn. a servant will assist the guest by pouring the water upon his feet over a copper basin, rubbing the feet with his hands, and wiping them with a napkin." (Taken from: "MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF BIBLE LANDS"; Wright, Fred H.; Copyright 1953, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

There may be some societies in the world that it might well be appropriate, but not as an ordinance.

There is no reason to involve ones self in foot washing, because the Lord had in mind the idea of serving one another.

The serving can be done in many ways other than washing a persons feet.

There are some that might view the anointing of oil as an ordinance also however there is no evidence for such an idea.

06150

THE LORD'S TABLE

When teaching the Lord's table I usually have a class discuss the elements, the sequence of elements and the frequency. Normally there is little discussion on what the elements are or the sequence, however the frequency stirs some discussion. I then read the following text.

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; For I say unto you, I will not any more eat of it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves; For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Luke 22:14-20

You should notice that the cup was first and that two cups were mentioned. RELAX! We haven't been doing it wrong. The Lord's Supper was part of the Passover meal that had multiple cups. We base our observance on I Corinthians 11.

Now as to the frequency question, we should remember that the last supper where the Lord instituted the observance took place at Passover a YEARLY observance. In light of this and "as often as ye eat this" should we not celebrate the Lord's table only once per year? Furthermore, this occurred after 6 pm on the 13th of Nisan which is April 13th after 6 pm. This is specifically when the Lord's table should be observed.

NO! "as often as ye eat this" comes from I Cor. 11:26 and this is what Paul told us to do. This has nothing to do with how often - only that when we do it, it is to be a remembrance.

Paul does not mention the Passover nor does he mention the second cup. Indeed, this seems to be the Lord laying out for us through Paul the procedure for the observance. There is no need to observe the Passover any more so the idea of "as often as ye eat" would indicate more the idea of every time you eat bread and wine rather than yearly.

COMMUNION

Communion has been defined in many ways among which are the idea of fellowship, friendship, comradery, agreement or having things in common.

Scripturally communion is the term "koinonia" and has the idea of fellowship rather than the observance that Christ set forth.

Indeed, the term communion or "koinonia" is translated fellowship and is placed as separate from the breaking of bread which most feel is the observance of the Lord's table in Acts 2:42, "and fellowship, and in breaking of bread."

The Lord's table certainly should have communion or fellowship between those involved, but specifically the better term for the observance would probably be the Lord's table. There is only one passage that mentions communion and the Lord's table together, and it is somewhat doubtful as to what communion relates to, the observance as much as the fellowship.

THE LORD'S TABLE

There are four main passages that relate to the rite. There are three in the Gospels that relate to the beginning of the observation, while the Corinthians passage relates to the specifics of it. (Mark 14; Matt. 26; Luke 22; I Cor. 11:23-26)

From Paul, we learn that the bread symbolizes Christ's body, the wine His blood and the elements remembered are a proclamation of His death. The command to observe "until He comes" is significant because He is coming again. The Gospels relate this coming to the setting up of His kingdom.

The Greek terms body, blood, cup, and bread carry no special significance. They are words that are normally translated as they appear here. The word translated remembrance has the connotation of remember again.

The text of Heb. 10:3 shows the yearly sacrifice for Israel was so that they could have a clear conscience. It also was "A REMEMBRANCE AGAIN MADE OF SINS EVERY YEAR." In I Cor. 11 it is THE REMEMBRANCE AGAIN OF THE TAKING CARE OF THAT SIN!

There are a number of views held concerning the observance of The Lord's Table. We will look briefly at these.

Roman Catholic

Transubstantiation: This teaches that the elements of the Lord's table (bread and wine) are, through the words that the priest repeats, changed into the literal body and blood of Christ and are offered before God anew. The left over host or wafer is kept in a box on the alter, and it cannot be desecrated, for it is the actual body of Christ. They offer Christ anew each time the mass is held in every cathedral and church in the world.

They must, by their thinking, view this as one of the sources of grace and indeed they do. Each time they receive the host they also accept grace. It is very prevalent in their writing that without the priest to make these changes in the bread and wine there would be no salvation available to the people. It is of great interest to me that some of these same people have accepted the outward trappings of the charismatic movement, and are now seeking to draw that movement into fellowship with them. The Charismatic Catholic is a contradiction in true terms. They have just added tongues to Holy Mother Church and hope that they will fool some with their terminology.

I would like to include a cute short story from an Irish viewpoint concerning this topic. The author is unknown, but I received it from Gospel Outreach; PO 7078; Philadelphia, PA; 19149.

A ROMAN MIRACLE (?)

"A pretty maid, a Protestant, was to a Catholic wed;
To love all Bible Truths and tales, quite early she'd been bred.
It sorely grieved her husband's heart that she would not comply
And join the Mother Church of Rome and heretics deny.

"So day by day he flattered her, but still she saw no good
Would ever come from bowing down to idols made of wood;
The mass, the host, the miracles, were made but to deceive;
And transubstantiation, too, she'd never dare believe.

"He went to see his clergyman and told him his sad tale
'My wife's an unbeliever, sir, you can perhaps prevail;
For all your Romish miracles my wife has strong aversion,
To really work a miracle may lead to her conversion.'

"The priest went with the gentleman - he thought to gain a prize.
He said, 'I will convert her, sir, and open both her eyes.'
So when they came into the house, the husband loudly cried,
'The priest has come to dine with us!' 'He's welcome,; she replied.

"And when, at last, the meal was o'er, the priest at once began

To teach his hostess all about the sinful state of man;
The greatness of our Savior's love, which Christians can't deny
To give Himself a sacrifice and for our sins to die.

"'I will return tomorrow, lass, prepare some bread and wine;
The sacramental miracle will stop your soul's decline.'
'I'll bake the bread,' the lady said. 'You may,' he did reply.
'And when you've seen this miracle, convinced you'll be, say I.'

"The priest did come accordingly, the bread and wine did bless.
The lady asked, 'Sir, is it changed?' The priest answered, 'Yes,
It's changed from common bread and wine to truly flesh and blood;
Begorra, lass, this power of mine has changed it into God!'

"So having blessed the bread and wine, to eat they did prepare;
The lady said unto the priest, 'I warn you to take care,
For half an ounce of arsenic was mixed right in the batter,
But since you have its nature changed, it cannot really matter.'

"The priest was struck real dumb -- he looked as pale as death.
The bread and wine fell from his hands and he did gasp for breath.
'Bring me my horse!' the priest cried, 'This is a cursed home!'
The lady replied, 'Begone, tis you who shares the curse of Rome.'

"The husband too, he sat surprised, and not a word did say
At length he spoke, 'My dear,' said he, 'The priest has run away;
To gulp such mummery and tripe, I'm not, for sure, quite able;
I'll go with you and will renounce this Roman Catholic Fable.'"

Lutheran

Consubstantiation: In years past this was the thought that as the bread and wine descended into your stomach it became the actual body and blood of Christ. This is a bit more believable than the Roman view. This has changed, I have been told, to a system of belief that the elements are bread and wine, however as you receive them you receive the body and blood of Christ which is in and around the elements.

The original Lutheran, Martin Luther, believed that grace was transmitted through the elements. This is natural because he was coming out of the Roman church and would not have been able to change all of his false teaching over night. From a Short Exposition of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism P 26 "...that in the sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us...." This is based on Mat. 26:28 "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Since remission of sins comes from the blood of Christ - to say there

is forgiveness in communion is to say that the wine IS the blood of Christ.

They speak of the "real presence" of Christ in the elements.

Traditional:

These people believe that the elements are as they were when Christ used them - symbolic of the body and blood. There is no change of elements nor benefit in the taking of the elements.

It is only a remembrance of the Lord's death on the cross for our sins. There is no grace or benefit forthcoming from the elements nor from the observance itself.

HOW OFTEN

The Christian church I attended as a child held the communion service every Sunday as an integrated part of the worship service. While speaking of the past I might observe from my childhood and adulthood, a marked difference in the observance and the people participating. In my unsaved childhood days, I observed a very marked reverence toward the observance. The older men of the church served the elements after two of the men had a devotional and prayer. There was lots of goofing off in my area during church, but when the communion service was in progress the order of the day was no fooling around, no reading, no gum chewing and nothing else. You were to sit quietly and do nothing. I KNEW there was something special about this observance though I did not know what it was.

The majority of churches that I have attended over the years have observed it once a month.

We were in a church in Parkersberg, PA years ago and they were trying to get back to the "Biblical standard" of the Lord's Supper. The following is a part of the paragraph explaining this desire in the bulletin. "We will have the Lord's Supper the first Sunday of each month." Now you know - it is every first Sunday! Others hold the communion every three months.

Who is correct and why are they correct? The Bible says "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread...." DAILY might be suggested. At Troas, they did it on the first day of the week for sure but maybe more - we aren't told. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," Acts 20:7 (We assume that break bread is related to the Lord's table.)

We don't have a command of scripture that states, thou shalt - but we do have the idea that it was at a meal. The idea of daily may have no justification in history, yet think about it. Every time you break bread, you remember the Lord's death. I have to wonder just how much of an impact that would have on the believer's daily life.

So, before you draw conclusions you need to consider: What is communion? Why do we do it?

How do we do it - what is the formula? Who is to be involved? Should we call it communion? Are we doing it right? Do we need both elements? Do we need either element?

Another question of some minor significance to people in the U.S. but of importance to the Swedish. Can you do communion over the TV? They have had some serious theological discussion on the subject.

If you are going to be a missionary there are other questions for you to struggle with. For example should you use orange juice and crackers as for the Lord's table as they do in some of the tropical areas of the world, or should you maintain the grape juice and cracker standard? (Actually this is not correct if you are going to be specific. The New Testament people used wine and unleavened bread.)

Should we use unleavened bread instead of the usual fish food? After all, the bread of Passover is unleavened.

Should we use wine? There is a growing debate about this in our country at this time in our history. Some are beginning to think that we should and others abhor the possibility.

Can you have the Lord's table with someone in a hospital, care home or laid up at home? Can you have the Lord's table at camps, Bible studies and Bible colleges. These questions have some ramifications if we hold to the observance being an ordinance of the church. That would indicate that the local church is the one that is to be involved and no other organization.

IN BRIEF

Lord's supper is an observance commemorating the Lord's death on the cross. It is a remembrance of His suffering for our sin.

1. Instituted by: Christ Himself.

2. Occasion: Christ wanted to celebrate the Passover with the disciples Mark 14:14-16. a. As a Jew He would want to keep the Passover. b. As Christ He would want to keep the Passover as part of His perfect life. c. As Jesus, a man, He would want to be with His disciples before His death Luke 22:15. "And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer"

The Passover was depicting Israel's firstborn being saved, while the cross was where provision for the salvation of mankind was made. A lamb was slain and eaten as a sacrifice of thanksgiving in the Passover. In the Church Age a Lamb was slain and we eat the bread that symbolizes His flesh as the sacrifice for which we offer thanksgiving.

3. Elements: a. Bread - unleavened from the Passover meal. b. Wine - fermented if you believe

the wine they drank everyday was fermented, or non-fermented if you believe the wine they drank everyday was non-fermented. (We won't try to answer that one. Do consider however Paul's use of the thought of controlled by wine in Ephesians five when he talks about being filled with the Spirit. Control by wine demands fermentation.)

4. Participants: a. In the Gospels it was Christ and the eleven disciples. (Judas had gone - John 13:30) b. In the book of Acts it was all Christians. c. In I Cor. it was the believers at Corinth. (I Cor. 1:1,2) d. Today it should be those that have reason to remember what the Lord did - believers.

5. Setting: In the Gospels it was the Passover MEAL and in the book of Acts it is tied with a MEAL and in I Cor. 11 it is tied with a MEAL.

The question which arises: Is it permissible to have the observance as a part of a meal? Why or why not? I have been told of churches that place the Lord's table as an integrated part of a potluck dinner and having it work quite well.

6. Time: In the Gospels it is in the evening. Other than the Gospels, I don't believe there is any indication in the New Testament as to the time of day.

7. Reasons for: a. Remember His death. b. Remember His death till HE COMES. c. The death remembered till He comes indicates as well the resurrection!

8. In History: a. 125-135 AD The Didache (teaching of the apostles) states, "On every Lord's day - His special day - come together and break bread and give thanks, first confessing your sins so your sacrifice may be pure."

b. Unger mentions, "In the earliest notices of the Lord's Supper a simple and almost literal imitation of the meal as instituted by Christ is prevalent." This would indicate similar to the Passover meal. (Unger, Merrill F.; "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Chicago: Moody Press, 1957; P 666)

c. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia and Matthew Henry hold to similar thought - that of a meal with the observance as an integral part of the meal.

d. Vincent, in his word studies, makes a lengthy comment that is worth mentioning. "The emphasis is on Lord's." "...supper, represents the principal meal of the day, answering to the late dinner. The Eucharist proper was originally celebrated as a private expression of devotion, and in connection with a common, daily meal, an agape or love-feast. In the apostolic period it was celebrated daily. The communion-meal of the first and second centuries exhibited this character in being a feast of contribution, to which each brought his own provision." (Vincent, M.R.; "WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT"; Mac Dill AFB, Florida, Mac Donald Publishing, (no copyright) PP 787-788)

9. Historical setting: Jesus, a Jew with Jewish disciples, desired to celebrate the Jewish Passover. The only thing in the Lord's mind was based on the Old Testament. The Passover feast was a sacrifice of thanks for their first born having been spared. (Ex. 12:27)

He wanted to incorporate a new concept into His disciples' thinking. He was introducing the new covenant which was about to be sealed by His blood. New elements or old elements with meaning added is the question. It seems that He used the old elements of the meal (the wine and the bread) and gave them new significance. (Heb. 9:15 mentions the new covenant.)

IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT CHRIST WAS DYING ON THE CROSS AS THE JEWS WERE KILLING THEIR PASSOVER LAMBS.

We would be remiss not to suggest a possible application of all this to our personal lives. We have spoken of sacrifice in this study however it is concerning the lamb of the Old Testament and the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. Ought we not talk of the sacrifice that Christ calls us to make? Rom. 12:1,2 mentions that we should present ourselves a living sacrifice, Phil 2:17 mentions that the faith of those we lead to the Lord are sacrifices (soul winning), Heb. 13:15 mentions that prayer is a sacrifice and Phil 4:18 states that giving is a sacrifice. We enjoy and remember his for us but do we sacrifice for Him?

We are to remember His death till he comes HOWEVER THAT INCLUDES HIS DEATH, BURIAL, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION! At times we may want to dwell on the somber side of the remembrance, and other times we may want to dwell on the joyful side of the remembrance. The Passover was thanksgiving. Christ Himself placed the observance within that general context for our benefit. We should remember, but also be thankful for what He has done on our behalf.

In my adulthood I have seen all sorts of variations of methodology used in an attempt to make the time more meaningful for the participants. In general, I would guess "TRADITION" is a term that describes it in many churches. Ritual is a close second to tradition.

I would submit one further observation and suggest that the most meaningful Lord's Table observances were in a church years ago when the pastor centered the entire service, including his message, around some aspect of the Lord's Table. This was very meaningful to all the people.

Don't be afraid to make the observance of the Lord's table meaningful. Take an entire service and center it around the observance. Try your church board sometime when you get brave, and see if they would go with having it as a part or ending to a congregation meal.

I would suggest you read a poem by Helen Steiner Rice entitled "MAN CANNOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE."

06200

BAPTISM

Christ commanded baptism in Matt 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them...." It is to be the normal course of action as we are going. Baptism should be an integrated part of what we do in our ministry.

Every believer is to be baptized. Not there is danger of losing salvation, but there cannot be a proper walk with the Lord unless the believer has been obedient to the Lord in baptism.

Matt 10:32-33 mentions, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." How much we want to build here I'm not sure. The thought of refusing to identify oneself with Christ seems very serious however.

Since baptism is an outward sign of an inward change, it would be natural for the believer to want to be baptized. On the other hand, if there is no desire to give this sign, then one is left to wonder if there is an inward change.

Can we say that a person that is knowledgeable of baptism and is not baptized, is living in sin? Yes. What is the sin? The sin is disobedience, since the command is to be baptized.

The natural reaction when a person was saved in the New Testament, was to be baptized. It should be the natural thing in our own generation as well. If anyone reading this is not baptized, then I would encourage you to take that step of obedience as soon as you can.

BAPTISM DEFINED

Webster tells us, "Christian sacrament marked by ritual use of water and admitting the recipient to the Christian community...a non -Christian rite using water for ritual purification...." (Webster, Merriam; "WEBSTER'S NINTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY"; Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc., 1986)

In general the term relates to the act in which a person is ritually sprinkled, immersed or poured upon for identification, purification or regeneration.

A little more to the point, from a fundamental view it is, the public testimony by which a new believer identifies with the universal and local church. It is an act which signifies his salvation experience.

"Baptize" is a transliteration of the Greek term "baptizo." All Greek words used of baptism in the New Testament come from this term. It means whelmed or covered wholly with fluid. It is

used in Mark 7:4 and Lu 11:38 as a purification of the Pharisees. They dipped their utensils. Dipping into water is hard to change into "sprinkle" or "pour upon" to most theologians. The question of immersion versus sprinkle or pour is based on personal desire rather than a study of the Scripture. Scripture seems to teach immersion.

There are some questions concerning Baptism? Who is baptized? Who baptizes? What mode is used?

The who is, all knowledgeable believers. The ones baptizing are the representatives of the church. This may be the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the janitor if he is spiritual. Anyone that is spiritual may be appointed to the task of baptizing by the church leaders.

Someone once asked me in a class, "Is it wrong for a woman to baptize?" I hadn't thought of it before. I don't know that it would matter whether a man or woman baptizes. The thought of a woman baptizing women has some possibilities tied to it. I suspect that through history the men have done the work due to the fact that if a small woman attempted to baptize a large man there might be some difficulty. There may also be a feeling that the church leadership should do the ministry of baptizing.

In looking at the book of Acts, we see that hundreds of people were being baptized. In such a situation it would seem that to accomplish such a massive operation might call for both men and women to have been involved. In considering the question, I can think of no scripture that would prohibit women from baptizing.

MODE

We want to look at the different modes of baptism so we can properly understand them.

SPRINKLING or ASPERSION:

Normally this is done over a basin of some sort and the head is sprinkled lightly as the baptismal formula is repeated.

The Roman Catholic Church practices this mode and the Evangelical Free, Methodists, and United Brethren in Christ allow it in their churches.

POURING or AFFUSION:

Again as in sprinkling a basin is used to catch the water and a pitcher is used to pour water upon the top of the head as the formula is repeated. Methodists, Evangelical Free, and the United Brethren in Christ allow for this mode in their churches.

IMMERSION:

Within immersion there are several variations. The idea in all of these is that the person baptized must go completely under the water, in order to properly signify the aspect of death and resurrection.

Among the methods are these: Some dip the person under three times in quick succession and one member of the trinity is mentioned each time the person is dipped. Some dip the person and use the formula as above only they take the person under water front wards rather than the usual backwards of most churches.

Many groups use immersion: Baptists, Independents, Brethren, Christian, Church of God, 7th Day Adventist, and Mennonite. There may be others as well.

In some communist countries where it is illegal to baptize the candidate is blindfolded and they use bathtubs. This way the one baptized cannot tell the police who baptized them.

Immersion examined.

1. The term used, "baptizo," has a primary meaning of immerse.

2. There are two prepositions which are used of baptism and they indicate the idea of immersion rather than pouring or sprinkling - "Into" and "out of."

3. Rom. 6:1-4 shows baptism as a picture of death to the old way and resurrection to the new. Immersion best pictures this. (In death you are buried and in resurrection you are raised.)

Some including myself question that this speaks of water baptism, however it indicates spirit baptism. It is a complete thing for the believer, thus since there is a close similarity between spirit and water baptism - immersion may be indicated.

4. The early church when baptizing could have used immersion. There is no logical reason for this not to have been the case. There is no idea of pouring or sprinkling hinted at in the accounts.

5. The Greek language has words for pour and sprinkle but they are not used of baptism.

6. John the Baptist went where there was much water to baptize. It would be illogical to go into the country side and use muddy river water when good clean water was available in the city. (Jo 3:23; II Ki 5:12ff shows the Jordan to be very dirty; Mark 1:15 shows that the Jordan River was used.)

7. The Ethiopian Eunuch and Phillip came up out of the water after the baptism. Coming up out of would indicate they were down in the water.
"And when they were come up out of the water...." Acts 8:39. For that matter if they were pouring why would it take two men to get a pitcher of water?

8. Christ is mentioned as coming up out of the water. Why would the Lord and John the Baptist get your feet and legs wet if they were going to pour or sprinkle? Matt 3:6

9. Matt 3:11, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

We have three baptisms mentioned here; one by water - John's, one by spirit - Holy Spirit, and one by fire - judgment. The final two would involve complete immersions (spirit involves the whole person and also judgment would involve the whole person), thus it would seem that the water baptism would also be a complete immersion as well.

10. Immersion was the order of the early church. The first indication from the church fathers of baptism other than immersion is that of pouring in the case of people that were sick and could not be immersed. This was called clinical baptism. The people, so baptized, were viewed as inferior. There is a possibility there was an element of baptismal regeneration in their thinking. Cyprian quoted an Old Testament verse that mentioned a sprinkling for purification.

Cyprian (A.D. 200-257) seems to be one of the first to introduce sprinkling.

The early Anabaptists were known to have sprinkled and poured in the early days. This was probably due to the fact they were just out of the Roman Cath. church. The fact some of them were in Switzerland in the middle of the winter affected their methodology a bit also.

INFANT BAPTISM

There are a number of groups that practice infant baptism. This is viewed as an entrance into the church body and regeneration is definitely in their minds. We need to look at this topic for a moment. Others desire infant baptism for much less spiritual reasons. I recently heard of a young mother that wanted her baby baptized because she had heard that baptismal certificates were acceptable if you lost the child's birth certificate.

The suggested proof of infant baptism:

1. The rite of circumcision is introductory to the old covenant, so the rite of baptism is the introductory rite to the new covenant.

Since Circumcision is done on infants, then so should baptism.

2. The scriptures show that entire households were baptized. Acts 16:33. The assumption is there were children and infants in the households.

3. The New Testament shows that whole households can be saved if one parent is, thus we

should baptize all members. I Cor. 7:14.

4. Since baptism saves, we must baptize immediately so the child will not slip into hell if it should die.

5. Matt. 28:19-20 tells us to baptize all nations. That includes babies and senior citizens.

Infant baptism refuted:

1. There are no New Testament references of babies being baptized. If it were important to them for salvation, the writers of Scripture would have told us about it.

2. The New Testament shows that baptism follows, repentance, believing, or accepting or some combination of these. An infant can do none of these things. (Acts 2:38-39 stipulates repentance before baptism)

3. The early church fathers rejected this thought. From the Didache we read, "Before the baptism, moreover, the one who baptizes and the one being baptized must fast, and others who can. And you must tell the one being baptized to fast for one or two days beforehand." (125-135) You cannot tell an infant something, and infants do not fast.

4. Let us consider the baptizing of households. We have no indication that infants were present or indeed if there were, they were baptized.

In one of the household texts is Acts 16 and in verse 32 we see, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." They spoke. If they were speaking then all that heard must have heard! That would mean understanding minds and not infant minds.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia raises a question that is probably tongue in cheek, yet very appropriate. They ask if we are going to press the thought of "household," if we should suggest that dogs and cats need to be baptized.

I Cor 16:15 mentions the house of Stephanas as serving God. Infants cannot serve. If the household idea is to be carried forth there is a problem in using this text.

5. Baptism is not related to salvation other than a picture. Mark 16:16 shows that disbelief is that which causes damnation.

Jo 1:12 mentions receive - you cannot do that as an infant.

Acts 10:47 shows they had the Holy Spirit before they were baptized. If baptism is needed before regeneration, then how could they have been indwelled by the Holy Spirit?

6. In the case of likening circumcision to baptism, we have a slight problem. If this is true then we should only baptize men, for only men were circumcised in the Old Testament. Indeed Gen. 17:12 mentions that it is to be done on the eighth day or older.

7. Matt 28:13-20 mentions discipling and teaching. This also is impossible with an infant.

8. Eph. 2:8-9 Mentions that salvation is of grace, and that works are not involved. Baptism is a work - something that man does and it can have nothing to do with salvation.

The whole thought of infant baptism is tied up in the thought of baptismal regeneration, the idea that baptism is an integrated part of regeneration. I would submit two more points to refute the idea of baptismal regeneration.

1. Paul mentions that he baptized few (I Cor. 1:17). If this is the case, and if it were the case that salvation was part of baptism, then wasn't Paul very remiss with his evangelism? If baptism is required for regeneration then Paul would have baptized those that he talked to.

2. A very clear proof that baptism is not a part of salvation is seen in the thief on the cross. The Lord told him he would be in paradise, yet the thief had not had the opportunity to be baptized.

I was in a class where a man from the Christian church was invited for a visit. We asked him about the thief on the cross and he said this was a special case. No other explanation was forth coming.

Some might wonder why people believe that baptism is part of salvation? Might I suggest a few possible reasons? a. The "tower of Babel syndrome." (Attempting to reach God by their own accomplishments.) They think there must be something they can do to help in the process of salvation. b. The "I'd rather do it myself syndrome." They haven't trusted Christ to take care of all there is to do. c. The "that's the way it's always been done syndrome." That is what they have been taught and that is the way it's been and that's the way it's going to be no matter what you say, and no matter what the Scriptures say.

My employers wife once asked me just before their grandchild was going to be baptized if I thought infants should be baptized. I told her that I did not think that the Scriptures taught that concept. I sat down that night and put down some references for her and took them in the next day. She did not listen to a thing, and felt that it was right and proper to have their grandchild baptized.

Baptism, to some, brings some benefit to the one that is baptized. The Roman Church sees the rite of baptism as a means of accepting grace and it is part of their salvation. "The sacrament of Baptism confers grace." (Morrow, Louis LaRavoire; "MY CATHOLIC FAITH"; Kenosha, WI: My Mission House, 1955, P 252)

Some Lutherans feel that baptism is part of their being saved. I'd like to quote from a Lutheran in Makoti, North Dakota. "Baptism is not merely a symbol. It is the means God uses: (1) to forgive sin, (2) to save us, (3) to create spiritual life through the giving of the Holy Spirit, thus beginning of formal membership in the church, (5) [not sure where 4 went - it was missing] to adopt us into His family wherein we become legal heirs of His Kingdom, and (6) to make us partners in Christ's death and resurrection." (from a church bulletin)

In considering baptism another question might come up. Is there any reason for an unsaved person to want to be baptized? In my childhood I was not well taught in the Bible though I was in Sunday School and church every Sunday. I had no idea what baptism was all about. The church I was taken to as a child, believed in baptismal regeneration. About ten or so my mother pushed me physically into the aisle to go forward for baptism. I returned to my seat though a few weeks later did ask to be baptized. I was taken into the church and all was proper even if I didn't know what it was about.

Others might be baptized because of popularity, or for an increase in stature in the community, however the scripture speaks to the thought of unsaved people being baptized. a. Matt 3:7-9 John The Baptist condemned some for wanting baptism when they were unrepentant. b. It is a picture of the death burial and resurrection, so why would any unsaved person want to identify with it? c. It is an identification with Christ and His church - why would a lost person be interested. It is only an empty work if they should be baptized. It would have no meaning to the world, nor to them.

Another question. Is there any reason why a person would, or should be rebaptized? Yes. This was what the anabaptists were all about. They were catholics that had been sprinkled or poured upon as infants. When they had understanding of salvation they were rebaptized as believers. This is also seen in the case of the disciples of John the Baptist in Acts 19:1-7. This by the way shows there was a difference between the baptism of John the Baptist and Christian baptism.

If a person was baptized before they were saved then the proper step would be for rebaptism. This was the case in my own life. When I was saved there came a time when I knew that my baptism had no meaning to me or anyone else, so took steps to be baptized again in the church where I was saved.

OCCASION OF BAPTISM: When should a person be baptized, after they are saved? Some Baptists desire and push for immediately. Some independents tell their converts whenever, and they do it as they feel they want to. The sad part of this approach is that some never do. Most independents feel that it is to be done as soon as the believer fully understands it. This may be awhile or it may be immediately.

Recommendations:

1. Never baptize without talking with the person concerning their salvation, the purpose and

intent of baptism, and the ramifications or responsibilities of being baptized.

2. Never push, but do encourage them - teach them the how and why soon after their conversion. For many years there was no real strong significance to baptism in this country, but more and more it is a real testimony of leaving an old life and beginning a new one. In other countries it is very significant and may be the act that solidifies your conversion to the world. In Ireland that is the last thing that the catholics will allow. They may allow going to the Bible Church, even maybe being saved, but the baptism is the BREAK with Holy Mother Church and the believer is in for ostracism from friends and relatives.

We have not discussed the baptismal formula that the Lord specified. Matt 28:19 "...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" Just what is the implication of this formula? To the Jew they were making a commitment to a belief in Christ as the Messiah and a public recognition of his deity. God THE FATHER, God THE SON - the Messiah come, and God THE HOLY SPIRIT.

There is a difference between the baptisms that are mentioned in the New Testament. We will not go into detail on these aspects of our topic. There is a short listing of thoughts in Appendix five at the end of the book for further study.

In brief: Baptism shows the inward death of our sin nature and the creation of our new nature. It also shows our belief in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. These three are also pictured by the mode of immersion.

As in other topics we would like to apply the truth that has just been studied. The obvious application is to the believer that has not been baptized. The ordinance is something that comes under the thought of obedience. If a believer understands baptism properly and does not move toward being baptized, then they are involved in the sin of disobedience. May we encourage anyone in this position to consider moving toward a complete obedience to their Lord's command?

A side application might be that, as teachers of the Word, we should see to it that new believers understand the major doctrines of the faith and call them to obedience.

We trust the reader now has a complete understanding of the ordinances so that we can move on to the final portions of our study.

06250

VI. THE PHYSIQUE OF THE CHURCH

"Physique" is defined by Webster as "bodily makeup," thus we want to discuss the body makeup of the church. Just how are we arranged? We have discussed the leadership and many of the things that the believers in a local church are to do, but just how does God view the family that He has assembled? He views us as a body. We want to discuss the body of Christ for a time.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Who is Head of the church? The pastor? The board? Mrs. Stuffed Pocketbook? Mrs. All-wise? The answer lies in the word itself - Head.

Psalm eight speaks of the dominion of the Lord before He was incarnate. Ephesians one mentions that He has dominion or Headship over the church.

Eph. 1:22,23 "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

Christ is the head and the church is the body. Let's think about this a moment. What implications are there in this short phrase?

What does the head do?

1. It controls the body. What happens if this control is removed? Ever see a chicken just after its head is removed? As a child I used to go to my aunt's place with my mom. Mom used to make me get clear over to the corner of the yard, then my aunt would chop a chicken's head off in the middle of the yard. the body of the chicken would take off flopping and rolling and flapping around for some time. Ever see a church after its head is removed? A man can remain conscious for a short interval of time after his head is separated from his body, but not for long. A body without a head cannot function.

2. The head contains some important equipment which some church members seem to think are located in the body.

a. The eyes. Christ alone is all seeing. He can see far into the future and make plans. If He sees a chuckhole in the road He can guide the church around it quite well. He doesn't need a busybody telling the church what to do.

b. The brain. Christ alone is all knowing. He does not need the unceasing wisdom of the rich elder that has built a fortune, or the sage pastor that has built a kingdom for himself. He doesn't even need the all-knowing teen that knows the church is being run all wrong. He - Christ can control the body!

c. The nose. He can smell out trouble and alert the pastor or elders to it without the self - appointed gossip helping.

d. The ears. He hears enough gossip without us. God has one that is in the business of reporting our errors to the Lord. A poem by Martha Snell Nicholson entitled My Advocate relates to this point.

e. The tongue. You might try a long detailed study of James 3 concerning the tongue? Our tongues are not really necessary except in witnessing and praising Him.

3. The head tells the body what to do and where to go. How far do we let this go? To what extent do we let Christ lead in the church? It would seem from Matt. 10:30 that Christ wants to lead in all areas of our life, "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

A woman in Denver needed a pair of shoes. She found two pair that might work. she really liked and wanted the expensive pair and the cheaper pair were almost ugly. She told the Lord to help her know which pair to buy. She allowed Him to choose. She tried both pair on. The cheap pair did not fit at all. The pair she liked fit perfectly.

We as individuals and as a church are His Body. A close relationship. He is interested in every part of our personal life and our church life. We should learn to take even small things to Him for a decision.

4. The head in the case of the church is the life giver. As the physical body dies without the head, so dies the church without Christ.

How do we treat this head of ours?

Ephesians tells us that God has raised Him, but I wonder if we don't often lower Him. We try to humanize Him and bring Him down to our level.

God placed Christ at His right hand, but many churches put Him beside Rock and Roll music in the sanctuary in the name of evangelism.

God placed all things under His feet, but we tread upon Him - we say we serve Him yet seldom do anything for His work.

He seems to have little power over His church in America today.

God made Him Head of the Church, but for the most part He is more like a headstone in front of a grave full of bones.

A rewrite of Ephesians 1:20-23 might show what man has done to Christ today. "When they lowered him to the depths of humanism--and set him under their feet in every earthly place--and hath placed him as dust, under foot, and gave him to be head over the church which is his dried bones, the emptiness of him that once filled the universe."

Let's consider some verses in Ephesians 1:15-23.

15. "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what [is] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set [him] at his own right hand in the heavenly [places], Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all [things] under his feet, and gave him [to be] the head over all [things] to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Let's consider that phrase, "All things under His feet."

1. All things are subject to Him; the earth, the heavens, all mankind (not outwardly toward Him but He is in control), and the Devil. All the universe is subject to Him, yet He allows the believer to decide his own subservience to his Lord - the one that has the position and power to command subservience.

2. Matt. 28:18 says all power was given to Him.

a. He has the power to provide for us. No matter what our financial position. He is in the business of supplying. (Matt 6:33)

b. He has the power to protect us from danger, from sin, from the Devil.

c. He has the power to prove us. That problem you had last week may have been a test.

d. He has the power to perpetuate Himself through us. By our witnessing, His power can bring people to Himself. Notice: His power.

Another phrase to consider, "Head over all things to the Church."

The key word is "all" - Every area! There is no area of your life that Christ is not over. Not an area that He isn't interested in. In the church the matter is the same. There is nothing in the operation of the church that Christ should not be over!

"Which is His body." As a local assembly with Him as Head are we a 90 lb. weakling or a Charles Atlas? For the younger generation let me explain what a 90 lb. weakling is. When I was a child there was an ad that used to be on all the magazines and comic books. A scrawny guy with a beautiful girl was lying on the beach. A huge muscle man came along and kicked sand

into the 90 lb weaklings face and took his girl away from him. Somewhere in the ad was a picture of an even bigger muscle man with the earth on his back. This of naturally was Charles Atlas, the man that was selling the course on muscle building.

With Christ's power we're Charles Atlas - ready to hold the world on our back. Without His power we're a 90 lb. weakling.

"The fullness of him that filleth all in all." The church is the fullness of Christ. Do you really believe that? Think about the church as a whole today. If this is the fullness of Christ, then Christ is a pauper and beggar. We have failed to show forth the fullness of Christ. Imagine - we can show forth the fullness of the one that filleth everything.

"filleth all in all." This phrase has the idea of cram. This is the only usage in the New Testament of this word. Many years ago at work we used to have one trash can in the shop. It was a long way out to where we dumped it. We prolonged the inevitable by pushing it down by hand until we can't push it down any more, then we would use our feet to stomp it down a little more, and then we would stack it so high that it fell on the floor. Then sometimes we would find a box to sit by the trash can which we would cram as full as we possibly could by pushing and stomping.

Christ fills all in all like we used to fill that trash can. He crams every corner and overflows all there is.

That's my Lord! I trust that the church today can sometime visualize what they could do if they applied this text. How do we get ahead in our churches today? Make Christ the one in charge.

What application do we find in this doctrine of the headship of Christ?

Concerning the local church: 1. He should be consulted on all decisions being made. This is done by the prayers of teachers, elders, pastors, and all Christians in that church. 2. He should be preeminent in all things. Everything should be geared to furthering His gospel and His glory. 3. We should seek to build up the body to make it strong, as well as bigger, for Him. The body will one day be His bride.

Concerning the Church invisible: 1. Many will be surprised to see who is in the body. Many of those we disagree with doctrinally will be there. This is not to say that we should be associated with them. Some, I think, will be as members with a disease. They will become holy through Christ's transforming power at the rapture. 2. You can disagree with other churches if they don't give Christ this place of Head in their group or church.

Concerning the believer: 1. This doctrine could also be entitled the Lordship of Christ. Christ is Head - He is Lord. There is one distinction. He's officially Head, but only Lord as we allow Him that position. This is true for the church as well. Allowing Christ Lordship is simply allowing Christ to have control of our life, and to have access to every area of life; be that area your

innermost secret, or innermost problem, be that area your dating, be that area your job, be it anything.

Christ is Head officially - now let's let Him be Head in practice. Let us as individuals and churches begin to allow Him to make the decisions.

We need to consider this picture that is used to describe us. We are told that we are the body of Christ. Consider that picture for a moment or two. First, there are several bones in the body of Christ. these bones are also found in each one of us. How well the body gets along depends on how much these bones are used. 1. Knee bone - How much prayer is offered on the bended knee? 2. The backbone - how may great laborers do our churches have. 3. Wishbone - This is often put to use instead of the knee and backbone. ("Oh, I wish the church would grow.") 4. The most used bone in the church today should be the least used - the jawbone. It has its good use - when it's operating for the Lord. 5. Finger bone - It points to everyone's faults. 6. Rib bone - Rib the pastor till he can't take it anymore. 7. Shoulder bone - It does the work.

Some churches I've seen remind me of my own body at times. My mouth runs before my mind is engaged. Sometimes I feel like I'm hooked up backwards; my nose runs and my feet smell.

We sometimes begin to think we're pretty important, but remember as you sit there you are worth $.90 chemically. You're pretty much worthless,
unless you are energized atomically, then you become worth millions per pound because you could produce 11 million kilowatts per pound of flesh.

Spiritually we're worthless without the Holy Spirit, but with Him we are priceless to God.

What kind of a body are we for Christ? The next text has specific reference to the local assembly as does Ephesians four, but by application we could see truths for the invisible church as well.

Take a few moments to read this text, I Cor. 12:12-27. Some facts from the text:

V. 12) One body, many members

V. 13) All are placed in the body via the Holy Spirit. This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This takes place at salvation!

V. 15) If a member, out of disgust, declares himself not of the body, he still is in the body, like it or not.

V. 17) There is a diversity of types. The body isn't just an eye. The body isn't just an ear. It's a complete body, arms hands, legs, feet etc.

V. 18) God placed us where He wanted us. This includes what we are. He chose what member

you are and placed you in the body where He wants you.

This passage has direct application to every one of us today! How? 1. We should carefully find out what local assembly He wants us working in. 2. After we know where we are to be, we should find out what we should be doing. This means more than just sitting idle while the hand scratches your foot. Every member of a healthy body functions. What are you supposed to be doing? 3. God placed! Not man! We are not to judge another member's place or ability. God thinks his ability is what He wants in that place. You may feel I am a rotten teacher. Maybe I am. Maybe I don't have interesting studies. Maybe I am bald. Maybe I don't have a sense of humor. Maybe I tick you off with all of my detail. But - you did not place me in this position. At this time god wants me here no matter what I'm like. Tomorrow He may want me in some other position. This can be done in a number of ways. Don't judge God's placement of members.

Vs. 21-22) One member can't do without the other if it is going to function properly.

Every job in the church is important to the smooth functioning of the body. Imagine if your left knee joint was rendered inoperative. Just how well would your back feel after hobbling along with a stiff knee? EVERY job is important to the body.

V. 23) We should try to honor these less important members. This is done by giving credit where credit is due and giving a thank you and pat on the back once in awhile.

V. 24) God gives honor to these less important parts, by spiritual blessing, by joy in serving, by rewards later.

A missionary friend once told a church that he'd help with their Vacation Bible School. He didn't get to speak in that church. He served them as a less important member. On his next furlough the church opened a day of services to him and support followed.

V. 25) This honor is done so there is no division in the body.

All members should care for one another. If there isn't a mutual caring, then someone's spiritual life is not in a proper relation to God!

There is a phrase in the Scripture that is very indicative of what we are talking about. "One another." The Bible mentions many things that we are to do for and to "one another." I would suggest a study of these passages for your further enrichment. It will take awhile, yet the benefit will be well worth it. The listing of these passages is in Appendix six.

V. 26) There should be common suffering and rejoicing: How do you feel when your tooth aches? Do you feel great all over? No! How do you feel when it's fixed. Great - all over. So we might surmise that if one member of the church body is off center then the whole body is slightly askew.

Some of the members have certain spiritual gifts to train, while all of us have a gift or more for the enrichment of the whole. Let's look at Ephesians 4:11-16 and see how this relates to the body of Christ. Vs. 11) Some gifts given for a purpose. Vs. 12) We see there is a reason in this verse: For the perfecting of the saints. (complete as a machine, ready to go.) In short, the purpose is to teach every Christian so that he is ready and able to go for God. Be it witnessing or whatever.

The pastor is to be helping complete the others in the church. At the same time there may be others in the church that can help in completing the pastor. This is not open season on telling your pastor what and how to do his work, but there may be opportunity for you to assist him in his ministry in a way that he learns.

The result of this mutual completing is a church that is growing maturity wise as well as number wise. It is a process by which a church can begin to function as a unit and not an octopus with many tentacles flailing the water.

Let's recap:

We - every one of us - is a member of a local assembly.

It does not matter if you hold membership or not. If you are attending a gathering you are in essence a part of that body. You - every one of you - have a spiritual gift. God placed you in your local church at this time because of your gift. It is needed to do what God wants done at this point in time.

These gifts are varied. You may have more than one! You may have the gift of giving, of helps, of pastor-teacher, of evangelist, of governments (oversight), of ministry (material, deacons), of exhorter (paraclete), of ruler (elder), or of mercy.

No matter what your gift you should be sharing that gift with the other believers. If you aren't sharing that gift, you are hindering and impeding the health of the body. What is worse - you are hindering and impeding the work of God.

It's easy to sit back and relax while others do all the work, but when you see it in its true light it's the fact that you are hindering and holding up God's work. Are you ready to admit to that?

There is another warning that might be drawn from this thought. The church leadership which does not allow all of the people to minister is throwing up a roadblock to God's work as well. Every gift is present for a purpose and should be used in the assembly.

God can work around you. He can do this is two ways: 1) by shifting your load to someone else, or 2) by bringing other people into the assembly to take your work.

Is someone else doing work in your assembly that you should be doing?

Not only should we be suing our gifts in the local church, but we also have other responsibilities.

Every organization has rules and regulations - no matter how loose the organization. Every organization has members. those members have set responsibilities. Even in the hippy groups of the 60's there were certain responsibilities. The hippy dress was to be different than the straights. They wore patches and rags so they could be different. My question is this - if they were so different why did they all look alike when they dressed differently? At any rate, they had certain responsibilities to the group.

This holds true concerning the members of the body of Christ. We will be looking at these responsibilities for a moment.

A. The first responsibility is to mature. Even though there are many immature Christians that have been saved for twenty-five years, our prime interest is in maturing and learning in our new life. This can be done in many ways. 1. Regular attendance at services. Not just the am, pm, & Wednesday, but all that are available. Many churches have training hours and different age group fellowships. 2. Daily prayer is needed to keep the channels of communication open. All the sermons, lessons, and devotions in the world will be useless unless you are on your knees asking God to apply them to you! 3. Regular personal Bible study. A very good place to begin here is to read through the Bible so you know what's there. Then get into detailed studies. Mix your ways of studying up so that you don't become bored.

B. You are responsible to honor other members of the body. 1. This does not allow for talking behind someone's back. This does not allow for backbiting. Our pastor years ago preached on the armor of God. He explained carefully how the front of the body was well protected, but there is no protection in the rear. He explained that the Christian soldier was always to be going forward. He also mentioned that it should have included protection from the rear. He told us that he had had more trouble from the rear, from Christians, than he had had from the front. He didn't say it, but what has happened in today's church is this -the Devil has infiltrated the Lord's ranks by getting Christians to sin. 2. This includes a mutual trust between members. All members are Christians and as such should be honest. If you have any proof of wrongdoing, go to the person in question. If you have only suspicions, be quiet. If God has placed a person in a place of leadership then it is your duty to keep his or her reputation, not tear it down.

C. You are responsible to support the body. 1. This can be in the form of help. Helping in the ministry. All are to be working. Every member. It is wrong to push all responsibilities onto one member. Remember your spiritual gift is to be used to support the body. 2. Spiritual support between members is needed. A mutual encouraging of one another. a. This can be on a one to one basis. b. This can be in informal fellowship. c. This can be during testimony times.

D. You are responsible to build up the body. 1. By personal witness. The early church was built by Christians witnessing, winning and bringing people into church. 2. As you talk to others about your church don't dwell on the dim side, like how little room there is or about how boring

the Sunday School class is, but emphasize the positive.

E. You are responsible to keep your attitudes straight. 1. Personal attitudes in a church are very important to smooth operation. 2. Don't get hurt when a vote goes against what you wanted. 3. Don't get upset if someone gets a job you wanted. Volunteer!!

F. It is your responsibility to mind your own business. Our world is changing drastically. Everyone is out to mind everyone else's business. 1. It used to be that how you raised your children was your business, but it seems everyone has to get into the show. A man shared with us once that he had taken a child out for several applications of the board of education on the seat of learning. Still the child gave trouble so he got up again and every person in the church turned and stared. To which the pastor said, "Now you people never mind - that child needs that." 2. It is proper and courteous to allow others to have a different opinion and leave it at that. Today, especially on spiritual things, if you have a difference of opinion you are treated like the scum of the earth. Many times when you take a stand on something you believe in, you are radical and stupid. This oft times is worst from Christians.

G. It is your responsibility to be content with what you have and with where you are in the body. I Tim. 6:8 "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." I Tim. 6:6 "But godliness with contentment is great gain;"

I. You are responsible to apply what you hear and learn from Scripture to yourself and no one else. When you hear something don't say, "Oh boy, does so and so need that." Say, "Does that relate to me?" Let the Holy Spirit work on everyone else. He can do it if you let Him. He is God, and conviction is one of His ministries to the believer.

J. You are responsible to keep your family in proper order so they are an honor and asset to the body. 1. The man has a set responsibility in the family (Eph. 5:22-25). We've been studying Christ's headship. The husband is the head of the family. I see no reason given in Scripture whereby this relationship can be changed. 2. Children are to obey their parents. Col. 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is wellpleasing unto the Lord." Also see Eph. 6:1-3. Note obey and honor are two things for us to do. Another good study for insight is the term "honor" and the term "obey."

As a teenager I was very cautious of honoring my father. He was the county treasurer - above reproach. Never did wrong. One night I went sliding around a corner and sped off only to be followed by a flashing red light. The first thought in my mind was not of the money or embarrassment to me, but of what my father would say and secondly what his friends and acquaintances would say. In court I was thinking about my name being in the paper and the dishonor it would mean to him. As children - not only kids and young people, but everyone that has living parents - it is your duty to honor your parents. Keep their esteem and worth in view in all that you do.

K. You are responsible to help keep unity in the assembly. A group of people bound together by a shared goal will be united behind that goal and the effort to obtain that goal. If you find you are at odds with the group, check to see if you are spiritually (sin-wise) prepared to make your decision, then make your decision on a Scriptural basis. Don't decide on what you think, but on what God says. If you are at odds you might try prayer.

If all of us keep our end of these responsibilities we can expect a smooth running church that will be quite honoring to God. If we begin to slip in these areas we can expect strife, hurt feelings, and trouble.

We've been talking about the body of Christ and the responsibilities of the members. Our study now should turn to how the members can be responsive. Really the only way! Take a moment and read through II Timothy 2:14-26

How do your religious conversations go with other people? Are they argumentative? Are they calm or heated? Are they based solely on Scripture or upon what someone thinks or feels? Are they profitable?

If they are heated or argumentative or based on thought, feeling or philosophy, then they are unprofitable and will subvert the hearers. Possibly an illustration of this concept would be good. Many years ago I was working on an F.M. radio. I was trying to align or adjust it in a certain manner. My boss said, "You can't do it that way." I said, "You're crazy - I'm doing it." A lengthy argument ensued which became heated. At last my boss, an electronic engineer conceded that I, only a technician, was right. What were the last four words about a heated argument? Will subvert the hearers. I had convinced a friend of mine, also. The problem came when I found I couldn't align the radio in that manner. Thinking back I found where I was wrong. The point? A heated argument subverted my friends and my bosse's thinking. I then had to not only tell them I had argued them into falsehood, but that I was sorry for the whole mess.

This happens many times in religious discussions. The same is true when we draw conclusions from discussions based on philosophy or someone's thoughts and beliefs.

Paul says - subverting is the result.

Vs. 15 "Study to show thyself approved...." Someone has asked the question: If you were arrested and tried for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you? Think about it. If you took your case before God right now and said, "Lord, I've studied in the Word in the following areas and I've spent this many hours a week studying your Word," would He say, "Here is your reward faithful servant." Or would He say, "You're a slothful servant. You will have no reward." Would He put His stamp of approval on you?

"...a workman...." This assumes that you are working for Him. Are you?

"...that needeth not be ashamed...." Have you ever witnessed to someone, or been in a discussion concerning religion and found you can't answer questions put to you - or you feel you were a miserable witness? If so this is your problem. You are ashamed. Why? Because you aren't an approved workman. Why? Because you haven't studied diligently.

This does not require length in study, but diligence to the study you have.

"...rightly dividing the word of truth...." Another area where embarrassment enters in when someone catches you teaching something wrong from the Word. Again this usually comes from poor study.

Vs. 16 "...stay away from babblings...." Another way to explain the discussions of v 14. If you are subverted and continue, you will be increasing your ungodliness. If you are a teacher and teach others, you are multiplying your ungodliness.

Paul goes on to give information concerning false teaching and the importance of being very careful in our acceptance of things taught. I have told classes and congregations all my life to check up on what their pastor tells them and to check up on what I tell them. Indeed, that is a good warning to the reader. There may be things in this volume that are false. Not because I am desirous of misleading you but there are ways in which falsehood can creep in.

We trust that this look into the body aspect of the church has been helpful and that the reader will continue to do further study on the subject as time permits.

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VII. SPIRITUAL GIFTS

There has been so much written about spiritual gifts that it doesn't seem logical to go into great detail in this section. I would like to just share some information that might be of use to the reader.

Miscellaneous information and thoughts concerning Spiritual gifts.

1. Gifts are not synonymous with natural talents. The gift may however be a supernatural enhancement of a natural talent. An example is a case of a man in Nebraska that was asked to paint a large Vacation Bible School banner for the church. He was somewhat of a sign painter, however made many mistakes and goofs in his work. He was very reluctant to take on this banner. The pastor encouraged him to do it. The man set out to do the banner and did not run into any difficulties and it came out quite nicely.

Many can teach as we see in the public schools however only the gifted can teach spiritual things

in a powerful life changing way.

2. Gifts are not ministries. The Lord gifts for the ministries for which he has called you. He will not give you the gift of pastor if you are never going to do any pastoring. He prepares you for whatever He desires for you to do.

3. Gifts are not offices. Those holding offices will have gifts and their gifts may well relate to their office, yet it is not an office as such. The gift of pastor teacher is not the office, though the man holding that office should have the gift of pastor and the gift of teacher. (See appendix eight for more detail on this.)

4. Gifts are not spiritual maturity or fruit of the Spirit.

5. Everyone has one. (Eph. 4:7 "unto everone of us is given grace"; Rom. 12:6-8.) The gift or gifts are given by the Holy Spirit for the building up of the church. Each believer has a gift, whether he knows what it is or not. In some cases a person will not know their gift for some time after salvation.

6. They will differ from person to person (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:11.) Everyone in a church will not have the same gift, though there may be several that have the same one. For example there will normally be several gifted teachers for the training of the saints. In a large church there may be more than one "pastor-teacher" for the ministry of the saints.

7. Gifts are for the common good of the body (I Cor. 12:7, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit." The profit will be to the person, yet to the body as well. The whole purpose of the gifts is to benefit the body of Christ. Christ set the church into motion for a purpose and these gifts are to aid and assist in the body's completion of that task.

8. The gifts are given through the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 12:7) Ephesians four declares that Christ gifted some, but He did it through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is assumed that Christ specifies the gift and the Holy Spirit empowers or gifts accordingly.

9. The purpose is the edification and growth of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12-14.) If everyone has a gift and the gifts are for building up of the body then it follows that if some of the people are not ministering in the church, that the church is not growing properly.

10. We are to know about them. (I Cor. 12:1, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." This is not to say that a believer should set aside all he is doing to seek and find his gift. The believer is to look at the Word and know of the gifts and then as they walk with the Lord their gift will be revealed to them. There was a time in the 70's in which the church in general seemed to be stuck on gifts. All the new books were on the gifts, all the sermons were on the gifts, and the concentration of believers was diverted to the gifts rather than other things of ministry. This was not all bad, for the spiritual gifts prior to that time were very

subdued in the church, however it tended to sidetrack people.

11. The gifts can be abused as is evidenced in the book of I Corinthians where Paul comments on the proper/improper use of the gift of tongues.

12. Most feel that you can have more than one gift. They quote I Pet 4:10 "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." I am not sure what they are seeing in this verse. The NASB mentions a "special" gift which might possibly indicate a special as well as a not so special gift.

There are some the teach a primary/secondary gift line of thinking. They feel there is a primary gift in which the believer actually does most of their ministering, and then one or more secondary gifts which assist them in their overall ministry. For example the pastor may have primary gifts of pastor and teacher while also the secondary gift of helps which he uses in ministering to sick and shut-ins. Though there seems little Scripture to base this on, observation over the years seems to indicate it.

13. If you know what your gift is then you should function in that area of your church. If you are not functioning with your gift then you are in sin. The gift was given for use.

14. Most believe that the gifts are given for life. If you are given the gift of pastor, then you will die a pastor gifted person. You may not be able to function as before, but your mind set will function around that gift that you have been given. If you have the gift of giving and you find yourself one day on a very limited Social Security income - you still have the gift of giving and you will probably be a real giver even though it is limited.

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR GIFT

The normal question from the person that does not know what his gift is, centers on how to find what their gift is. Let's consider that for a few moments.

1. Know what the gifts are, what they mean, and the action that each is able to perform.

2. Go to work and find out what area you seem to flourish in. The old adage "God can't steer a parked car." is very appropriate. Get busy in several different areas and see if you function well in them. This may take some time so don't be discouraged. (Stephen is seen as a deacon but is soon preaching. Phillip as well.)

3. Consider what part you would like to have in the local church. The desire will be found resident if the gift is there. If you really like to teach then teaching may be your gift.

4. Dedicate yourself to the Lord and to serving Him the best way you can (Rom. 12:1-5). Be controlled by the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead you.

5. Try to develop the gift you think that you might have and see if the gift is there or if it is just a talent.

6. Wait and see if others view you as having the gift as well.

7. Do not worry if you do not know or find your gift. You can function in the church without knowing.

8. Take a test and know what your gift is. I have passed out tests and have seen tests which are billed as "Indicators" of your gift. I have seen people take these tests and "KNOW" what their spiritual gifts are. NOT SO! These tests usually are accurate in indicating what a gift might be. In people that know their gifts and have taken the tests, the tests seem fairly accurate. Be careful however not to base your knowledge of a gift on a test. Allow the Lord to lead you to what your gift is.

I would like to give some listings of the gifts in different groupings for your personal study and reference. These are to be found in appendix seven.

THE GIFTS EXAMINED BRIEFLY

PROPHECY: This gift is quite often listed in the sign gift area due to the revelatory nature of it in the New Testament. "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." (I Cor. 14:3) Some feel that prophecy rightly belongs in the ministry gift area due to this verse. In truth it would seem that possibly the gift of prophecy had a redefinition in the New Testament times. In the Acts the gift has the idea of forthtelling with the future involved as in the Old Testament prophets. While this verse (I Cor. 14:3) sounds very much like a gift that belongs in the Ephesians four category.

Some see different aspects of the gift in the New Testament. There is the prophetic aspect of revealing God's message to man, there is the forthtelling of God's message as in what we view as preaching. I'm not sure there is enough evidence to justify either side of the case. The important item is this, if you see the gift of prophecy in place today, be sure that you explain what you mean by that gift, and not allow people to believe there is prophecy of the New Testament revelation type going on today!

FAITH: This gift seems to be the God given faith to see something that God wants done and to go forward planning and praying toward that end. This would probably be in view in the book of James. "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up;" James 5:15

This might be the little old lady that KNOWS THAT GOD IS GOING TO SEND SOMEONE INTO THE MINISTRY FROM HER CHURCH. A professor of mine at Western Bible College in Denver, CO shared that he had been a secular school teacher for some time, and the Lord began leading him into the ministry. He had a masters in education and he was planning to go on

now to seminary. His pastor asked him to share this in church, so he did. After the service a little old lady came up to him and was shaking here skinny finger in his face and she said, "I've been praying for years that God would raise up someone from our church to go into the ministry, and for the last three years, I've been praying that it would be you!" The moral of my story? Watch out for those little old ladies, or you may become a missionary or who knows what!

WORD OF WISDOM: This is usually seen as a sign gift, and rightly so, however there may be a sense in which you should watch the wisdom that comes your way as you walk through life. I personally believe that the gift of wisdom is a sign gift, yet I have seen some very wise men who God has placed in my path. Don't discount wisdom when it walks up to you and says hello. Learn from it!

It seems to be the ability to take the facts and consider all information and wisely choose the course of action to be taken. You may run into this fellow when you begin trying to figure out what the Lord wants you to do with your life. You may give him all your assets and fears, and he will work through your fears and help you to an understanding of what you can do and encourage you toward that end. Not all people are as wise as they profess, so be very careful, of those that you take advice from. If you don't have confidence in them, if you don't see evidence of wisdom in that life then don't ask them advice.

WORD OF KNOWLEDGE: The ability to search the scriptures, systematize and communicate the knowledge received. Again this is usually viewed as a sign gift and should be. There is the idea of it in our own day also however. Hopefully this is what we have in the books that we are reading. The men of God of our day and past days are looking at the word, looking at the language, and looking to other areas of research and are setting down information that we might be able to use in our own lives.

HEALING: The miraculous bringing about of cures to all manner of diseases. Another sign gift. This is seen as the complete and immediate cure of the malady. This is seen in several accounts of the healing in the Book of Acts. It is significant to note that the apostle Paul healed many in the book of Acts, yet in later life he could not heal himself or others mentioned in the epistles. This is proof that he no longer had the gift of healing.

We might make comment also that God is able to do as He pleases in response to our prayers, and based on this it should be noted that He does heal at His choice and discretion. This healing is done directly and not through a faith healer or some other third party.

MIRACLES: The supernatural intervention of someone with the laws of nature to bring about some work via a command or prayer. Again this is a sign gift that is no longer in existence. The fact that God works in miraculous ways in this day is not disputed. He, as we have said, can do as He pleases, and does intervene at times in wonderful ways.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS: The ability to discern the difference between a spirit of truth and a

spirit of error. Though I believe that the gift has passed away, I would encourage you to develop your impressions and feelings toward people and what they teach. As you go along you may feel, with no cause there is something wrong. Go carefully and see if your feelings or impulses are correct.

I have noticed many times that we will meet someone in a secular setting and I will tell my wife that I would bet the person is a charismatic. I have been quite accurate. We arrived for a deputation meeting in Oregon and about fifteen minutes into the Sunday School lesson, I leaned to my wife and said that I thought there was something very wrong in the church. She said that she felt the same thing. Within a couple of weeks someone told us that the church had gone charismatic.

TONGUES: The supernatural ability to speak in a previously not known tongue or language. This is definitely one of the sign gifts and is not for the use of the believer today. The so called heavenly tongue that many claim to use is easily proven to be of something other than the Lord and His plan.

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES: The supernatural ability to interpret what is spoken by the person speaking in tongues.

APOSTLES: This would seem to be the office that the disciples and Paul held. There is no equivalent to this office or gift today.

MINISTRY GIFTS

MINISTRY: This would seem to relate to the work of the Deacon. This is the ministering to the physical needs of the saints. I rather suspect that many people have this gift in there is so much to be done in this area of the church. Indeed, I have to think that many of the bench warmers that we have in our churches may well have this gift, for there is quite often to much ministering to be done for those that minister.

TEACHING: The God given ability to search the scriptures and declare that truth which has been learned. This seems to carry with it the ability to create interest in spiritual things and have insight into the needs of the students. We have many teachers in our churches, but I'm not sure how many gifted teachers we have in our churches. (That are busy Ministering at any rate.)

EXHORTATION: The Spirit given ability to comfort and help those that call you along side for help or assistance. The term is also used of the Holy Spirit in relation to his ministry as the comforter. The person who has this gift quite often finds that people with problems seek them out for help, advice or just a listening ear. If you have this gift PLEASE use it at every opportunity. Many in our churches are hurting and have no one to talk to.

GIVING: The ability to give money for the ongoing work of the Lord with a single minded

commitment to continue to do so as long as the Lord allows. This does not mean that you are or will be rich. We had a supporter that felt that giving was his gift. He was on a disability income from social security and is unable to work. He and his wife give as much as they can and are determined to do so as long as the Lord gives them income and life. Even though they are low income, they seem to have the gift of giving.

RULING: Some would lump this into the gift of governments however there is a possibility that the two are different. Ruling may have the idea of ruling over the church as in oversight. The idea of the one that guides the church along.

MERCY: The ability to show mercy or kindness to those in the body of Christ that are hurting and/or are in need of encouragement. This will normally be a part of a pastors ministry, however there may be some in the body that could do a much better job of mercy. We should teach people this so that the pastor is not burdened with a ministry that he is not gifted to do. The pastor can do his part and allow others to come in and hurt with the people. I've noticed in the past, however that normally the pastor does do well in this area and is probably gifted for the ministry.

HELPS: The ability to step into any situation and assist in accomplishing the task at hand. This gift may well involve the ability to organize and carry through on a task until done. In a church in Nebraska there was a man that always headed up everything. At potlucks if something needed done he was in the middle of rounding up workers to get it done. His motto was, "Everybody works!" Many joked of the man's work, but he was a man that got the work completed in quick and good order.

GOVERNMENTS: As opposed to Ruling this gift would be in the area of administration. The smooth running of the church affairs. Possibly an assisting of the different church leaders. We have churches and organizations with gifted people in this area, but the heads of the groups are to insecure to allow them to minister and have a great effect upon the body.

EVANGELISTS: The gift that enables it's bearer to share forth the Gospel to the unsaved in a way that is both powerful and effective unto the leading of souls to the Lord. Some churches are seeing an advantage in having an evangelist on staff. This is a man that is equipped, not only to evangelize, but to train others to do the same. He is usually head of outreach for the church and is given a certain amount of time in the pulpit to exercise his gift among the assembly.

It is not necessarily the man that is called in for evangelistic services. The order of evangelism in the New Testament is for the church to train workers that go out evangelizing and then bringing the new converts into the church for training. (I think that you have read that before!) If the church was functioning properly, there would be no need for an outside evangelist to come in for meetings.

PASTOR-TEACHER: (Again, I would suggest you read appendix eight for more on this topic.) The shepherd of the flock that can both shepherd and feed the flock with the food from the Word

of God. This man may well have the gift of administration in a small church, yet not in the large church where they have a very good business manager. When you are organizing the church as it develops, be sure to see what qualified and gifted people you have. This may well help you know what ministries the Lord has in mind for your people. If you are in a city and find that you have three evangelists and four or five pastor-teachers, you might conclude that a few satellite churches would be in order.

Let's look at a few views of the gifts by other groups.

OLD TIME PENTECOSTAL VIEW: 1. They believe in the New Birth. 2. They view Spirit Baptism as Post Salvation. 3. They lay emphasis on all the miraculous gifts especially tongues and healing. 4. Tongues are the evidence of the Spirit Baptism.

CURRENT PENTECOSTAL VIEW: 1. Hold to Spirit Baptism. (May be pre or post salvation.) 2. The book of Acts is a pattern for today. 3. You are spiritually lacking without tongues. 4. Healing is also seen as very "today."

PROTESTANT - Non Pentecostal view: 1. Miraculous gifts. 2. Spirit Baptism is at salvation. 3. All gifts are active today. 4. Each believer has one or more. 5. They rely on experience. One of the leading seminaries fired three men for holding to this position. At the time of hiring they knew the men leaned this way, but when they shifted and started propagating their beliefs the seminary let them go.

PROTESTANT - Non Pentecostal - Non Sign gift view: (Body life movement people.) 1. The lack of gifts has hindered the church. 2. They emphasize interpersonal relations and normally are light on the theology. 3. Many differences on the types of gifts. 4. Many differences on definitions of gifts. 5. Many differences as to which gifts are for today.

PROTESTANT - average fundamental view: 1. The sign gifts were for the establishment of the Gospel message in the time of the apostles. 2. The ministry gifts are for today for the edification of the local church. 3. There are differences as to which are active today but usually this difference is prophecy. 4. The gifts are for the believers use within the church, but it is not a "hurry up and find it" attitude. The gifts will surface as a person is active within the church. 5. Misuse or none use of a gift would be considered sin. (That is assuming that you know what your gift is.)

For a number of years the emphasis was upon the gifts. You must find yours! What is yours? etc. It was not unlike the worlds quest for knowing their astrological signs. Many would ask what your gift was before getting to know you.

The better emphasis is very definitely upon the giver of the Gifts, Jesus Christ. Christ's provision of the gifts through the Holy Spirit was for the building up of the church.

To dwell on gifts is to be a poor steward of your time. To uplift your gifts is to be a poor steward of your humility. May we all seek to minister in the church to the best of our ability? Indeed, that is what the Lord would have us do. We should function as we are gifted to the best of our ability.

A WORD OF WARNING CONCERNING GIFTS

There are some in the church that will not allow others to minister in the area of their gifting. I really have to wonder if those people won't be held accountable for limiting the gifted peoples function in a particular instance.

As you go out into the ministry, seek to help people find their gifts and then use them in the assembly.

Realize that unless all are functioning properly, then the church is not functioning properly. If you have bench warmers, then the church is not functioning properly. If you have absentees, then the church is not functioning properly. Apply that one when you want to go to the mountains. If you are not involved in a local church then some local church is not functioning properly, unless you are in an itinerant type ministry.

A pet view of mine follows and I am not sure that I could prove it from scripture, but I believe that the indications of scripture run along this line.

Every church or organization has just as many gifted people as they need to do the work that God intends to have done. This may mean that if something is not being done, then someone is not functioning. Either from inability to or lack of desire to. This means that if a new aspect of ministry comes along and there is no one present that can do it, then you should begin praying for the person needed and look to the Lord for His provision. This means wait till the provision is made before launching out into that ministry. It means that if your only gifted teacher is transferred to South Africa there may be one present and just not knowledgeable of his gift. You should check around and train him when you find him.

SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS:

I trust that you will pay attention to the next section of information. I believe that if it isn't helpful now, that it may well be useful to you at some time in the future.

We have been talking about spiritual gifts and the fact that you have one or more. God has called many people into ministries of many different character.

Some in the ministry begin to question whether they should really be there or not. Usually this question is raised because they are in ministries that are not going well or not going at all.

The following thoughts are based on observation, plus a bit of scriptural indication.

Some Biblical indicators:

Paul always went to the Jews each time he entered a new area. They rejected his message. TAKE NOTE OF SOME THINGS: The rejection was of Christ and not of Paul. The rejection did not mean that Paul was a failure. The rejection did not indicate that the Lord did not lead Paul to that place to minister to the Jews.

Some of the Prophets of the Old Testament were sent to a non-listening people. God told the prophet up front that the people would not hear. TAKE NOTE OF SOME THINGS: The not listening was not because the prophet did not communicate well. (It was because their ears were plugged with sin.) The judgment that followed was not the prophets fault. The judgment was due to the sin and the not turning back to God, not any lack on the part of the prophet.

Now some application and some observation:

1. God may lead you to minister in an area where there will be no visible lasting result. This is not your affair to worry about. It is God's desired result for His desired ministry for you.

2. God at times gives a people or an area every conceivable opportunity to come to Him, and then when they have turned their backs, He will give them another opportunity.

I have seen men go into an area that has had abundant opportunity for a church and the men will work their hearts out and not see any real results. THAT IS GOD'S BUSINESS AND HIS DESIRE, OR THEY WOULD NOT BE THERE! The key to this type of situation is to be open to the Lord's leading as to when to leave. Be open to the Lord to be sure that your life is straight before Him. Be open to the Lord to be sure that you are doing all that you can. THEN, if there is no result it is due to God's plan! He will care for it.

I really believe that He gives every opportunity to some, just so they will have no valid comment at the judgment seat, be it the bema or the Great White Throne, they did not know what to do.

3. Your only responsibility is to be right before God and do the work that He leads you to do.

4. There may be times when you will minister in an area for years with no real success. It is God's success that we should be interested in!

There are many accounts of missionaries that have labored a life time to see very little results. The next generation of missionaries, however usually reap the benefit of those works and see great things done for God.

God will give the increase in His day and His time! Just because you do not become a rousing

success in one place of ministry, do not assume that you have no gift and that you are a failure. You may indeed have the specific gift needed in that case and be a rousing success in God's mind and plan.

If I were to measure my success in light of man's standards I would become very discouraged! I try to keep my eyes on the Lord and His leading and trust that He is seeing all that I do as a success.

Be realistic, and understand that this is not an easy thing to do. There will be times when you have doubts concerning your abilities. There will be times when you become disgusted because you can't do something that you feel is needed, because the Christians are to dead to get involved. There will be Monday mornings! There will be times when you become discouraged. There will be times when you type up your resignation.

THE POINT OF ALL I'VE SAID IS THAT YOU NEED TO, AT THOSE TIMES, GO BEFORE THE LORD AND ASK FOR MORE OF HIS STRENGTH!

1. Be thankful. 2. Don't be prideful. 3. Don't look down your nose at those that we have spoken of in the preceding section. 4. Be an encouragement to your brothers and sisters in ministry that are having ruff times.

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VIII. THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

I personally have only been in a church involved in church discipline one time and that fairly recently. Church discipline is a topic that many let slip for many years. It is coming back into the foreground again for which we should be very thankful.

It is the means of keeping the local assembly pure, and it is a needed tool at times.

It is not hard to recall a minister that has fallen from his position due to immorality or theft. It is not hard to remember several members of local congregations that have gone off into open sin. The hard thing to recall or remember may be that any of these people were ever disciplined for their activity.

In the past there have been many that have taken church discipline very seriously. We have a series of Questions and Answers from history that were set forth by Menno Simons in 1550 concerning how the disciplined person should be treated. The "ban" in these questions refers to the fact that the sinner is banned from the local congregation.

I would like to share some of these questions for you. So you can see how seriously some believers in the past were about discipline.

"Should husband and wife shun each other on account of the ban?"

"Should we greet one that is banned, with the common, everyday greeting, or return our respects as his greeting?"

"Are we allowed to show the banned any charity, love, and mercy?"

"Are we allowed to sell to, and buy of, the apostates....?"

"Are we allowed to be seated with an apostate in a ship or wagon, or to eat with him at the table of a tavern?"

We might assume from the questions on the ban, that these people were serious about what the word says about church discipline.

I read an article some time ago that mentions a study in the south. The author had done some research on church discipline in a specific area (Mississippi). The church members did not know of any serious church discipline, except for one person that remembered a discipline of a singing star in Hollywood. The point? Church discipline is not a common thing.

Someone has, tongue in cheek suggested, that church discipline today is the pastor and elders keeping quiet about the sin in deacon Jones life so that he won't rock the financial boat.

To say the least, discipline is not a prime topic of activity or discussion these days in the local church, yet the Bible very clearly teaches that open sin should be dealt with by the church body.

DEFINITION

Let us define church discipline as the correction of action, or the removal of the erring believer from the local church body, for the purpose of correction and/or restoration. This is normally undertaken for immorality or deviation from approved doctrine.

At the outset we must realize that discipline is NOT to make the church sinless. It is to maintain a proper testimony before the world. Anyone thinking that discipline can make the church sinless does not understand the teaching of man and his relationship to sin.

Matt 5:23-24 is a text that would indicate we should be right with any brother that has anything against us before we offer to God. This is under the law but in the New Testament context I would assume we could apply this to coming before God with our gifts or offerings. In short if we have anything against a brother, we should settle it before we move into a place where we are

approaching the Lord.

This alone would eliminate many of the problems of the church. We need to work on these items as we attempt to build a body for the Lord.

Matt. 18:15-17 is the text which gives us the guidelines for correcting a brother. If you have a problem go to the brother alone and confront him. If this does not work take one or two with you so all can be established in front of witnesses. If this fails then tell it before the church. If this also fails then "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a tax collector".

Some might wonder if this text is appropriate for the church age. The fact that it appears after Matthew 13 where the Jews seem to reject the Messiah, and He begins to teach of things other than the millennial kingdom indicates that it is for this age. Even if you saw it for the kingdom age the principles seem to be good, and I think some of these ideas are born out in the epistles.

Most definitely the most drastic account of church discipline is found in Acts 5. Ananias and Saphira have lied to the church and more specifically to God, and their discipline is very quick and strong. Their lives are taken upon confrontation with their sin. This is a text which relates to the apostolic leadership however the idea that the sin was confronted and cared for immediately should be usable to us today. Note should be made that it was God that took their lives and not the church. The church confronts and in our age takes action of reprimand and/or removal. This is the extent of the churches authority. God may and I personally believe in some cases does, take further action in the lives of unrepentant believers. I believe that John 15:1-14 and I Corinthians 11:30 show that God may remove a sinning believer that is unwilling to turn from their sin from this life.

In Rom. 14:1-15:1 Paul sets down some principles for handling differences of opinion. This chapter shows clearly that differences of opinion are not in view for church discipline. These items are of personal decision and Paul lays down principles to deal with these situations.

The basis for removal of an erring believer from the assembly is based on I Cor. 5:4-11. I would like to consider this for a moment. First of all is this a believer or nonbeliever? It seems to most that this is a believer for we see in verse 5 that Paul is concerned for his soul. If this was a nonbeliever their soul would be on the way to destruction and there would be no need to turn it over to Satan.

Some suggest that verse 11 mentions him as being a so called brother or lost ("...any man that is called a brother...."). However, the context seems to shift in verse 9 from the man in sin to another topic.

This man was involved with his fathers wife. Paul is quite plain there is a problem and that it should be dealt with. Verse 7 uses the terminology that indicates the removal of the person from the church assembly. "Purge out." The term purge would indicate there is to be a cleansing

action in the whole process. If you have removed a man that is in open sin, you certainly are cleaning up the church.

In verse 5 they are to deliver him to the Devil for the destruction of his flesh. The purpose of discipline is seen in 7 and 8. Sin is like leaven and you must get it out of the lump before it leavens the whole lump. (Leaven is the same as yeast.) Leaven is usually seen as a type of sin in the Bible.

I have wondered if Paul's choice of words wasn't deliberate. "Puffed up," would picture a lump with leaven throughout - fully raised. His comments then in 7 & 8 would call on them to clean out that pride - which is sin - they can be a new lump. Indeed Vs 6 indicates this.

It seems somewhat hard to envision a church that is proud of the sin that is within. The idea may be they were proud of how tolerant they were of the sinners. Tolerance is not something that is to be desired in the church, be it tolerance of sin, tolerance of false doctrine, or tolerance of improper activities.

We attended a Sunday School class in the South while on vacation and the teacher was involved in this idea of being pleased about how tolerant the people in her church were of one another. She mentioned they even had fundamentalists and liberals in the church and they all got along fine. That is not getting along, that is being tolerant of false doctrine in your church assembly!

We need to look briefly at II Cor. 2:6-11 before we move on. Most agree that this is speaking of the man in I Cor. 5 that was to be put out of the church. Paul tells them to commend their love to him and to forgive him and comfort him. Restore your fellowship with him would be the idea of the text.

Another text which relates to the topic is Gal. 6:1,2. If anyone be taken in a fault restore him in meekness. The warning also is given to consider yourself so that you aren't tempted in the same manner.

The question is, "Does this relate to church discipline?" Specifically I would doubt it. It seems more of a generic type sin rather than immorality etc. The principles set forth may well apply however. Restore in meekness - and seeing to it that you don't become tempted. Along with this we must not forget that Christ was very forceful when he ran the money changers out of the temple (John 2:12-17), and most consider him meek.

There seems to be evidence that unruliness or disobedience is also a basis for taking steps of discipline. I Thes 5:14 "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, encourage the faintheartedly, support the weak, be patient toward all men." II Thes. 3:6,14,15, mentions that we should withdraw from those that are disorderly and those that walk not after "the tradition which he received of us." Verse 14 tells us to "have no company" with anyone that disobeys the words of the epistle.

The elders or church leaders are not exempt from the possibility of discipline. I Tim. 5:19,20, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Trouble with elders should be heard only if two or three witnesses are available. Then confront him before the assembly.

In our "don't scare people" atmosphere today we don't dwell on the aspect of hell because we don't want to scare anyone into heaven. This text tells us that disciplined people will cause fear in the assembly. Fear is not the best motivation to obedience however, the Word states that it is a possible motivation.

Titus 3:10-11 sets a basis for discipline for divisiveness. "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject, Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." This verse tells us to reject after the second admonition the heretic. The term heretic seems to have the idea of one that is divisive.

Another text which we need to look at is II Jo 7-11. First of all we need to see that verse 7 shows these to be lost people! This seems quite clear that we are to have no part with "RELIGIOUS" people that have a wrong view of Christ. This would be in the realm of having them in our homes for hospitality and encouragement. I'm not sure it prohibits having them in to witness to them yet I'm not sure that is a good idea either. You might run into difficulties. We can certainly witness to them - that is not a thought in the text!

From what we have seen there is plenty of evidence to show that we should and must discipline believers that are in sin. If we do not then we are allowing the leaven that Christ spoke of to contaminate the entire assembly. If we do not discipline, then we invite trouble and strife into our churches.

Discipline is not popular in our churches today. I have talked with pastors that have taken a needed stand and found themselves questioned for their activities.

The next question. What offences do we discipline for? I would submit a list of topics and references for your consideration.

a. Immorality. I Cor. 5
b. Unresolved disputes between brethren. Matt. 18:15-17
c. Elders that sin. I Tim 5:19,20
d. Repeated troublemaking. Titus 3:10
e. Outward sin, such as divorce or immorality.

A related question. Are there others that we should separate from?

a. Those teaching false doctrine. II John 7-11.
b. Professing people involved in fornication, covetousness, idolatry, railing, drinking or cheating.

I Cor. 6:11

We have shown that discipline is Biblical and that it is being ignored in our day. So, why do churches today fail to discipline? May some possibilities be set forth for your consideration and future avoidance.

a. Afraid to rock the boat. Financial problems will come if we make trouble. We might hurt someone's feelings. How would it look to the community?

b. Indifference. We don't care.

c. There is always the usual outcry that "We can't judge." This argument is illogical. God states that we are to discipline. Thus we must assume that discipline is not "judging," or else God is telling us to do something that He has told us not to do. Now, just how logical is that?

All of these allow the leaven to leaven the whole lump.

Now that we see discipline to be correct we need to consider who it is that should do the disciplining? Yes, the individual should confront, yes there should be witnesses on the second trip. These witnesses should be the elders so they are involved from the beginning. Several references indicate that the elders are the ones to become involved. Acts 20:28 show the elders over the church. I Thess. 5:12 mentions some are over the church for the purpose of admonishment. Heb. 13:7,17 mentions those that rule over the church and that the church is to submit them.

If you have been reading newspapers or listening to the network news over recent years you know that churches have been sued for disciplining a member. There is a lot of worry about lawsuits.

First of all we need to remember that the law of man is not the law of God. God tells us to discipline. If the law of the land punishes us for doing so, then so be it. We must do that which God has said.

The lawsuits that I have heard about seem to have been caused by improper application of the discipline. One lawsuit in particular was brought because the church broadcast the sin of the person far and wide. There is nothing in the Bible to suggest that we should take out a personal want ad to advertise a persons sin. We should be as discrete about discipline as possible without causing hurt.

We need to consider a few easy steps of prevention that might save your church from a lawsuit.

I might suggest an article from Christianity Today, "Church Discipline Without a Lawsuit" by Carl Laney, Nov. 9, 1984 which deals with this problem. I have adapted some of Mr. Laney's

points into the following list for you in case the magazine is not available to you.

1. Get insurance for the problem. Some church insurance companies have it available. We have insurance to avoid lawsuits for accidents etc. so there should be no real moral question in taking this step. Yes, it is sad that our Christian society has degenerated to the place where we have to insure ourselves against such activities, but this is the society that God has asked us to operate in.

2. Don't slander while the discipline is going on nor after. There is no need to cause pain and suffering. Present the facts to the church family, act and keep your mouth shut.

3. Don't spread the information outside the church family. This is a family problem and there is no need to take it outside the family, no matter how badly you want to talk about it.

4. Include in your constitution a clause that allows for church discipline. Have each member sign the constitution as they join the church. This may or may not take care of the possible situations.

5. Possibly a visit to your lawyer in your state would be of good advantage.

Include just what you believe church discipline is, why it is to be used, and the procedure which is to be followed. Indeed if there is no clause in your constitution, put one in and ask all to sign it, be they new members or old.

Dr. Laney suggests the inclusion of a paragraph which forbids the member to sue the church leadership or the church if they bring church discipline action against the member.

I would work into this statement, something that covers you and the church in case they withdraw membership during the procedure. This would give them a moral obligation not to sue. You could also include information on the fact that Scripturally the believer is not to go to law with a brother etc.

5. If someone tells you something in confidence then you are bound to keep that confidence. If there is a real problem it will probably come to the surface in time.

I might take a side track for a moment and state there is a real lack of keeping confidences in the church today. Many of the illustrations I hear come right out of counseling sessions. That is not confidence!

6. In all of the activities attempt not to embarrass those that are involved. This can only hurt and bring about hard feelings. The desired result of discipline is restoration and hard feelings will not aid in this process.

7. During the process be sure to reveal only the information that is necessary for a proper

procedure. Disclosing all of the little details is not necessary.

If at all possible, keep all discipline activities within the local assembly. If the person tries to transfer membership to another church, you should be bound to let the new church know they are under discipline. The details may not need to be given unless it affects the new church's decision.

If it is a pastor that is disciplined then there should be contact with the men of his ordination council, so that proper steps can be taken if any are needed.

Now, the following is my OPINION! DOCTRINE OF DERICKSON.

If you have someone come to your church for membership from a church close by, take time to find out why they left the other church. It may save you a multitude of trouble. Usually when people leave it is because of problems. You don't need those problems. If this is the case it would be good to talk to them and ask them to return to their previous church to solve their problem, and then they can be considered for membership.

8. If a lawsuit comes into your future, find a good lawyer so that you know you are doing things correctly and seek an out of court settlement. This will allow you to not go to court with your brother. If this is not possible, then you are bound by the law of the land to answer the charges and you must do the best you can to bring about a peaceful end to the matter.

9. Be very careful to inform the congregation. A church in Oregon discovered a teacher and woman were involved. They were guilty and would not cease their activity. The elders wanted to keep it quiet because both parties were very prominent members. The couple left the church voluntarily, but the elders did not inform the congregation. Rumors began flying and the elders still kept quiet. Before the situation was over others left because they mistakenly thought that the elders had kicked the erring couple out of the church with no reason.

Let's draw some conclusions to our study.

1. Church discipline is not a four letter word. It is taught in Scripture and we should be practicing it!

2. We need to know our own attitudes. Discipline is to be done in love and concern for the other person. Forgiveness is the required when confession and repentance are forthcoming. (I Cor. 5:2; Gal. 6:1; II Cor. 2:7)

3. There should be a restraining influence from discipline upon the rest of the membership. I Tim. 5:20

4. For the church that is contemplating not bringing discipline I would recommend they read

Rev. 2:12-17

5. I Pet. 1:15 calls us to holiness. II Tim. 3:2 mentions that the elder is to be "above reproach". I Thess. 5:22 calls us to avoid any appearance of evil. Let these be your guide.

In light of such verses, we as local churches must maintain the purist assembly that we can. This comes from personal purity. This comes from prodding our friends to purity. This comes from purging impurity, if need be.

Years ago we attended a church in Denver, CO that had a missions conference. Two missionaries from Africa came to the conference and were talking about how great the church was doing in Africa. It was growing, it was evangelizing, it was an alive church.

I asked the two missionaries why the church in Africa was such an alive, growing church. The younger missionary quipped out some quick answers that I accepted. (I wasn't convinced that he had answered my question.) The next day the older missionary came to me and said, "Stan, I think I can answer your question from last night with one word. "Purity." He went on to explain that the church was pure on a personal basis and they were pure on an ecclesiastical basis as well. That was an answer that made much sense.

6. In the end result, I believe our emphasis should be squarely upon the Word of God. If lawsuits come they come. If bankruptcy comes it comes. God's Word must stand and we for it!

Mr. Laney ended his article with I Tim. 3 12, "Indeed, all who desire to live Godly in christ Jesus will be persecuted.."

I suspect that the following is the best policy. PROBABLY THE BEST CURE FOR CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS CHURCH DISCIPLIN'. If we teach them right there will be less chance for error.

Some other references which might add to your personal study: Ex. 12:15-19; Ex. 13:7; Lev. 2:11; Deut. 16:4; Matt. 16:6,12; Mk. 8:15; Lu. 12:1; Gal. 5:9; I Cor. 6:11.

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CONCLUSION

This is the second of the sections of my theology that I have gone through, to convert my class notes into book form. It has been a very joyful experience to review the greatness of the church, the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, yet I am discouraged to a point in what I see in so many local assemblies.

There is so little genuine caring for the lost, for the newcomers, or for the membership at times. There is so little genuine teaching being done. The preaching is not all that great at times either. I have discussed this with many church people and pastors and they feel that my observations are valid.

So, why is this the case when we have the Holy Spirit empowering us, teaching us, leading us and comforting us? So, why is this the case when we have Christ Himself in charge of the work?

I am confident there is no problem with the Lord Jesus, and I am just as confident that the Holy Spirit is doing His work properly and adequately. We must assume from logic then that it is not the Head nor the plan, nor the power source. That leaves only one answer.

US!

We the people are the problem and there is nothing that can be done until we do it. Don't worry about your neighbor and how sinful he is, don't worry about your pastor and how uninteresting he is, and don't worry about the church membership and how worldly they are. You worry about you and your relationship to the Head of the church. You should be sure you are in a proper mode, and then pray that the Lord would bring about needed changes in the assembly.

There is one subject which is somewhat related to this thought of the church. I have not made comment on it as such but feel that it is important to do so.

If the church is Christ's body and if it is His desired vehicle for reaching the world, and I believe it to be, then why do we have para church organizations all over the world?

I am not condemning the para church groups for they are doing a job that the church is not doing, however that is not the point. They are not the church.

The church in our generation should begin to correct the problem that has developed over the years. Most of the groups give lip service to the thought of allowing the local churches to have a say in things. Most will say they are an extension of the local church however, the control that the church has seems to end at the purse strings.

There is no reason why the church shouldn't, indeed must, take steps to do the ministries of these groups. The groups ought also to take steps toward allowing church control. There are some that are already working on this by adding pastors and laymen to boards, by having yearly get togethers of supporting churches and mission leaders. These are good steps and should be continued, but more must be done.

Possibly one of the easiest ways for the corrections to begin is to see to it that new ministries become the extension of a local church or two, and see to it that the ministry remains under that control. This would place ministries under the control of spiritual men within the church that can

lead and guide the ministry.

Moving on I would like to mention that the section concerning other types of church government was brief and intentionally so. There are other works that elaborate in detail these systems.

As I have moved in and out of churches over the years I have observed many problems. I have also discussed problems with pastors and laymen. The result is that I realize that the elder form of government can, if run properly, create a church environment which would eliminate many of these problems. There are many difficulties when we work with people however, the creator of these people has set forth a system for governing those people in the Word. If He has given these guidelines then it is logical they will be the best possible method of operation.

Even if a died in the wool congregationalist must reject the thought of accepting this form of government, at least give credence to the process of qualification. There must be a qualified leadership or the job is doomed to failure.

The principles set forth in this section can and do work. I have knowledge of a few churches that are operating with this form of government. As we see more and more churches becoming involved, I am personally confident that we will see some great results in the area of church relationships, as well as church growth. As we believers function Biblically, church growth will be automatic.

One final topic. The thought of a "paid" pastor is one that is currently accepted, yet it is not historically nor Biblically. The Bible allows for it and I am not saying get rid of paid pastors, however we need to consider the possibility of non-paid people running a church. Many of our small churches today are pastored by non-paid or poorly paid pastors. As observations go, I feel that often these men are considered less than normal. They, after all are not "full time" in their ministry.

There seems to be a real hierarchy developing in our church thinking. There are full time, there are part time, there are the laymen, there are janitors and then there are missionaries. My teaching has always included the thought that we are co-workers with Christ. If we are co-workers then there is no level of importance.

May we consider our developing problems in the church, get in touch with the Head and move on to solve the problems.

I did not go into the idea of fellowship, of what the church should be in the social realm, nor many of the other thoughts that relate to the church. I did include a section in appendix nine relating to how we view ourselves. Are we a society as believers, or are we really the "body" that the Lord wants us to be. Be sure to read this appendix.

06450

APPENDIX NUMBER ONE

A CONSTITUTION FOR A MULTIPLE ELDER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

This document comes from a compilation of many hours of study and reading on the subject. There was input from many sources including two college level theology classes which went through this study of the church with me. One of the projects in those classes was to create a church constitution based on the Biblical principles which we had studied. (This document is a rework of one of those constitutions.)

I thank all those that gave information and thought to this document, which by the way is not inspired! It could serve as a bare bones start for a constitution for a church that desires to have this form of government. There might be things that a particular congregation would like to add. The basics are based on the Word of God and we trust that the suggestions will be of assistance to churches in the future.

CONSTITUTION
OF
FIRST
CHURCH
OF
ANYTOWN

I. PREAMBLE

We the people of _____ church believe that the Scriptures show both a universal and a local church. The Universal church is that body made up of all believers that are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. The local church is an assembly that is gathered and organized for the purpose of edification and evangelism.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this local church is to edify the believers who in turn will go out evangelizing. (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11-16)

Jesus Christ is the head of both the universal and the local church. The individual believer will

seek to know Christ's will for himself as well as for this local gathering of saints.

III. MEMBERSHIP

Anyone desiring to enter into fellowship with this church must:

1. Have accepted Christ as his/her personal savior and have a desire to achieve the purposes set forth in the preamble.

2. Have prayerfully read and considered the church constitution and believe it to be based on God's Word. The person should desire to commit themselves to abide by that which is set forth in the church constitution.

3. Have agreed that if at any time he/she should determine to disagree with the constitution, he/she will without trouble withdraw from the fellowship, giving the pastor and board permission to erase his/her name from the membership.

4. Agree to accept the discipline of the church in accordance with this constitution or separate themselves from the membership according to number three above.

Process of becoming a member:

The person desiring to unite with this church will request to be considered by the elder board. The elder board will hear their testimony of salvation and recommend the candidate to the general assembly for vote. The person will give their testimony publicly before the church votes.

IIII. COVENANT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

We as a local body, having been redeemed by God (Rev 5:9), being the body, of which Christ is the head (Col 1:18), and being indwelt by the Spirit (Rom. 8:9), believe God has saved us by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8), do hereby establish this covenant.

Those that join this fellowship know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and they shall share in its privileges and also the duties required (John 1:12,13; 8:12; 10:27).

As a fellowship we pledge ourselves to walk in Christian love, remember each other in prayer, aid each other in Christian living (I John 4:7,8), and to help those who are sick and in need (James 5:14). There should be no gossip, backbiting, and anger, being slow to take offence and quick to reconcile, keeping unity and peace (Eph. 4:31,32).

We covenant together with the desire to promote the true church's spiritual and physical well being: by regular attendance, supporting its worship, services, ordinances, discipline and doctrines (I Cor. 15:58), and assisting in whatever way possible in supporting the operation of the

church (I Cor. 16:1,2). Finally our desire is to spread the gospel here at home and abroad (Acts 1:8).

We as members of this body should educate our children in the Christian faith (Deut. 6:5,7; Titus 1:6). We also should refrain from fleshly lusts, and practices and associations, that would dishonor Christ and/or the church (I John 2:15-17).

We also agree to cooperate with those in leadership, to submit to and oversee discipline in a loving way, (as officers and members of this church Heb. 13:17), and accept responsibility and positions such as God has qualified and called each to do through the Holy spirit (Rom. 12:1-8).

By the guidance of the Holy Spirit I accept this covenant. I also promise if I find myself at anytime in the future in disagreement with doctrines and standards of the church I will withdraw my name from the membership and not cause any friction among the members (Rom. 12:18).

I further submit myself to the Scriptural authority of the church leadership and will abide by the churches disciplinary policies if there be cause for discipline due to sin in my life.

V. MISSIONS

In keeping with the purpose of evangelization, there will be a missions committee maintained at all times for the purpose of stimulating the membership to give, pray and go in relation to Christ's commission to evangelize and disciple all nations. (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)

This committee will be responsible to schedule missionaries to share their burden and call of God with the membership of the church.

This committee will oversee the missions giving of the church body through the church treasurer. Funds designated by the church for missions will be distributed in accordance with the policies set forth by the church leadership.

VI. GOVERNMENT

POLICY

1. The church will not be ritualistic in practice.

2. It will not be subject to any authority or power save it's Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and it's own leadership.

SUPPORT

All church expenses including pastor's salary, Sunday School expenses, various organized

bodies, are to be raised by voluntary, free will offerings. (The pastor's salary will be set according to the needs and funds available.)

BUSINESS AFFAIRS

1. The annual business meeting of the church shall be held _____ , and the new church year shall begin _____ .

All officers of the church and heads of departments shall give reports of their transactions at this annual business meeting.

2. Special business meetings may be called at any time with a two week notice given publicly at each normal service of the church.

3. Beyond the routine weekly affairs, no meeting shall be carried on without the pastor, except to determine his continuance as pastor.

4. A quarum of more than two thirds of the members of adult age (21 and older) is required to hold a business meeting of this congregation.

VII. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

PASTOR

CALLING A TEACHING ELDER (OR PASTOR)

This is not to assume that a paid teaching elder is required by this constitution. If there is a qualified elder present in the congregation that desires to fulfill this function and it is agreeable by a 3/4 vote of the elder board, then this should be accepted. He may be paid if the congregation so desires.

1. A pulpit committee shall be formed of two elders and two deacons. (If no elders are available then deacons shall fill these spots. If there aren't enough deacons, members will be elected from the congregation) and two members from the congregation.

2. The pulpit committee shall secure names of prospects. Prospects shall be supplied with a copy of the church constitution and any other information the committee deems appropriate.

3. An application form shall be sent to all interested prospects. The application shall include questions concerning the applicants qualifications and a request for references.

4. The qualifications for the pastor shall be those listed in I Timothy three and Titus one that pertain to elders.

5. Qualified prospects shall visit the church at least one Sunday and one Wednesday in a row during which he will fill the pulpit. Time shall also be scheduled for the combined boards to interview the prospective candidate. There will be a concerted effort to encourage the church membership to have the candidate and his family into their homes for meals and/or fellowship so they can get to know the family on a first hand basis.

6. The candidate will then in two weeks be presented to the congregation for a vote. The elder and deacon board chairpersons will give a report on their boards feelings concerning the candidate.

The candidate shall be called if there is a 3/4 majority of those voting members present.

It is recommended that the candidate be informed of the numerical outcome of the vote of the congregation.

7. The candidate will be informed from the beginning that he will be expected to go through and complete the qualification process as set forth in this constitution.

TERM OF THE TEACHING ELDER

1. The pastor shall serve as long as mutually agreeable to him and the church.

2. The pastor may be removed from office by unanimous vote of the other elders and by a 2/3 vote of the congregation. (Good reason for removal should be the basis of the elder board moving to dismiss. Good reason would include personal ongoing sin, and immorality as well as other problems deemed proper.)

DUTIES

1. The pastor shall serve as a voting member of the elder board, supply spiritual leadership to the board and the congregation as a whole.

2. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations and committees.

3. The pastor shall fill the pulpit of the church at regular meetings, or supply such from time to time as needed or appropriate.

ADDITIONAL STAFF

1. Assistant pastor(s), Youth pastor(s), Associate pastor(s), etc. may be added according to the

need of the church.

2. These would be called in the same way as the teaching elder and have the same office term as the pastor, unless otherwise specified by the elder board and congregation. They will be ex-officio members (without voting privileges) of the elder board and their duties would be specified by that same board.

3. The pastor should be very much involved in this choosing of staff, so that the church is assured that the two men can minister effectively together.

ELDERS & DEACONS

CHOOSING OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

1. All candidates for the elder or deacon board shall apply to the elder board in writing. Applications shall assume that the candidates feels qualified according to I Timothy three and Titus one and shall state why they are applying and why they feel they desire the position.

2. The elder board shall publish the name of the candidate to the congregation and investigate his qualifications. They shall especially seek advice from the deacon board and/or other members of the church. It is recommended that the elder board speak with the candidates neighbors and secular coworkers concerning the man's character. The family of the candidate should be considered as another source of information as to the qualifications of the man.

3. The prospective member will meet with an elder board specified representative for a period of three months during which the two men will evaluate the scriptural qualifications and the prospects own feeling of his living up to those qualifications. During this time the congregation would be encouraged to share any information pro or con to the chairman of the elder board to be used in evaluating the prospect.

4. At the end of this three month period the prospect will be presented to the full elder and deacon boards for questions and answers.

5. Upon approval the prospect will be presented to the congregation for confirmation. If the prospect fails to gain the approval of the boards or the congregation, then he will be referred upon mutual agreement to another six months of encouragement along the lines in which he was found deficient. At the end of this six month period another appearance before the board would be in order. Failure to complete the qualification process is not indication of something negative, but on the other hand a recognition there are things that the person needs to work on in their spiritual life, a condition that is true in most church members.

6. The prospect shall be approved by a unanimous vote of the elders and a 2/3 confirmation of the congregation.

7. There shall be no limit as to the number of elders in the church, however a minimum of three elders will be required. Elders should be added as there is a need in the overall organizational structure of the church. If the board becomes too large, and its own members unanimously agree, a system may be set in place whereby the elders would serve on a rotating basis with active and inactive elders. Inactive elders may attend and have input at meetings but only active elders would have voting privileges.

If three qualified elders are not available, then the church should modify its government slightly and use the elders that exist as a guiding board with the congregation the final authority in most decisions.

TERM

1. The elders and deacons shall serve as long as mutually agreeable to the officer and the church. Lifetime seems to be the acceptable unless there are reasons for considering less.

2. An elder or deacon may be removed from office by unanimous vote of the elders and by a 2/3 vote of the congregation. (This action should only be taken in light of sin in the elders life and his unwillingness to repent of that sin. In the case of immorality and divorce there would be an automatic removal.)

DUTIES OF THE ELDERS

1. The elders shall be responsible to oversee the churches spiritual growth and vitality. They are to see to the proper teaching and direction of the church.

2. The elders shall elect from among themselves a head elder, or chairman and a secretary to record minutes of meetings.

3. The elders shall meet jointly with the Deacon board once a month for the exchange of information and to inform the deacon board of any recommendations for their action.

4. The pastor shall chair the joint meeting or delegate the responsibility to another elder.

5. If the church doesn't have enough qualified men for elders the remaining elders and deacon board with the leadership of the pastor shall perform as many of the duties as they are gifted and able to perform.

6. Any action taken by the deacon board that is deemed detrimental to the church can be overruled by a unanimous vote of the elder board.

Upon such veto the deacons may, if they desire, submit the proposal to the congregation for a congregational vote. The meeting will be called by the elder board and both the elder and deacon

boards will be given time to submit their feelings on the proposal.

A 2/3 vote of the congregation will pass the proposal.

DUTIES OF THE DEACONS

1. The duties of the deacons are to be servants of the church and to meet the physical needs of the church body.

2. Special attention should be paid by the deacon board to the needs of the poor and widows of the church.

3. The deacon board shall be responsible for the church property and funds. The funds will be expended according to the needs of the church with the elder board approving of any major expenditures over $50 item.

4. The deacons shall elect from among themselves a head deacon, or chairman and a secretary for the keeping of records.

5. The deacons shall meet jointly with, and report to, the elder board once a month.

VIII. QUALIFICATION PROCESS

All teaching elders, elders and deacons will go through a process whereby the church body and the individual desiring the office will attempt to determine the candidate's qualification for his desired office. Pastoral staff may be added to the church without going through the process, however they will enter into this process at the first opportunity. Failure to qualify does not mean they will be dismissed. The elder board will consider the candidate's position and recommend steps by which the candidate may correct any deficiencies or they will recommend dismissal. The candidate will enter into the process at the next earliest opportunity if they are retained on staff.

1. There will be a time of self examination by the candidate during which he will consider the qualifications for his office with the Lord. An existing elder will assist the person in this process with explanation of the qualifications and prayer.

2. References will be sought from the candidate for the purpose of sending out letters to request information about the candidate. Letters will be sent to the person's employer, one coworker, two neighbors and his last church in the case of a pastor or newer member.

This letter will request information concerning the person's qualification and character.

These letters will not be the sum of information that a decision will be based on. They will be

only a part of the total information used in determining the persons qualification. (These letters should not be sent out until the candidate has completed his personal evaluation before the Lord and the elder board.)

3. The church body will be given a list of candidates for their earnest prayer. The church should desire great wisdom in this process to choose it's leadership.

4. The church body will be given a list of the candidates with space for comments weither positive or negative for the consideration of the elder board. These documents will remain confidential and must be signed in case the elder board desires to investigate any negative responses.

5. The head elder will stress the importance of this process, and the prayer behind it, to the congregation. This can be accomplished through the bulletin or from the pulpit.

6. There will be a minimum of 90 days given for this process with more time to be taken if needed.

7. The elder and deacon board will spend time with the candidates for the purpose of getting to know them and praying with them.

8. There will be a class taught concerning the qualifications, responsibilities and lifestyle of the offices. This will be required of new candidates and will be open to all that might desire to gain this knowledge. This class will be offered yearly if there is interest or candidates. (It could be offered during the Sunday School hour as an elective.)

This process is to allow the church time to consider the candidate and a time for the candidate to look at the church, his future responsibilities and his life before God.

It should be emphasized that if a candidate or the church feels that the candidate is not ready for leadership that the candidate is welcome to enter the process the following year. There should be no feeling of inadequacy or inferiority if a person does not enter an office. We are attempting to find well qualified men that meet the Biblical standard set forth by God for the men that would lead His church.

All Christians are to be striving to attain this same level of Christian living!

IX. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Discipline may be defined as the correction or expulsion by the church of one or more of its members for immorality of life, or heresy of doctrine.

Discipline is of God (Job 36:10; Heb 12:6), to maintain sound doctrine (Titus 1:13), to correct

disorder (II Thess. 3:6-15), to rebuke offenders (I Cor. 11:34), and to remove the unrepentant (I Cor. 5:3-5,13).

God disciplines His own directly concerning matters of their family relationship to Him. But he has also ordained mediate discipline by the church concerning those affairs that concern the life and walk of the corporate household of faith.

There are two kinds of offenses of which a church member may be guilty, namely public and private. (Matt 18:15-20; Acts 5:1-11)

Church discipline whether private or public may take one of three forms and should be kept in the local church (I Cor. 6:11).

1. Private reproof.
2. Public reproof.
3. Breaking of fellowship.

(Matt. 18:15-17; II Thes. 3:6,11-15; I Cor. 5:3-5; 11-13; Matt. 5:23-24; II Cor. 2:6-8)

Our attitude toward the believer in sin should be one of love and humility seeking to heal and restore their attitude. The purpose of all discipline must be to restore the person to his Lord and the church body. (Gal. 6:1; II Cor. 2:4).

All effective and true discipline can only be carried out in an attitude of prayer.

X. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

1. Any member may propose an amendment to the elders.

2. The elders then will prayerfully consider the amendment.

3. If the amendment proposed is rejected, the elders are to contact the person who wants the addition or subtraction and explain the reason, or reasons for rejection. If the member proposing the amendment feels the elders have acted wrongly, opportunity will be given to the member to present his/her thoughts to the congregation. If the congregation feels by a majority vote that the elders should reconsider the proposal they shall give the matter another sixty days consideration and prayer. If the proposal is deemed inappropriate after this time of consideration and input from the congregation then the matter shall be dropped. If they feel the amendment has merit, then they shall proceed as with any other amendment.

4. If the elders approve the amendment, it must be put to the vote of the active members of the church.

5. Proper written notification to members will be given by posting and announcing thirty days in advance what is to be voted on as well as the time and the place of voting. A meeting may be called before the written notification is given for explanation and information.

6. The amendment will require a 4/5ths majority of the members present to pass.

7. If approved, copies will be added to all future constitutions and copies will be made available to the membership to amend their own copies.

XI. ORDINATION

Those desiring to be ordained by this church will make their request known to the elder board and they will consider the possibility along with the congregation. If there is interest the elder board will enter the candidate into the elder/deacon qualification process to ascertain the candidates qualifications.

Upon completion of this process the elder board will call a proper meeting of the congregation for the ordination of the candidate to the Gospel ministry.

The church will maintain contact with the person for his entire ministry and give due consideration to any inappropriate activities that might warrant the withdrawal of recognition or ordination.

XII. DISSOLUTION

In the case of this church closing or disbanding the assets will be distributed among foreign missionary agencies to be determined by those members remaining in membership at the time of closing. These agencies will be groups that hold to the major doctrines set forth in this constitution.

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APPENDIX TWO

This appendix contains all of the referrences that contain the terms elder, elders, deacon, and deacons.

ELDER

Luke 15:25 Romans 9:12 1 Timothy 5:1
1 Timothy 5:19 1 Peter 5:1 1 Peter 5:5

2 John 1:1 3 John 1:1

ELDERS

Matthew 15:2 Matthew 16:21 Matthew 21:23
Matthew 26:3 Matthew 26:47 Matthew 26:57
Matthew 26:59 Matthew 27:1 Matthew 27:3
Matthew 27:12 Matthew 27:20 Matthew 27:41
Matthew 28:12 Mark 7:3 Mark 7:5
Mark 8:31 Mark 11:27 Mark 14:43
Mark 14:53 Mark 15:1 Luke 7:3
Luke 9:22 Luke 20:1 Luke 22:52
Luke 22:66 Acts 4:5 Acts 4:8
Acts 4:23 Acts 6:12 Acts 11:30
Acts 14:23 Acts 15:2 Acts 15:4
Acts 15:6 Acts 15:22-23 Acts 16:4
Acts 20:17 Acts 21:18 Acts 22:5
Acts 23:14 Acts 24:1 Acts 25:15
1 Timothy 5:17 Titus 1:5 Hebrews 11:2
James 5:14 1 Peter 5:1 Revelation 4:4
Revelation 4:10 Revelation 5:5-6 Revelation 5:8
Revelation 5:11 Revelation 5:14 Revelation 7:11
Revelation 7:13 Revelation 11:16 Revelation 14:3
Revelation 19:4

DEACON

1 Timothy 3:10 1 Timothy 3:13

DEACONS

Philippians 1:1 1 Timothy 3:8 1 Timothy 3:12

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APPENDIX THREE

I'm going to be intellectual for awhile in this appendix. Eisenhower defined an intellectual as, "...a man who takes more words than necessary to tell more than he knows."
What I am including in this section may be just that.

In light of the comments made in this work concerning pastors and their working in secular work I feel that this section may be of help to the reader.

PRINCIPLES FOR VIEWING MATERIAL THINGS,

IN LIGHT OF YOUR PROBABLE LOW PAYING MINISTRIES

- OR -

HOW TO ENJOY HAMBURGER 555 WAYS.

When in college we helped produce a college students cookbook designed for the poor wife that had to figure out how to fix the hamburger tonight. I might add that the wives were very inventive. The college was given a truck load of Scooter Pies (chocolate covered graham cracker and marshmallow). After awhile they were trying to decide how to fix scooter pies in a tasty manner. We ate them for breakfast, lunch and dessert for supper.

These are just some thoughts and illustrations that might help you to understand, how some believers chose to live, and it may challenge your own life now, or in the future.

One of the frustrations of my early Christian life was the lack of help I had been given in knowing how to live the Christian life. I stumbled and faltered my way through until I finally found some answers. The area of finances was a real problem to me at times, for I had some ideas of what God wanted, but I was constantly hearing "experts" in money telling me that I was doing it all wrong. I hope that some of what I teach will help you avoid some of the frustration and confusion that I had to go through.

You will all come to a place where you need to make some real commitments to the Lord in the area of finance. This study is not to show how spiritual I am nor is it meant to shoot how other people live their financial lives before the Lord. I know many people who live according to similar principles and don't feel there is anything special about themselves other than possibly in the area of their commitment.

God has chosen to deal with Faith and I as He has, and I have decided to walk as I have, with the full discussion and assistance of my wife. We are in agreement concerning how we live and enjoy it as is.

I want to illustrate these principles so you have some practical guide to go by if you ever need to use them.

I might introduce these thoughts with a reminder of the widow and her two mites. She was one of the last illustrations that Christ gave to
the disciples before his death. You should note as you consider her offering, that it was all that

she had. She could have saved half for food, but she didn't. Do you suppose she had heard Christ tell the followers not to worry about what the morrow shall bring. She gave till she was forced to live by faith in the Lord's provision. Can you imagine how many missionaries we could send out if all Christians began to practice that philosophy of giving?

Principle one: Be a good steward - as directed by God.

Not as directed by someone else. You get on your knees and see what God wants for you!

Stewardship may mean investing to some. I disagree if you are looking to save up for rainy days. If God gives us an overabundance we usually find places to put it. If we don't have needs, we try to find others that do. We try to share what we have with others. If we have an abundance of food we invite people over to share it while we fellowship. If we don't have extra food we still invite people for the fellowship. It isn't wrong to have someone in your home without food, though with food is more fun!

Principle two: Always be willing to give up all you have to move to another ministry, or to another place of residence if the Lord should lead you to do it. For that matter be willing to give up all you have if the Lord should lead you to do so.

We have sold all we could sell several times to finance the trips cross country to college and to ministries. One time we sold everything we wanted to get rid of and loaded the trailer. The next day we headed to the next town where our in-laws lived and found that our car did not have enough power to pull the trailer. We drove in 2nd gear for 40 miles. We backed up to their garage - unloaded everything and began sorting the essentials from the non-essentials. We began a large pile of stuff that we wanted to leave and decided that we should give it away. We called the pastor and asked him to contact needy families and send them over. WE MADE THEIR DAY - AND I MIGHT ADD HE MADE OUR DAY!!!
We really enjoyed seeing those folks get some of the things they needed. We reloaded with about half the stuff and continued on the next day. Miss the stuff? Some we have missed at times, but those things we really needed we always had the finances to replace them when we needed them. For the most part it was non-essentials that we left.

We have always felt that our belongings were for conversion into cash if we had need. We have sold many things at many different times to make up where the bankbook left off.

It has been interesting at times to consider the things that we absolutely could not sell. We for five years tried to sell our piano at a very good price. There were no takers. We did finally sell it when we were selling everything that we could so that we could make a move. That particular move was very expensive and our income was interrupted for a sizable time. The money from the piano carried us through those incomeless days.

We have never suffered from having sold anything. There are times when we wish we had such

and such but we have either replaced it or done well without it.

It has been fun to see how the replacements of things we wanted to replace came about. When it came time to replace, quite often the only thing in our price range was something on sale that was much better quality than what we had sold.

We started our college days with a $10 stereo amplifier and a very poor am/fm tuner. The next one was a stereo that didn't work that was given to me in about 100 pieces in a cardboard box. I was able to repair it and we sold it later for a sizable price. We sold and replaced many times with very little cash outlay over what we sold the old one for and today we have a 30 watt AM/FM tuner amp and speakers that are worth more than $400. We paid very little for it. By the way we have tried to sell that outfit many times and couldn't.

Principle three: Always be willing to give of your prizes as He leads.

I became interested in coin collecting in the 80's when the silver and gold prices were low. I was not selective in coins that I purchased, but bought those that caught my interest and those that might increase in value.

I had quite a collection of neat coins gathered together. I was becoming quite attached to them because they were so very interesting.

One day the silver prices started going wild. I watched the market and decided not to buy any more silver coins. As the market went up I decided that to own silver coins was foolish. There was no way that I could collect them on our budget, so had been thinking about selling them.

One day at church a friend mentioned he wanted prayer for their finances. He was due to register for seminary shortly, and had to come up with several hundred dollars to pay off the preceding semesters bill in order to register.

Faith and I wanted to help but had no money. The coins crossed my mind so we discussed it and went for it. We had no idea what we could raise in the way of money, but decided anything we could do would be a help.

I packed up all the coins and headed for the coin store. The silver price was up even more than before. The man totalled up all that was before him and he gave me the figure. I told him to give me the cash.

The total was enough to pay the seminary bill plus enough to reimburse us for all that we had invested in the coins. The very next day the silver market plunged!

Principle four: If you are offered free insurance or retirement benefits, it would be sensible to accept them.

This may be the method by which God is going to provide for you.

We have had this come up several times in our lives. We have seen God provide for medical needs and dental needs through free and very inexpensive insurance. Faith worked for Penneys and they offered med/dental insurance for the family for under $15 a month. We opted for it and received benefits far above the premium, in care.

He does not always provide in that way. We had an emergency a few years ago that cost more than $2000 and took me away from work for a couple of months. We had no insurance and little income. Would you believe that the Lord was able to handle it? He provided through a good job after the time off, that gave us enough to live on and pay on the bill. He also provided through a good church that helped in many ways.

YOU DO ALL THAT YOU CAN AND GOD WILL FILL IN THE GAP!

I was offered a retirement plan that was totally free. I was planning on being in the area only three years and it would not have benefits for five years so I told my Jewish boss no thanks and told him why I thought that it would be unnecessary. He said, "Stan you don't know how long you will be here so you sign it." I signed it, and we were in the area for seven or eight years.

When I left the company they informed me we would receive two checks over the next few months, but they didn't know how much they would be.
We moved away and found that we had some large needs when we arrived at our new ministry. The first check arrived and it was for over $1000, and it took care of the needs. See, God can provide our needs, at times eight years before we know about them. The second check was around $800. All that for a signature. Anyone want to make me an offer like that today?

Principle five: Keep your eyes on God, and not everyone else's paycheck.

I GUARANTEE THAT THIS WILL BE A MAJOR JOB! Realize that God deals in different ways with different people. He may chose to put you through the mill and some one else on easy street.

During our first year of college we were eating pancakes to many times a day. We were really in a bad way. One day in chapel they opened a time for testimonies. One of the Sophomores stood and told that he had gotten a job at a grocery store and that the boss was giving him a good wage and told him that he wanted to provide all his groceries for the rest of his college days.

Yes, I was wondering why him and not US! God needed to teach me through that testimony time that He does as He wills. The pancakes still filled us and so we went on for a time.

Principle six: In particular situations seek all info - figure - think - pray - decide.

You must use the wisdom that God gives to you when you ask in accordance with James 1.

At times it is wise to wait. At times it is wise to move quickly - let God tell you which one.

We needed a car in a very bad way at one time. We had prayed and the Lord had given us $200 toward a car. We were looking and praying. We found several possibilities, all of which seemed good and affordable. We did not have peace about any of the cars. We waited and prayed. We waited for over a month with this looking and seeking and no peace.

Finally, I told Faith that I thought that we should go back to our hometown and see what we could find. I called my father to ask him to begin looking around for us. He picked up the phone and we went through the hi, how are you routine, and before I mentioned anything about cars, he said, "By the way Stan, could you and Faith use a car if it was free?" Naturally, I told him we weren't interested. HA! We went back to pick it up and it was unbelievable. The car was a former highway patrol interceptor and believe me, a neat car! We drove the car for some time, free of charge!

By the way we have had three cars given to us over the years that have given a total of around 150,000 miles. Two of them came from people that had no idea that we needed them.

On the other hand we have driven cars that belonged in junk yards, because that is what the Lord had provided. One we had burned oil so bad that when you stopped at a stoplight and the sun was shinning you could see this cloud rolling from under the hood. I used to sit in total embarrassment when we got caught on a red light. However, we drove that car for over a year and a car dealer gave us $250 for it when the Lord provided another.

Principle seven: If you find that you have an excess of money and you usually are broke, don't go out and spend it immediately, unless you have the Lord's direction that you should.

Many times in our lives we have been given large sums of money - get all excited about how we were going to use it, and find out in a few days that the car needed a set of tires, or the daughter needs teeth pulled, or the wife is in the hospital, or what ever God may have provided it for.

At other times the Lord just enjoys making a bright spot in your day.

Principle eight: God promises to meet our needs. I assume that is a lifelong promise.

I will warn you that trusting in this promise gets harder as your age increases. As the poor health years approach and the possible need to stop ministering due to health approaches all sorts of worry can set in. This was especially real to me when we moved to Cheyenne, WY and could not find work of any sort for some weeks. Then as I worked at my part time janitorial job, I really wondered about the wisdom of not having had a savings account, paid for home and an IRA.

Just another thought: As you reach retirement consider - God has provided your needs for 65 years and didn't go broke so 15 to 20 more years shouldn't strain Him too much.

Principle nine: Give as you are able and as God directs.

We've attempted never to go below a tenth, and have given at times as much as 50%.

There were times when we felt that the Lord would have us really skimp in our own lives and give heavily to help missions. These have been usually brief periods of time. I have often wondered if He was just interested in seeing if we would do it. There are other ways of giving as well. There are material things that can be given to missionaries.

We had an electronic keyboard for a number of years. We never used it and had it out at every garage sale that came along at a ridiculously low price. During a missions conference a man ministering in South America mentioned they used them in Brazil. My brain lit up! A way to get rid of that thing in the closed that is always covered with dust. God had a place for it and He just asked the Dericksons to keep it dusted.

Principle ten: Watch and enjoy how God decides to provide for you!

God has a good sense of humor and timing. I had a professor in graduate school that took most of a class period to tell us that God does not provide for students through the mail box. Now, I don't know of many students that have not at one time or another gained great financial help through their mail box. It is just one of the ways that God works with Bible school students. God does do great things through mailboxes!

True we should not sit on our duffs waiting for the bucks to fall, but at the same time God gives through the mailbox at times.
I do not fault this faculty member, because he was formerly a banker that had never had any reason to live by faith. He always had the money and always controlled it well.

After this long session on the practical aspects of money, I was in the library and one of the students asked me if I agreed with the professor. I said that I didn't and shared some of the times when the Lord had supplied through the mail box. He had been very concerned that he was in error, because the Lord gave money to him at times through the mail box.

I didn't think to much more about it. We were preparing to make a major move cross country and had decided we would need around $2000 for a different car and trailer expenses. We hadn't really been praying about the money yet because we hadn't done any exact figuring.

That day when I went home for lunch I stopped for the mail and found a letter with a check in it. $2000. The next day I sat down by the student and said, "Say, do you know what I found in my mailbox just after we talked yesterday?" When he said no, I slid the check out of my checkbook

enough for him to see the amount.

God provides in many ways, so don't try to box Him in even though He likes mail boxes.

There is one other area that I might mention. Debt or credit.

Facts:

1. It costs dearly. On one account we had we paid a payment of $22.00 per month and the interest was $18.37 per month.

2. It is very handy to have at times.

3. It can be a trap.

4. It is not against scripture to borrow.

a. Romans 13 mentions owe no man anything. If you are current, you don't technically owe. When you are delinquent in your payment, then you owe.

b. The Old Testament has laws of usury or interest and it was all right to loan and to borrow.

5. If you never borrow you will be the better for it. It is spending what you don't have, and that is never best.

6. A guide: If the benefit of the item purchased is more than the finance charge, then you will profit from it. (You would profit more if you paid cash however.)

7. If you know someone in debt don't give them a guilt trip. I became sick of guilt trips years ago, when the super saints felt we shouldn't be in debt. At that time we shouldn't have been, but we realized it after the fact, and the guilt trips helped very little.

We have always tried to stay debt free, but at times take on debt.

Most people who are against debt own homes that are financed. That is debt even if they call it an investment. Most make payments on cars as well.

You let God lead you in your decisions. Gather facts - pray - think - plan - pray and follow Him.

These are just some thoughts that I have jotted down and I'm not sure that the Derickson family has always functioned under these principles as we should have.

These are set forth for your consideration and not as a teaching of scripture. I believe they are based on the Bible and what God would have us do, however these are convictions and decisions that you need to make with your mate and your God!

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Don't expect this type of answers to your prayers.

God is far to inventive to answer yours as he has ours. Indeed, He seldom answers my prayers like I think He might.

2. We dropped all life insurance in the 60's due to several reasons:

a. We were broke and owed $6000.

b. We decided that God can take care of Faith without my help if I should die before she does.

c. We felt that this would be more in keeping with the thought of living by faith and laying up treasures in heaven.

3. Some time ago a student asked me if we saved money, and I sidestepped the question. My answer? HA!

At times we have put extra aside toward some project or some need that we knew that was coming. Usually and normally we do not put money away. In recent years due to our income we have not had reason to consider it.

As far as retirement goes, I am trusting that the Lord will keep me active until He decides I should go home. We did not opt out of Social Security as some ministers do, because I could not in good conscience sign the statement. The statement declares that you feel that it is against your belief system.

If Social Security fails before I get to the retirement age I will not be totally surprised, nor heart broken. God can use other means than the United States government to support us. INDEED, the United States government may not be here when I'm 65. God has brought about changes that most would have deemed impossible in 1987 in the Eastern Block. Don't put your stock in the institutions of this world for they rise and fall, but put your stock in the Lord - He never changes.

Many lost loads of money when the Savings and Loan scandal hit. Some will never recover their losses. You cannot really plan for the future. We have some older friends that had sold a business and invested very wisely. They had planned for a set amount to live on and a set amount to give on a monthly basis to the Lord through missions when they retired. The economy did some strange things after they retired and they are not living as they had planned. The Lord

has supplied and they live nicely and still give according to what they have but it is not what they had planned.

Do not put your trust in what you can do, save, accomplish, for God may well have other plans for you. Plan to the best of your ability with wisdom from the Lord and allow Him to do the rest. I trust that this has not been to boring.

I also trust that it has been a time of uplifting the Lord and His watchful care over us.

In closing, do not tell people this is what I teach as the proper way to live. You consider it and see if you feel it is Biblical and if it is, apply it to yourself, and then teach others.

One last point. These principles came about over a period of years. I didn't just up and one day institute them in our lives. They are things that Faith and I have discussed and considered before the Lord, and decided we wanted to be a part of our life together.

Part of all this is that God has always chosen to keep us on short accounts financially. It is easy to live by these principles in that circumstance. Give us a million dollars, and I have no idea how we would apply these principles.

You do the very best you can using what God has given you to work with. You care for your family as you can. If you can't care for them like you want, or like others think you should, don't worry about it. God knows what He's given you to work with - He is your master not others.

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APPENDIX FOUR

Since I have made reference to the Baptist distictives is seemed good to give a listing and brief explanation of these for the reader.

Baptists believe in the usual fundamentals of the faith, however due to their history and convictions they are distinctively "Baptist." Most are Baptist by conviction and are convinced that the Baptist stand is correct.

This is somewhat of a consternation to other Biblicaly sound people in that the distinctives which we will soon see are Biblical distinctives first and the Baptists have by nature held to them through the years. The Bible church movement holds to these same Biblical distinctives also.

The difference may be that the Baptists have held them longer. However there is evidence there

were Biblically centered people much earlier than the Anabaptists.

"Baptists believe in the scriptural teaching of the priesthood of believers, which is the spiritual principle underlying their democratic type of church life. They believe that every believer receives salvation and has free access to God the Father at any time for spiritual comfort and forgiveness of sins through the one and only High Priest, Jesus Christ our Savior. With this principle in mind, Baptists have opposed any distinction between the clergy and laity that savors of priesthood." (from a pamplet WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE by Robert Torbet)

They feel that the congregation has the final authority in all matters.

Due to their persecution by state churches in their early days they have held tenatiously to the separation of church and state.

The Baptists have what they call "BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES". These are some beliefs that Baptists from the early days have held to be Biblical. They are not Biblical distinctives but "Baptist Distinctives". I have discussed this often with many baptists and always end up with the same frustration.

These things are doctrines of the Scriptures. God made them up and not Baptists. They are doctrines that Baptists for years have held but they are still Biblical distinctives. I feel that if you hold these ideals and doctrines you are a Bible beleiving Christian. I say what I say knowing that I am as Baptist as most baptists. I have been educated in two Baptist schools and feel more comfortable with Baptist churches than any other.

BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES:

1. Biblical Authority. The Bible is the rule for faith and practice in all areas of life.

Whats more the Bible is the only authority for your life as opposed to the Roman church that the Baptists fought with in their early days. A church system has no authority over the believer. This is not to say that the individual of a local congregation can't be disciplined if there is sin in their life. The thought of a church hierarchy telling a person what is spiritual is what they oppose.

2. Autonomy of the Local Church. This means that the local church is independent of all ties with other organizations.

There are fellowships of Baptists which are loosely knit gatherings of pastors and laymen for the purpose of fellowship and mutual edification. There are some churches that will work together in the areas of youth work and evangelism.

Some are very strong on not being linked in any way with other churches - even of their own

kind. In Denver years ago there were at least a dozen independent Baptist churches with Christian day schools. They wouldn't even go together to buy paper and supplies together to get a price break.

3. Priesthood of all believers. The emphasis is on ALL believers. Each and every believer has the right to go before the throne of grace with his needs and sins to set them right before God.

4. Two ordinances. There is the Lord's table that is usually open to all believers, but not always. Some have closed tables for their own members only. The second ordinance is that of baptism by immersion as an outward sign of an inward change.

5. Individual Soul Liberty.

6. Saved, baptized church membership. All people desiring to be part of an assembly must be baptized and saved before they can become members.

7. Two offices. Pastors or as they very seldom say but usually admit to elders and deacons. The deacons are the board that keep the church running. Most deacon boards are very active in the spiritual end of things as well as the physical.

8. Separation of church and state. They are opposed to any state intervention into church affairs. Be it worship or day school.

I agree with their feeling and would back them on their feelings however in turn, logic demands that the church not be benifited by the state. The majority of Christians be they Baptist or other would be up in arms if the government took away our tax exempt status. Now if we really want separation of church and state shouldn't we welcome the lifting of tax exempt status?

From the above distinctives you can see why a congregational form of government has been the hallmark of Baptists churches. It is only in recent years that some have begun to stray from this distinctive.

If the individual believer has access to God on his own and can be lead and guided by God then it follows that the church should be lead by all the people as they are in tune with God.

The balance between "Baptist Distinctives" versus "Biblical Distinctives" was met by a college prof of mine. Mr. Richard Muntz told us that the distinctives were not purely Baptist, but they were points of doctrine that the Baptists have closely followed through history. He mentioned that the points are needed to fully achieve the Biblical local church. He also stressed that if a church did not follow these points of doctrine, they were not truely a Baptist church.

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APPENDIX FIVE

The listing of references that speak of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. Read each reference and see if you can find out if there is a difference between these two kingdoms and if so what that difference is. Also try to determine what the kingdoms are.

KINGDOM OF GOD

Matthew 6:33
12:28
19:24
21:31
21:43

Mark 1:14
4:11
4:26
4:30
9:1
9:47
10:14
10:23-25
12:34
14:25
15:43

Luke 4:43
6:20
7:28
8:1
8:10
9:2
9:11
9:27
9:60
9:62
10:9
10:11
11:20
12:31

13:18
13:20
13:28-29
14:15
16:16
17:20
18:16-17
18:24-25
19:11
21:31
22:16
22:18
23:51
John 3:3
3:5
Acts 1:3
8:12
14:22
19:8
20:25
28:23
28:31

Romans 14:17

I Corinthians 4:20
6:9-10
15:50

Galatians 5:21

Colossians 4:11

II Thessalonians 1:5

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Matthew 3:2
4:17
5:3
5:10
5:19-20
7:21

8:11
10:7
11:11-12
13:11
13:24
13:31
13:33
13:44
13:47
13:52
16:19
18:1
18:3-4
18:23
19:14
19:23
20:1
22:2
23:13
25:1
25:14

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APPENDIX SIX

This is a partial listing of the references concerning "one another" or "one toward another" in the New Testament. See a concordance for a complete listing.

"one another"

Ro 2:15 Ro 12:10 Ro 13:8 Ro 14:13
Ro 15:7 Ro 15:14 Ro 16:16 I Cor 16:20
II Cor 13:12 Ga 5:13 Ga 5:15 Ga 5:26
Eph 4:32 Col 3:13 Col 3:16 I Thes 4:9
I Thes 4:18 I Thes 5:11 Tit 3:3 Heb 3:13
Heb 10:24 Heb 10:25 I Pet 5:14 I Jn 3:23
I Jn 4:7 I Jn 4:11 I Jn 4:12 II Jn 5
Re 6:4

"one to another"

Ro 1:27 Ro 12:10 Ro 12:16 Ro 15:5
I Cor 4:6 I Cor 6:7 I Cor 11:33 I Cor 12:25
Ga 5:15 Eph 4:25 Eph 4:32 Eph 5:21
Col 3:9 I Thes 3:12 I Tim 5:21 Jas 5:16
I Pet 3:8 I Pet 4:9 I Pet 4:10 I Pet 5:5
I Jn 1:7 Rev 11:10

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APPENDIX SEVEN

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (listed in order by references)

Romans 12:6-8

Prophecy
Ministry
Teaching
Exhorting
Giving
Ruling
Mercy

I COR 12:8-10

Word of wisdom
Word of knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Discerning of spirits
Tongues
Interpretation of tongues

I Cor 12:28-30

Apostles
Prophets
Teachers

Miracles
Healings
Helps
Governments
Tongues

Eph. 4:11

Apostles
Prophets
Evangelists
Pastors and teachers

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (arranged to show duplicate listings)

ROMANS	I CORINTHIANS	I CORINTHIANS	EPHESIANS
12:6-8	12:6-8	12:28-30	4:11
Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophets	Prophets
Ministry			
Teaching		Teachers	
Exhorting	Giving		
Ruling			
Mercy			
	Faith		
	Word of wisdom		
	Word of knowledge		
	Healing	Healing	
	Miracles	Miracles	

Discerning
of spirits

Tongues Tongues

Interpretation
of tongues

Apostles Apostles

Helps

Governments

Evangelists

Pastors and
teachers

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (listed by Sign vs. Ministry gifts.)

SIGN GIFTS

Prophecy
Faith
Word of wisdom
Word of knowledge
Healing
Miracles
Discerning of spirits
Tongues
Interpretation of tongues
Apostles

MINISTRY GIFTS

Ministry
Teaching
Exhortation
Giving
Ruling

Mercy
Helps
Governments
Evangelists
Pastors and teachers

Those that make distinctions between sign and ministry gifts normally reject the sign gifts for our own day. The sign gifts were for the apostolic days and this can be shown in several different ways.

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APPENDIX EIGHT

THE GIFT OF PASTOR-TEACHER EXAMINED

OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION
I. THE CONTEXT OF THE GIFT
II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GIFT
III. THE MEANING OF THE GIFT
IIII. THE APPLICATION OF THE GIFT
CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

In my early college days the Lord laid it on my heart to prepare for the ministry of teaching at the college level. All of my college and seminary work was aimed toward that time when I would be teaching in a Bible college or Bible Institute. The Lord used a number of things to help me understand that I had the gift of teaching. To begin with, I found that I seemed effective as a teacher with several age groups. Many people responded positively to my ministry and finally there were many that told me they felt that I had the gift of teaching.

I proceeded to pray concerning where the Lord might be able to use me and it seemed obvious that teaching was the area. From that point on I attempted to be involved in that ministry. As time went by, I discovered that the usual college/institute teacher was a pastor that had decided later in life to go into teaching. Many of them as I observed were men that did not do that well in the pastorate.

At one point in my life I was faced with deciding whether I should go into the pastorate. I was

not comfortable with doing the work that we noramlly assign to the pastor. The roll of marrying, counceling, funeraling etc. As I considered these things it crossed my mind that I was certain what a teacher was, but that I was not certain about what a pastor was. As I considered this, a word study about the word "pastor" seemed appropriate.

I. THE CONTEXT OF THE GIFT

The gift is listed in Ephesians four. Please take time to read verse 11-16. Notice that the gift of pastor is linked to the gift of teaching. This gift is listed in Rom. 12:6-8, I Cor. 12:28-30, and Eph. 4:11. We cannot look at the gift of pastor without considering the gift of teaching. Some link these two gifts together showing there is a gift of pastor-teacher and a gift of teaching. The thought being that the pastor of a church should have the gift of pastor-teacher while a teacher would have the gift of teaching.

The text seems to indicate that the Lord gifted different men in different ways. The emphasis is on the man that is gifted in the text. The man that was listed as a pastor also received the gift of teaching. This is not to say that every pastor must have the gift of teacher, only that Christ gifted some with both pastor and teacher. You might wonder why I give emphasis to this. The church is given the gifts that it needs. We have a wrong concept of what the pastor of a church is. Today a pastor is a man that preaches, teaches, councels, calls, visits, mowes lawns, cleans floors, and everything else.

I believe, and I believe that Scripture teaches that this concept is grossly wrong. A pastor is not all of these things. A pastor is a man that has the gift of pastor. This man may be the local undertaker, or the banker, or the butcher. He is a man in the church that can do the work of a pastor. We will look at what I mean as we go along, but we MUST get rid of the thought that the pastor of a church is the man that does everything.

Paul in Ephesians was not trying to say that the pastor-teacher was the head of the physical local assembly. He was telling the Ephesians that the Lord had given some men the gift of apostleship, some men the gift of prophet, some men the gift of evangelism, some men the gift of pastoring and some men the gift of teaching. The first two, the gifts of apostles and prophets were among the sign gifts that have passed away. He stated by coupling the gifts of pastor and teacher together that some men have both gifts. He was not requiring that the pastor be a teacher or that every teacher be a pastor.

There are two gifts. Pastor and teacher. The pastor gift is not listed elsewhere in scripture. Indeed the translation of this Greek word by the term "pastor" is misleading and probably due to the wrong concept of pastor that the church has had for many years.

The Greek term translated pastor here is actually translated differently every time it appears in the New Testament. It is normally translated shepherd, which is a totally different idea than what we have for the pastor of our day. Let's consider all of this for awhile.

What are the terms that are used in Eph.? The term translated pastor is "poimeen" and it is normally translated shepherd. Indeed, it is never translated pastor, except in the Eph. text. The term translated teacher is "didaskalos" and is translated "master" in the Gospels and teacher in the rest of the New Testament.

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GIFT

Let's look at the term "poimeen" and find out just what a shepherd should be. There are only two references containing this term in the epistles and both of them are referring to the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ. (Heb. 13:20; I Pet 2:25)

The other uses of the term are found in the Gospels. We won't take time to look at these, but they show the ministry of a shepherd to his sheep. Probably the reference that depicts the overall idea is Matt. 9:36 which shows the overall concern of the shepherd. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they were faint, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." You should note that this Shepherd not only had the compassion for the people, but His entire ministry was the steps He took to relieve their misery. It was a caring, and ministering to the sheep.

I would like to sum up the thoughts of the other Gospel references and just list the items that can be seen concerning the shepherd. (These references contain the word "poimeen". Matt 9:36 (Mar. 6:34); Matt. 25:32; Matt. 26:31 (Mar. 14:27); Lu. 2:8-20; Jn. 10:1-16.)

THE SHEPHERD:

Gathers the sheep. Collect, control, draw, and limit are part of gathering sheep.

Keeps the sheep from falsehood or things that are not true.

In the case of Christ, He died for the sheep.

Watches over the sheep.

Stick with the sheep to assure their safety. Won't leave them.

Know his sheep. His sheep will also know the shepherd. This is not descriptive of many of our churches today.

We won't go into these thoughts. You can apply these things for yourself.

III. THE MEANING OF THE GIFT

If the man is gifted to be a shepherd then he is one that practices the art of shepherding with a

flock of believers. The man that is a teacher is teaching the sheep to do the work that the Lord has for them to do.

It is of interest to me how the apostle Paul operated. Some of the apostles were active in the local church at Jerusalem while others according to tradition went out evangelizing as Paul did. Acts 13 mentions there were prophets and teachers that were active in a local assembly. One of those men was Saul, or Paul as we know him. He was either a prophet or teacher and I would guess that he was one of the teachers, because there is no indication in the NT that he was a prophet.

Now, why did Paul never settle down in a church? The only reason that I can think of is that he realized that he was a teacher and that the Lord wanted him out teaching. He did not practice the gift of pastor in the NT as far as I can find. He knew his gift and he practiced his gift where he could. He did not stuff himself into a pastoring position because he knew he was not gifted in that area.

I trust that as we continue on through life that we will seek to find ways of allowing the gifted to practice their gifts instead of placing them where they do not belong.

A teacher is a teacher and a pastor is a pastor. If a men is both then he should do both. If a man is a teacher, he should be a teacher and if a man is a pastor, he should be a pastor.

May we make some observations:

1. There are five gifts listed in the text. This may have application in three areas: a. This could mean that you will have one man with two gifts, that of pastoring and teaching. b. This could mean that you have one man that is a shepherd and one man that is a teacher if you have a plurality of leadership. If you have only one leader then the man should have both gifts. c. This could mean that a teacher should not be the soul leader of a church. If that is all you have then you should look around until you find the man that is gifted to be a shepherd. Use a "teacher only" if that is all you have, but I believe there will be a shepherd if there is a need.

2. Shepherd is a gift separate from the gift of teaching.

3. In Eph. 4 we see that these men are there for the training of the believers. We must assume that the shepherd is involved in training as well as the teacher. Let's think about how the two might be able to train believers.

THE SHEPHERD: Leads to proper food, corrects, protects from falsehood, guides, motivates to move, and gathers.

THE TEACHER: Teaches proper principles of living, interpreting etc., teaches the Word, warns from the Word.

There seems to be a difference of ministry between the two. We must realize that one cannot do the other, and they are a complmentary pair of gifts. Indeed, the evangelist can train the believer in areas that the shepherd and teacher cannot.

The teacher can teach principles of evangelism, however it is the evangelist that can take the believer out and show them how it is done.

All three gifts work to train the believer, yet the three cannot operate alone and be effective.

(Some feel that the gift of prophet is current today but that it is functioning in a different way than in the sign gift days. They feel that the prophet is the preacher. This does not detract from what we have stated thus far.)

IIII. THE APPLICATION OF THE GIFT

The importance of all this is seen in the fact that we may have a man that is a pastor and a teacher at the same time, but it is also true that we may have a man that is a pastor and a man that is a teacher and that we could function well as a local assembly with either situation.

I include this study in the hope that we will change our concept of "pastor" to one that is Biblical and not traditional. I have met many men that would love to preach and teach from a pulpit in churches, but they do not feel they are able to handle the other parts of "pastoring" which the church has laid upon the man in the pulpit.

On the other hand I suspect that we have many men that can shepherd that would never be capable of entering into a preaching or teaching situation that are not functioning in the local church because the pastor does those things.

If we had a proper understanding of the term pastor, we could operate a church with a teacher in the pulpit, in the class room or in the Bible study and a pastor in the sick room, or in the counceling room, or in the visiting room.

CONCLUSION

Christ gave gifts to all believers. Some of these gifts are for training the sheep.

As we move into a new century for the world and the church might we look into the scripture for our forms and organization, rather than into the traditions that we have inherited from past generations.

May we seek to minister to one another as Christ has gifted us.

May we determine that we are not going to cram a teacher into a pastoring positions or a pastor

into a teaching position.

I might mention there are churches that have realized these things and have allowed their teachers to teach and their pastors to pastor. These churches have a plurality of leadership and function quite nicely with these principles. I am told that A.W. Tozer was a teaching elder in his church and that others did the shepherding.

06850

APPENDIX NINE

BODY BUILDERS OR SOCIAL CLIMBERS?

I would like to consider whether we, as local assemblies, are bodies as the Scripture states we are to be, or are we societies.

Forgive me for the length of this quote. Society according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary is: "1: companionship or association with one's fellows: friendly or intimate intercourse: COMPANY 2: a voluntary association of individuals for common ends; esp: an organized group working together or periodically meeting because of common interests, beliefs, or profession 3 a: an enduring and cooperating social group whose members have developed organized community, nation, or broad grouping of people having common traditions, institutions, and collective activities and interests 4 a: a part of a community that is a unit distinguishable by particular aims or standards of living or conduct : a social circle or a group of social circles having a clearly marked identity ... b: a part of the community that sets itself apart as a leisure class and that regards itself as the arbiter of fashion and manners 5 a: a natural group of plants usu. of a single species or habit within an association b: the progeny of a pair of insects when constituting a social unit (as a hive of bees); broadly: an interdependent system of organisms or biological units" P 1119 (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Let's list the aspects of "society" from this definition:

1. Society is companionship with others.

2. Society is association with others.

3. Society contains friendly conversation.

4. Society contains intimate conversation.

5. Society is being with others toward a common end.

6. Society is being with others because of interests.

7. Society is being with others because of common beliefs.

8. Society is being with others because of a common profession.

9. Society is an organized group of people with traditions.

10. Society is an organized group of people with institutions.

11. Society is an organized group of people with collective activities.

12. Society is an organized group of people with collective interests.

13. Society is a recognizable community because of their aims.

14. Society is a recognizable community because of their standards of living.

15. Society is a recognizable community because of their living or conduct.

16. Society is a group of people that stand out because of their identity.

17. Society is a group of people that set themselves as a standard of fashion or manners.

To begin with I see little difference between the above list and the church in America today. I took a class in college on sociology that required us to read a book that held to the teaching that society was based on groups of people that are playing games. The doctors play the doctor game and do what doctors do, the lawyers play the lawyer game and do what lawyers do, and the laborers play the laborer game and do what laborers do. The author's thought was that the doctors did things that doctors do because that's what doctors do, etc. Naturally the Christians would be playing the Christian game and would be doing what Christians do.

I am beginning to believe that some Christians and churches are playing the Christian game. We talk a good talk, we work a good work, we do what is expected of us because we are Christians playing the Christian game.
SO, what is the difference between the Christians in our day and the idea of society? Is the church a society within the general lost society of our world today? Is the church a mini-society that operates among the other mini societies in the world?

The church is told that it is a body. Just what did the Lord mean by that? How can we relate that concept to the church? Can we be a body and also fit the thought of a society? Because we have

already stated that the church seems to be a society, is there something that we should be doing that would automatically change us from the status of being a society to the status of being a body?

BODY VS SOCIETY: Let's consider the ideas of body and society for a moment.

1. A body is living while a society is organized. Even though the church may be loosely organized, the primary emphasis is supposed to be on the living.

2. A body is made up of interdependent parts that must draw life from the common physical bond, while a society is made up of people that are drawn together because of a common mental or ideological bond.

3. A body part cannot exist apart from the whole, while a part of society can exist and thrive apart from the whole.

4. A body is directed by one source, the head, while a society is led by the dictates of the whole.

5. A body is in the business of survival of the whole, while a society is open to destruction of the parts and/or the whole for the survival of the other.

Illustration: The communist block was a whole that is now in the process of destruction for the survival of the parts. The church body must and will survive because we have the Head, Jesus Christ, directing toward that end.

6. The body exists to grow and develop, while an organization may or may not desire to grow and develop.

7. In the body, growth and development is automatic because it is living, while an organization must plan and labor to grow and develop.

8. A body is sensible, or it can sense the world outside of itself in all respects, such as emotional, mental, and physical, while a society may or may not sense the world around them.

Are these differences important? I suspect that the differences are the keys to why many of us originally felt that the church fit into the definition of society. The differences, if realized and maintained in the church then should move a local assembly from the place of being a society to the place of being a body.

Let's list these differences in a short thought that would help us work on being sure that our churches are bodies and not societies.

1. A BODY GROWS NATURALLY: A living body is growing naturally because of individual

parts reproducing themselves (cells). In the broader thought, the head is teaching the limbs and parts to work together for the common good.

A body is an organism not an organization. An organism lives, while an organization is given life by its participants.

2. A BODY'S PARTS ARE INTERDEPENDENT: Every part is interdependent, thus every part is of supreme importance as a part. A part missing is a part that is not supplying something to others in the body.

3. THE PART CANNOT SURVIVE ALONE: A believer apart from a local assembly faulters spiritually, thus when a part absents itself the whole OUGHT to be concerned rather than being critical or allowing them to go their own way.

4. THE HEAD DIRECTS THE WHOLE: When the parts begin to direct the whole rather than the head, the group cannot be a body.

5. THE BODY WILL SURVIVE: This would have application in the area of problems that we allow to develop into church splits. A body cannot split and survive, so why do we feel that a church can?

6. THE BODY EXISTS TO GROW: The Church should exist to grow and develop. This eliminates the purpose of growth for any other reason than this. Growth is not to provide for building of personal kingdoms, of buildings, budgets etc.

7. THE BODY IS LIVING: How much energy is spent in the church organizing growth campaigns, and contests to produce what should happen naturally?

8. THE BODY SENSES ITS SURROUNDINGS: Are we as a body of believers really sensitive to the hurt and destiny of the world? Are we really sensing the impending danger of hell for those around us? Are we open to helping a hurting person?

Body has been described as a mass of matter. Some indicate it is a mass that is different from other masses. Now, to call the church a mass is not too appropriate, however the idea of a mass that is distinct from other masses SHOULD BE descriptive of the church. We should be distinct from the rest of the world. We should be, shall I say, easily distinguishable from the world.

So why do we dress, act, spend, live, invest etc. like the world?

Another item that is important for us to consider is the attraction of those outside the church to the church. Is that attraction because they desire to be a part of a living, thriving, growing body or are they attracted to what the society can do for them. I fear that many in our churches are socially attracted rather than spiritually attracted.

I trust that you will consider the differences between the body that we are supposed to be and the society that we seem to have become. I trust that you will commit yourself in your local church to work toward being a body rather than a society.

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THE LORD'S TABLE - WHO WHAT WERE?

Question: Is it correct for an institution or organization aside from the local church to offer and/or celebrate the Lord's table?

DEFINITIONS:

1. Local Church: An organized body of believers gathering for the purpose of edification of the saved, and the evangelization of the lost.

The term organized would refer to the fact that they have a pastor and/or elders and deacons functioning for the leadership of the body of believers.

2. Ordinance: Theissen, "We may define an ordinance as an outward rite appointed by Christ to be administered in the Church as a visible sign of the saving truth of the Christian faith."

Bancroft in ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY p 310 mentions, "The word ordinance comes from two Latin words which in their final meaning signify 'that which is ordered or commanded.'" (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.)

Ryrie in A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE p 149 mentions, "an outward rite prescribed by Christ to be performed by His church."

OBSERVATIONS:

1. The Church is the church and organizations or institutions are not the church.

The Church has a specific organization, purpose and function.

Any organization that is not a church will have a different organization, purpose and function.

Example: A Bible Institute declares it's purpose to be, "_____ is a highly specialized institution raised up by the Lord for intensive and comprehensive training in God's Word. It

exists to prepare men and women to serve the Lord as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, youth leaders and Christian education workers."

The only organizations that function with a leadership of pastor and/or elders, and deacons are churches. No other organization or institution that this author knows of has this type of organization nor terminology.

2. No organization other than a church claims to be a church.

3. Most doctrinal statements, if they mention the ordinances list them as "ordinances of the Local Church."

The above Bible Institute's doctrinal statement mentions,

"5. We believe that there are two ordinances given to the local church:

a. "Water baptism...."

b. "The Lord's Supper, which is to be observed only by believers as a memorial to the death and coming again of our Lord Jesus."

Note should be taken of the phrase, "given to the local church"

This, in essence, would indicate that no other organization or institution has the right to practice the ordinances.

4. Since para-church organizations are a relatively new movement there are no Scriptural references which may be quoted to support their use of the Lord's table. By the same token the church fathers and their writings would not have reference to our question.

5. The text usually presented to show the institution of the ordinance is usually one of the Gospel accounts of the Lord celebrating the passover. He used the elements that were present on the dinner table. He mentioned that He would not drink of the fruit of the vine until He came in His Father's Kingdom. (Matt.) Luke in 22:19 records, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20.

6. I Cor. 11 is the other text which relates to the question at hand. Verse 2 mentions, "...keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." Paul himself had given them the information they needed for the observance. Items to observe from this text. a. It is an ordinance. (v 2) b. It is for the church. Paul is speaking to the church in Corinth and he also mentions the "church of God" in verse 22. I Cor. 10:16ff shows that the church at Corinth had been taught of the Lord's table prior to this letter.

7. Matthew records in 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." There is no mention of the church in this text. Indeed the church did not exist. The context of this verse is prayer. There cannot easily be an organized local church with three members.

8. The early church might be suggested as an example of the Lord's table.

Acts 2 is where most place the beginning of the Church. It might be of interest to note that the apostles did not observe the Lord's table prior to Pentecost. The day of Pentecost was 50 days after the passover (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia p 2318) and Acts 1:3 mentions that the Lord assended about 40 days after the passover. This would indicate several days (8 to 10) between the ascension and the day of Pentecost - surely enough time to have the Lord's table if they thought it important. (Indeed one must wonder if they were waiting for the Lord's quick return to have it with Him.)

Indeed it is difficult to show from the Scriptures that the apostles participated in the Lord's table after the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:42 mentions for the first time the "breaking of bread" which most hold as being the Lord's table. Verse 46 states, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart." Might one suggest that these phrases may well indicate sharing of meals and not the Lord's table. The next text relating to food is in chapter six where they were eating as a group. Again there is nothing specific about the Lord's table.

One further text uses the term "breaking bread" but again the way it is stated to read into it more than eating is just that reading into it. "When he, therefore, was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed." Acts 20:11

One is left to wonder if the early church indeed did practice the Lord's table prior to the teaching of Paul. It could easily be suggested that the Revelation to Paul from the Lord may have been the first and official institution of the Lord's table.

c. Christ revealed this information to Paul personally. It is not meant to be a quote from the Gospels, but it is meant to be the exact information that the Lord gave to him.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Lord has so designated the Church as His body and His organization to work in and through. It is this writer's opinion that one must assume heavily to even suggest that there is any other organization that is qualified to initiate or perform either of the ordinances, be it Baptism or the Lord's Table.

2. Is it wrong then, for other organizations to perform these functions? Let this be answered by another question. By what authority might they presume to function? There is no authority given in Scripture to any group other than the Local Church.

3. In specific relation to Colleges, Seminaries and Bible Institutes one must take into consideration several items:

a. Do the schools feel that they are an extension of the Local Church. Most schools make no such claim nor do they seek to become an extension of the church. b. Does any Local Church have any control over the schools? The answer to this is no unless they are denominational schools. c. Is there any organizational or intended connection between schools and local churches other than by speaking, attendance, or membership of individuals from the school? Again the answer is no. d. At most, the schools could possibly be classified as an arm of the Local Church, however this is not indicated by most schools. This is not to say that they are the local church nor is it to say that they have any authority as does the local church.

They have authority only over their own people and students. That authority that does exist comes from their own organization and the individuals submission to it, not from Scripture? The school has no authority in the area of church discipline nor ordinances.

4. Many conservative pastors and teachers feel that the Lord's table may be held anyplace and under most circumstances IF the service is under the authority of the Local Church.

Bancroft in his ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY p 312 mentions, "There are a number of questions which may be asked in relation to the two ordinances, such as these: What is the proper method of observing baptism and the Lord's supper? Who is qualified to administer them? Who are fit subjects or recipients of them? And to whom does the responsibility for their proper observance or administration belong? Suffice it for us to say in general that these are church ordinances and are therefore not to be administered or observed in promiscuous assemblies, or by individuals, but by the church in the regular local assembly, and according to the pattern furnished by the Lord Jesus Christ." He follows this statement with his doctrinal summation on ordinances. "The church is the custodian of the two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, and is responsible for their administration." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.)

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DIVORCE/REMARRIAGE

PRESUPPOSITIONS:

1. This is not to condemn anyone in any relationship.

2. This is to present the Scripture involved, and draw conclusions.

3. This is to reprimand the Church for its steady decline and slide toward the world in relation to this subject. The Churches divorce rate if about that of the world's.

4. This is to confront people in this situation with a head on look at what God says concerning the subject. Many today have accepted the norm for themselves, and have never looked into the Word to see what God has to say.

5. Malachi 2:15b, 16 States, "Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."

Note: God hates the putting away of the wife of your youth. If you do, you deal treacherously against her. This is the context that this study must be done in. All else that the Scripture states must be understood in light of the fact that God hates divorce, and that the person that does go ahead and divorce, is dealing treacherously with their spouse.

6. This is also a call to the church to commit itself to two items:

a. Begin to properly teach the principles of marriage.

b. That it begin to minister to those already in the divorce/remarried situation.

First I would like to present some of the views held today on the topic.

1. No divorce No remarriage
2. Div. OK in some cases No remarriage
3. Divorce OK Rem. OK in case of fornication
4. Divorce OK Rem. in case of fornication and desertion
5. Divorce OK Rem. OK in all cases

One, three and four are held in conservative circles, although four is not widely held. Three is the past favorite. Two is fairly new and not to much is being done with it. One is very conservative but I believe that it is growing rapidly due to the rethinking of the old position of number three.

Most view death as grounds for remarriage though Paul indicates that staying single may be best (I Cor. 7). Paul hints that young widows probably ought to remarry in one of his epistles if they

can't handle the life of a single. (Which is hard for most young people that have lost a spouse via death. I Cor. 7:7-8 mentions it is better to marry than burn, however that is specifically in the context of single persons considering not marrying for the first time and widows. It has nothing to do with the divorcees situation.)

Let us begin with a text that God set forth through Moses long before any of the texts that we will consider, were given.

Gen. 2:23-24, "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."

May I add a New Testament passage also?

Matt 19:4-8, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made [them] at the beginning made them male and female,

"And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

"They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

"He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."

Most agree to this. Marriage is between two, and in the beginning, was for life.

"Leave" is imperative to a good marriage. The cleave is indicative of holding to one another and no one else, as in parents or friends (This is not the idea of moving away from parents, for the Old Testament concept was the family staying together. The one flesh is indicative of the unity of the marriage.

How can you divide one flesh? This is the dilemma that faces those that see divorce as an option. They just don't deal with it.

I might add immediately that a legal separation may be very wise and in some states divorce. This will provide legal protection in some cases for the person. IT SHOULD NEVER BE SEEN

AS A DIVISION IN THE MARRIAGE FOR THE LAW CANNOT DIVIDE FLESH. DEATH IS THE ONLY DIVISOR OF THE ONE FLESH OF A MARRIAGE.

Let us look at the passages that seem to relate to the problem.

Exodus 20:14 "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

The clear command of God in one of His ten big ones! He says that you shalt not do it!

Lev. 18:16 mentions that it is not right for a brother to uncover the nakedness of his brother's wife. This would be in the case of a brother with his presently married brother's wife I would assume.

Lev. 18:20 mentions that adultery defiles the man.

Leviticus 20:10 "And the man that committeth adultery with [another] man's wife, [even he] that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."

This passage is clear that death was the laws answer to the adulterus activities of the Israelites. Christ, living under that law, obeying that law and fulfilling that law would naturally have known of this passage. He would have had to be thinking of this when He announced the so called exception for fornication. He knew that under the law, death was the answer to fornication, and there were no other cases whereby adultery was acceptable. It is not acceptable in the case of fornication, but is cause for death.

Let us look at the relationship of Christ to the law.

1. Christ was made of a woman under the law: Gal 4:4

2. Christ came to redeem those under the law: Gal 4:5

3. Christ came to fulfill the law: Matt 5:17-20

4. Christ would have to keep the law to fulfill it:
Matt 4:13-17 ("fulfill all righteousness")

5. Christ taught the keeping of the law: Matt 19:16-19

6. Christ did not come to destroy the law, nor to set it aside: Matt 5:17

In light of this it seems doubtful that the Lord was giving an exception for divorce, but rather He was stating there was no reason for divorce. Indeed, the reaction of the disciples indicates that

they viewed marriage for life and not something that could be dissolved.

If Christ had such strong feelings about divorce/remarriage, why shouldn't the minister of God, why shouldn't the woman of God, why shouldn't the man of God abhor divorce/remarriage within the family of God?

Deuteronomy 5:18 "Neither shalt thou commit adultery." This is a repeat of the commandment.

Deuteronomy 24:1 We need to understand this text in light of the Malachi passage concerning God's hate for divorce, and realize that the New Testament mentions this was allowed because of the hardness of their hearts. (Matt 19:8)

1. "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

2. "And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

3. "And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;

4. "Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

Some brief information on the words used: v 1 some = 1697 (from 1696) = "dabar (daw-baw) = twot 399a; relates to saying, speech, word, or business. uncleanness = 6172 (from 6168) = "ervah" (er-vaw) = twot 1692b; relates to nakedness and shame, or exposed. bill of divorcement = 3748 = "keriythuwth" (ker-ee-thooth) = twot 1048; means divorce or dismissal. v 4 defiled = 2930 = "tame" (taw-may') = twot 809; This tern relates to being unclean or impure. It can be sexually, ceremonially, or religiously.

The use of the word "dabar" would indicate that this uncleanness may be related to the spoken word. It could be cursing, or more to the point probably, would be the confession of some uncleanness. However, when you put this word with the word "ervah" you have a double term indicating other than the thought of uncleanness, but rather the thought of some spoken nakedness or exposure. This could relate to most any exposure of information that causes the man to decide he does not want this woman for a wife.

Many believe that this passage relates to the engagement period, before the actual marriage. It is something that the man finds out before the actual marriage ceremony and consummation of the marriage.

The term married = 1166 = "baal (bah'-al) = twot 262; Strong: "...to be master; hence...to marry:-have dominion (over), be husband, marry...." twot "possess, own, rule over, marry." Neither mention the thought of engagement period. This would indicate that they were indeed, married, however, since marriage is for life and the penalty for adultery is death, it seems right to assume that the text may well be speaking of the engagement period rather than an actual completed marriage.

Barne's Notes has a good comment which needs to be considered. (Cook, F.C., editor; "THE BIBLE COMMENTARY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House; no copy, pp 315-316) The author mentions that these four verses are actually one sentence. "Moses neither institutes nor enjoins divorce. The exact spirit of the passage is given in our lord's words to the Jews;, 'Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives' (Matt. xix. 8). Not only does the original institution of marriage as recorded by Moses (Gen. ii. 24) set forth the perpetuity of the bond, but the verses before us plainly intimate that divorce, whilst tolerated for the time, contravenes the order of nature and of God." He goes on to state, "Moses could not absolutely put an end to a practice which was traditional, and common to the Jews with other Oriental nations. His aim is therefore to regulate and thus to mitigate an evil which he could not extripate."

Since this is a text that we can't really nail down as to meaning, it should be subjected to a proper level under the institution of marriage in Genesis and the thought that God hates divorce. The most you might conclude from this text would be there is something revealed that causes the problem. You should not assume that this is basis for the divorce rate we see today.

A New Testament illustration of this would be Matt 1:19 when Joseph considered putting Mary away before they had consummated and completed the marriage.

In an informal paper from Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, OR, the faculty were trying to work through the issue of divorce/remarriage. They state of the Deut. 24 passage, "Divorce in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 was allowed but not ordered. What was commanded is this: if there were a divorce, the person being divorced must be given a bill of divorcement...." They go on to emphasize that the divorce was due to the hardness of their hearts.

It seems that the emphasis is not on allowing divorce, but that if you are going to be hard hearted enough to divorce then give a bill of divorcement.

The term defiled in v 4 is "become unclean" according to the Theogical Wordbook of the Old Testament. It is used in the following texts: Lev. 18:20 defiling a neighbor's wife; Ezek. 18:6 defiling a neighbor's wife; Num. 5:133,14,20,29; This is strong number 2930.

The first husband caused his wife trouble evidently because she went out and remarried.

NOTE: The 2nd divorce or idea that she is defiled to the point she is not able to be married

without adding problems to the situation indicates that the defilement is permanent. Marriage is for life.

Divorce is only recognized in this text, and is not commanded. Divorce is not even condoned in this text. Divorce is only recognized as being in existence in this text.

The first husband and I would assume all others are not to marry this woman. She is defiled for life! The text does not state it but the second marriage is what defiled her. She is not to remarry.

If the husband divorces he is to do the paperwork that is involved. This is all that this text is getting at.

The standard of the woman for marriage was: Being a virgin Deut. 22:13ff, Matt. 1:18ff;
or a widow - Ruth and Boaz produced a child in the line of Christ.

The defilement of this woman was life long. Barne's Notes backs this line of thinking as well.

Conclusions:

This woman defiled herself when she married the second time.
This woman had caused problems in the marriage.
This woman would defile any one that she married.

Thus the divorcee that remarries is defiled or unmarriable for life. The second and succeeding spouses are defiled because of the marriage to the divorcee.

The defilement in the case of the divorcee is for life, while we aren't told of the second spouse. The indication of Lev. 22:7 is that the priest would be defiled. If there was a possibility of him removing that defilement the Bible is silent. I would assume that if he were to put her away, then his defilement would end.

Leviticus 21:7 "They shall not take a wife [that is] a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he [is] holy unto his God." (v 14 also)

The priest is not to marry a divorced woman because he is holy. This is very plain and the indications are very clear that the divorced woman would be a defilement to the priest.

An associated passage is Lev. 22:13. A priests young childless - widowed or divorced daughter may live with the priest, but no strangers are to eat there. Since this text mentions the widowed, I would assume that the danger here is that some unwanted possibilities would exist if a stranger were to drop in for a period of time.

Conclusions from the Leviticus texts might run along this line. If a man marries a divorced

woman he will become defiled or unholy.

It should be pointed out that 22:13 tells us that associating with the divorcee is not defiling. The divorcee needs to be ministered to and that is a real problem for the church. We have many divorcees going to churches that are inadequate doctrinally because they find acceptance there and they don't in our fundamental churches.

A word of warning: I think that a close relationship to a divorcee could well damage a good marriage, so there is a real danger in this. The divorcee can affect in a negative manner a happily married person to the point of damaging the marriage.

Some suggest many things from Deut. 22:13-21. There is a lot built on this text that is not really there. If you see comments on it be sure that you look very carefully. The context is a woman that is claiming to be a virgin and is trying to publicly get away with her lie. Note: If she is virgin the marriage bond is for life! Divorce in vs. 19 is literally "send her away". This is a problem that arises before the marriage is consummated. (virgin)

It is of interest that Joseph (Mary's husband) knew this ruling. If he thought that Mary was a non-virgin He may have been showing a great love for her by trying to divorce her quietly. He didn't want to chance any harm for her and her baby.

Deut. 22:22 Remember for awhile, the fact that verse 22 mentions death as the punishment for adultery. Divorce is not in view here!

Deuteronomy 22:28, 29 is of interest while we are in the vicinity. It speaks of a single man and single woman that have relations. The point of the passage is marriage and payment of money to the father. The passage ends with a command, "...and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. This idea is in v 19 as well. It seems Moses wanted to emphasis the point. Unless I am seriously wrong, this is a command that a marriage is for life. It would not seem logical to penalize these particular situations for life, so we should see it as general principle - marriage is for life. If there is divorce, the person is defiled when remarried.

Ezra 10:3,19 "Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.

"And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and [being] guilty, [they offered] a ram of the flock for their trespass."

Chapter nine and Neh. 13:23-31 are also background for this text.

This speaks of putting foreign wives away, however there is no mention of divorce or bills of

divorcement which Deut. required.

The most you can draw from this is that the Jews were allowed to separate themselves from foreign wives - not divorce. The term used here "put away" is "yasa" which means to go out from. (This is Strong's 3318 and twot's 893) This is not related to the terms for divorce in the Old Testament. This was a step to keep the Messianic line pure, and I have not found any that speak of this being for today.

Proverbs 6:32 "[But] whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he [that] doeth it destroyeth his own soul."

There are two things mentioned here. The adulterer lacketh understanding, and he destroyeth his own soul.

Just what the last item means is another thing. It would probably be readily accepted that this is not talking about eternal things. It would seem that it speaks of the man's earthly life. The soul is the center of our world consciousness, thus the thought should relate to how the man relates to his world. Adultery certainly has been observed to seriously affect the mental and emotional side of people involved, and these two often can cause problems within the physical realm as well.

Thus the destruction probably relates to the life, or quality of life of the people involved. I once was told by an older woman of a part of her life. Her account relates to this point. She had divorced her first husband and had remarried. She began to look at the Bible and realized that she should not be married. She mentioned that she went through many years of guilt feelings because of her situation. She said that she was very relieved when her first husband died. She felt that she had been freed.

Jeremiah 3:1 "They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD."

God views the put away wife that remarries as an harlot, or as we've seen - defiled.

Jeremiah 3:8,9 "And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also."

"And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks."

The whole tenor of the text should set the person contemplating adultery at odds with their straying desires.

Several things to note:

Israel committed adultery and was put away: This might indicate that the exception of the New Testament for fornication had Old Testament basis. This is God that did this.

It could better be said that it is an understandable picture that God gave to the Jews, and that He did not really give them a divorce - He just put them away for their spiritual adultery.

The thought of Israel being His wife is merely a picture, thus so would be a divorce from her. If you make the mistake of making this a real divorce then you have him married to Israel and divorcing her, while he is married to Judah. You might tack on the fact that Christ will marry the church one day. Bigamy on the part of God - not a tolerable teaching!

God gave a bill of divorce: Again this does not indicate an Old testament basis for the exception of the New Testament. Even if this is a true event of divorce on the part of God, it was for the fear factor in others. He did it to salvage a relationship with Judah. Application of this might run along the line that any divorce in this age should be an example and a case to cause fear in other peoples relationships. It is of interest, that if this is true, then the people of our day have done as Judah - feared not and played the harlot.

Conclusions from this text:

1. The thought of the text is that God was trying to set an example and salvage another relationship.

Those today that do not take the example of others divorcing are not fearing God and the party that is unfaithful is an HARLOT.

2. This text should be taken within the context of all prior Old Testament information on divorce, and putting away. The Jewish mind would have understood this terminology because of their background.

The thought that God actually issued a bill of divorcement should not be taken as a literal writing and delivering, nor should it be taken as an okay for man to do so.

I personally feel that it was a picture for Judah and that it was an illustration. As were the anthropormorphisms of the Psalmist. They picture an attribute or act of God. He merely saw their adultery and put them away because of it.

Verse one "they say" may refer to Deut. 24:1-4

The most you might come up with here is that the wife that plays the harlot, and continues in it for many years - not a one time act of adultery, may be put away. Remarriage is never an option

here. However to view this as a basis for putting away, I believe that it would be stretching the text. Indeed, reconciliation is the thought of all that God does in the book of Jerimiah. He is always calling his people back to Himself. If you see divorce for adultery in this text, then you must also see no thought of remarriage to another, as well as the key thought of reconciliation. Note should be made that this adultery was over many years and even generations and God still wanted them to return to Him.

Some information on the words used: "committed" and "adultery" are one word: 5003 na'aph {naw-af'} a primitive root; TWOT - 1273; It seems to mean to commit adultery. It is used of men/women/figuratively of idolatry. "her a bill": 5612 cepher {say'-fer} or (feminine) ciphrah (Psa. 56:8 [9]) {sif-raw'} from 5608; TWOT - 1540a,1540b; it has the idea of a book, document or legal document. "of divorce": 3748 k@riythuwth {ker-ee-thooth'} from 3772; TWOT - 1048a; simply refers to dismissal or divorce. "harlot": 2181 zanah {zaw-naw'} a primitive root [highly-fed and therefore wanton]; TWOT - 563; relates to commission of fornication, adultery, or harlotry.

Jeremiah 5:7 "How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by [them that are] no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses."

The spiritual adultery of Israel should let us know how God feels about it in the physical realm. Words like these should move the believer to refrain from the act, to abhor the act, and to teach against the act.

Jeremiah 7:9 "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;"

This use of adultery is speaking of physical and not spiritual adultery. Adultery is related to stealing, murder, lying, and idolatry. Are these things that a believer wants to involve themselves in? I fear in our "gray area" Christian society, believers feel free to be involved in these areas with no thought.

Jeremiah 23:14 "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah."

Again, how can the believer desire to have anything to do with adultery if God feels this way about it? Indeed, there may be a harsh message to the pastors and leaders of our day that give the idea that divorce/remarriage are correct methods of operation. Pastors have now, in some cases, decided it is acceptable for them to be divorced/remarried.

Jeremiah 29:23 "Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery

with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and [am] a witness, saith the LORD."

This passage would call the erring believer to realize that God is witness of what they do in the dark. He is also their judge, the judge with the perfect, truthful, and unfailing witness - Himself.

Ezekiel 16:32 "[But as] a wife that committeth adultery, [which] taketh strangers instead of her husband!" A bold, concise, and clear statement of what adultery is!

Ezekiel 23:37 "That they have committed adultery, and blood [is] in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through [the fire], to devour [them]."

This passage should wake some up to the effect their life style has on their children. God states that the adultery of the father may well be passed on to the family. Indeed, this is easily observed within the fabric of our society today.

Ezekiel 44:22 "Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before."

Hosea 2:2; Hosea 4:2; Hosea 4:13, 14.

Matthew 5:27 "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

Christ related the wondering minds eye to the wondering physical eye. If you are involved mentally with one that is not your spouse, you are involved in adultery. Christ relates this new truth to the commandment that we have already seen in our study.

One might ask the question, if a person involved in pornography comes to know the Lord does that person need to remove his mind from the pornography? I think that the overwhelming answer would be YES! If the one involved in mental adultery needs to come out of their sin when they are saved, why shouldn't we teach that the physical adulterer should set aside their adultery when they become believers?

Matthew 5:32 "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

It is of interest to me that Christ assumes that the person will remarry. This is related to the society they were operating in. The woman would have no way of living without a husband, so

would naturally look for another husband.

The statement is clear - If a man puts away his wife, he causes her to commit adultery. Further, if one marries her he also commits adultery. "committeth adultery" is a present tense verb which indicates that this is an ongoing adultery, not just a one time act.

Q. What is this adultery that is committed? Is remarriage equal to one act of adultery, or is remarriage equal to moving into a relationship of ongoing adultery? It seems logical that it is ongoing rather than a one time event. There is no logical basis to relate the act of marriage to the sin of adultery. Getting married does not make you an adulterer, the intimacy of marriage to one not your spouse makes you an adulterer.

Some might suggest that remarriage = adultery = one time = this is what Christ was saying = leaving the spouse. If this is true then the application of that concept is that any man stepping out on his wife the first time commits adultery - one time act, and then following occurrences of infidelity are not adultery. The adultery was the original leaving. Believing that the adultery is a one time sin that is forgiven once, is not a logical conclusion.

Context: The Jews and no one else. This is a group of instructions given to the Jews to prepare them for life in the Kingdom. This is a Jew talking to Jews, in a Jewish setting, in Jewish times, in a Jewish law discussion, in Jewish land, with Jewish leaders about a future Jewish age, under a Jewish ruler.

Most use this verse to show that divorce is okay in the case of fornication. Most relate fornication to the sin of adultery. By the way none I've read mentions in this context that the Old Testament penalty for adultery was death.

The contrast of "some say" and "I say" is of interest as well. Christ is not teaching on what "some say", but on what He says. This whole section seems to be His expansion and explanation of some of the Old Testament concepts, that indeed had been misinterpreted by the Jews of His day.

You might easily view this verse as stating that in the case of fornication the death penalty (Deut. 22:24) is to be carried out and there is no remarriage in that case for the person is dead. This was Christ, the one that lived the law perfectly, that is speaking, and this would certainly be His interpretation I would think. It is also to be noted that Christ is speaking of the Kingdom in which He will reign with a rod of iron and judgment of wrong will be immediate. This would mean the adulterous parties will not be around long enough to remarry!

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DIVORCE/REMARRIAGE CONTINUED

In the case of divorce for any other reason the resulting remarriage is sin.

The term fornication is discussed at times but usually is related to adultery. Some miscellaneous information on some possibilities that have been presented. beastiality: the result was to be death, Lev. 20:16; Ex 22:19; Homosexuality: Death, Lev. 20:13; These were sins of the people that God destroyed at the hand of Israel as they entered the land, Lev 18:22-24

There is a study of the term "fornication" at the end of this paper. Basically the term is any sexual activity that is incorrect. In these cases it refers to adultery.

Some would suggest that the death for adultery was not being practiced in this time. The method of death was stoning. Stoning was yet present in Stephen's and Paul's time. John R.W. Stott in "DIVORCE" mentions that stoning continued until 40 AD.

Matt 14:3-14; Mark 6:14ff (Herod)

John The Baptist had told Herod that it was unlawful for him to have his brothers wife. Why? It would seem that his brother was still alive and he along with his wife were breaking the law. What law? The law of God that states that the man and woman are one flesh until death. Unger in his Bible Dictionary mentions that the Herod and Herodias eloped while both were still married.

John The Baptist was confident enough in His God to accuse even the king, of adultery, yet when a pastor suggests church discipline for the same thing in this generation, he is held up to ridicule.

Matt 19:3-12 We have here some questions and answers in this text. Question: v 3 "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Christ answers, Haven't you read: Christ refers to the Gen. 2 text.

Question: v 7 Why then did Moses "command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" THIS IS A MISREPRESENTATION OF MOSES! Christ corrects the comment, and tells them that it was because of the hardness of their hearts that Moses PERMITTED, not commanded it. BUT, This was not so from the beginning. Would Christ return to the beginning if He thought there were any basis for divorce or putting away? Not logical.

The term hardness of heart is used normally of unsaved and non believing. (Pharaoh; Mk. 16:14; 3:5; Rom. 2:5.) This may indicate that divorce is allowed in the unsaved world due to their unbelief and hardness, though I'm not sure you can even build that case.

Christ then goes to the thought of adultery for those involved in a second marriage after a divorce. No man in the text would include a husband. No man should cause separation!

The reaction of the disciples was of interest. They decided it would be better not to get married.

(Matt 19:10, "His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." The discussion that follows makes it clear that they were talking about not getting married. Their reaction can only give evidence that they felt marriage was for life and that there was no way out.

Matthew 19:18 "He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,"

The Lord repeated all of the commandments except the sabbath, thus telling us they are still valid for today. Clear and concise - no adultery.

So, how can a believer be involved in divorce/remarriage? If they are they are openly before all that know, breaking one of God's commandments in an ongoing manner.

Q. How involved can someone in this position be in the local church? A good question! Today we have men pastoring in this situation. Would we have an active murderer teaching our youth group? Would we have an active thief teaching our beginners class? Probably not, so why do we have divorced/remarried people involved in these ministries?

I once spoke to a man that had recently divorced his first wife. They had both remarried and all four were singing in the church choir - an evangelical church - there was constant division because he felt that she and her husband shouldn't be involved in the choir. WHAT A TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST!

Mark 10:2-12 This is similar to Matt 19, except for one very curious exception. The exception clause of fornication is not mentioned. Now if the book of Mark was written for the edification of Gentiles it would seem that the exception clause would be explained for them, rather than not mentioned, if indeed there is an exception. Is Mark just applying the thought that death is the result of fornication and there are no exceptions? It would seem entirely possible. Christ is asked by the disciples again in private and Christ states clearly there is adultery in the case of ANY divorce - remarriage situation.

Some would submit that the reader would assume the exception clause due to their knowledge of the Matthew text. This is foolishness for the reader of Mark probably did not have the Matthew text to read. Mark was writing to specific people. Indeed, since this is true, the exception clause should have been present, if there was any case for remarriage without adultery being involved!

Some suggest that his leaving it out was to emphasize the concept of no divorce that the Scriptures set forth as the best. The fact that Matthew mentions the exception is because the Lord wanted to be in keeping with the letter of Deut. 24. Mark just eliminated it to emphasize the importance of lasting marriages. This to me seems to leave Mark in the position of being somewhat dishonest with his readers.

Some thoughts: Mark is probably the first Gospel written. He was presenting the message to a gentile audience that probably would never see Matthew. If he left out the exception, then he was dishonest and misled the readers. On the other hand, if he viewed Christ's "exception" as this paper indicates, as not really an exception but death to the adulterer, then we have Mark setting forth a proper and complete picture of what Christ said.

This text is even clearer that the divorce/remarriage is a sin based on the breaking of the original marriage. "committeth adultery against her", is clearly stating that his new marriage is against the original spouse - it is adultery against her. Can we ever delegate this to a one time act? I don't know how.
The divorce is not the adultery, nor is the remarriage. It is the divorce/remarriage that leaves a person in an adulterous relationship.

Can one that is divorced/remarried before salvation receive forgiveness for their sin when they accept Christ? YES! Does the wrong situation change because of salvation? NO. Does the first marriage suddenly disappear or become null and void? NO. Does the adulterous situation disappear or become null and void? NO.

The use of tenses in this text backs up the thinking presented here that the adultery is continuing. The verb for putting away is aorist (one time action), the verb marries is aorist (one time action), and the verb commits adultery is present (continuing action).

Verse 12 continues on, "And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." Again the married is aorist while the committeth adultery is present - continuing.

This use of the present tense would indicate that the Lord and the three Gospel writers considered the adultery as an ongoing state of affair rather than a one time act. If this is an ongoing condition then the person that is divorced/remarried is living in open ongoing sin with no thought of ceasing from their activity.

Corinthians tells us that open, ongoing, unrepentant sin is cause for the removal of the person from the assembly. Someone asked me once what I would suggest for the divorced/remarried person. He asked if I would recommend divorce. When I said that this would put them closer to the thought of marriage (one for life) and that it would remove them from sin, he stated that he thought if was foolish of me to suggest divorce because it was sin. The man did not think that in God's eyes there is no second marriage, so there is nothing wrong with going through a secular, legal "divorce."

I would suggest a question in answer to this thought of suggesting a second divorce. What would we ask a Mormon with four wives to do if we led him to the Lord? Would we welcome all four wives and the husband into the membership of the church? No, we would teach them the Bible and pray that the Holy Spirit would lead them to do the right thing. Missionaries have faced

similar problems on the field over the years and find that the men with multiple wives normally separate from all wives but the first and support all wives and children involved.

Luke 16:18 "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from [her] husband committeth adultery."

Notice that Luke also fails to mention the "exception." He was not writing to Jews either, so would present the complete picture of no divorce. Matthew on the other hand was writing to Jews. He would naturally comment to them from the Jewish background which included the thought of death to the adulterer. Since their question was based on Moses, Christ had to respond to the Old Testament information.

Luke 18:20 "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother." It doesn't sound like the Lord appreciated adultery.

John 8:3 "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act."

I would like to look at this text for a moment. It might be used as a proof text to show that the Old Testament death penalty was being set aside. Not so. Christ told them, that were without sin, to cast the first stone. None of the men were without the same sin, so none cast a stone. Since Christ was not a witness to the act, nor was he in the position of judge, he would not be involved in carrying out the command to stone. The scribes and Pharisees did not deal with the woman as they should have under their legal system. They should not have taken her to Christ.

Romans 2:22 "Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"

This passage encourages the one that condemns adultery to be sure that he does not fall into the sin which he condemns. This is a strong admonishment to the pastors and leaders of our churches. Some leaders are now doing what they have always condemned.

Romans 13:9 "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Again, definitely in the church age, we have a clear statement of "Thou shalt not commit adultery...." We Cannot have church leadership, nor even teachers that are committed to the open breaking of God's clear commandments.

1 Corinthians 7:10, 11 mentions a woman leaving her husband. Some state this allows her to divorce him. Not so. Divorce is not mentioned - only leaving. She is told to remain unmarried.

Galatians 5:19 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,"

Adultery is mentioned as a work of the flesh. This passage is contrasting the works of the flesh with the works of the Spirit. It might well be pictured as the works of the lost contrasted with the life of the saved. The least we can draw from this text is that the believer should not be involved in the works of the flesh. If they are in an open manner, how can we allow them to minister in the church? We should not. Verse twenty mentions, strife and heresies. These are causes for church discipline and removal from the assembly, so why would we want someone living in open adultery actively ministering in our churches?

One might wonder why the church has left its strong stand of removal of divorced/remarried people from the assembly. The thought that the father that is in adultery, brings danger to his son in the same area, may well relate to why the Church today has the same divorce rate that the lost world has. Because a few divorces were tolerated they became more acceptable, etc. Some miscellaneous references containing "adultery": James 2:11; 2 Peter 2:14; Revelation 2:22.

Question: When is adultery, adultery? Each intimacy with one not your spouse is adultery. The life style would also be a life, or living in adultery. The key is that the adultery is an ongoing thing as long as there are intimate contacts.

This is illustrated for us in the spiritual adultery of Israel. They could have ceased their adultery at any point by leaving their "other gods" and returning to God. This by the way is also an illustration of the proper remedy for divorce/remarriage adultery in our own day in the physical realm. Leave the one that it not your spouse and return to your original spouse.

Question: Is there any sin whereby it is sin for the lost and not for the saved? Only one that I can think of and that being the rejection of Christ's finished work. All other sin is universally wrong, incorrect, and unacceptable to God.

Thus if adultery is deemed sin in any manner wouldn't it seem that it is sin in all manner? If it is sin for the unsaved, then being saved does not change it to non sin.

One closing thought concerning divorce/remarriage. Spiritual adultery is leaving God for other gods. The remedy is leaving the other gods and returning to God. In marriage adultery is leaving your spouse and going to other women. The only remedy is to leave the other women and returning to your spouse.

Conclusions to the study:

1. The most you can say from Scripture is:

a. Divorce for sexual problems was tolerated for Jews because of the hardness of hearts in the time of Moses.

b. Divorce is not commanded in any circumstance. This leaves the thought of working it out as the option.

c. The Jews are the only people involved in this idea of divorce, even if you hold to the possibility of the adultery clause in the Gospels.

d. If you reject the Matthew text being to the Jews then you must do two things.

1.) Accept that divorce in the case of adultery is allowed - NOT COMMANDED NOR ENCOURAGED!

2.) You must prove that the stoning for adultery was set aside before the time of Christ.

e. You may from I Corinthians 7, envision a separation but not remarriage.

f. Remarriage seems to be out even if you hold to an exception clause due to the defilement problem of the Old Testament. If you marry a divorcee then the defilement is transmitted to you as well.

g. The church, and parents are to blame for our divorce problems today among Christians! We have not been teaching proper ideas of marriage, and when trouble comes we are not teaching a Biblical concept of divorce and adultery that follows.

2. Notes of interest:

a. Lev. 21:7; 22:13 show that associating with divorcees does not defile you. However, beware of their possible negative influence on your own spiritual life and marriage.

b. A priests daughter can be divorced without bringing change to the priests status of holiness or position.

We need to apply this to the parents of today. A pastor or layman that has a divorced daughter need not have his status in the church changed. The divorce was an adult decision by the daughter and does not affect the father.

c. Jer. 3:1-8: God put up with generations of adultery with Israel. This is not permission to people to remarry, but is an illustration of God's longsuffering. Indeed, it shows that the spouse of a longtime adulterous partner can have the grace to look toward a reconciliation.

d. If God puts a couple together how can man do anything to tear it apart? The thought is foolishness. God put it together and there is nothing short of death that can change that fact.

3. The present tense indicates the adultery is of a continuing nature and not a one time act at the time of the remarriage. Matt 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18.

Some say these usages are a special use of the present tense which means that it was a one time adultery. I have asked several Greek scholars if there was a grammatical basis for saying this, and they said there is not.

4. The idea of the adulterous woman in John 8 is of interest. She was continuing in sin and was told to go and sin no more. She was forgiven of the past sin, but told to stop.

5. If the adultery of the divorcee is viewed as a one time sin, then all succeeding sexual relations are of no consequence. This seems to be illogical. The person that is married and has activity outside of his marriage is considered to be in adultery at each occurance. Adultery is an intimate relation of a married person with a person not their spouse!

6. Some suggest that if a person was divorced and remarried before they were saved that they are not held accountable for what they did before they were saved. Let's think about that for a moment. If you murdered before you were saved are you not still a murderer after you are saved. Are you not liable for all consequences of the murder before you were saved? Salvation does not change our marital status nor does it negate the consequences of past sins.

7. Some ask what the person is to do. They suggest that a second divorce is wrong. The second divorce would be correcting the sin of the remarriage and is the only logical answer to the situation.

Indeed, is the second divorce a wrong. There is no second marriage in God's eyes, so the second divorce would be a legal tool to return to the situation that God wants them in. One that is divorced and remarried before salvation has this option open to them and should consider it. Yes, it would be very difficult! Yes, there would be hardship. But the Scriptures mention the consequences and hard ship that follows our sins!

The business man that is saved Cannot just break contracts on bad deals because he becomes a Christian. The alcoholic that is saved is forgiven, but he has a life long problem facing alcoholism!

8. The problem we have today is twofold.

a. We have divorcees and people that have remarried in our churches! We must deal with these people as believers that need to be ministered to. We must attempt to minister to their needs. We do not have to condone their past actions, nor do we set aside the clear teaching of Scripture

just to use them in the church. Timothy's clear command from Paul was that the elders were to be one woman type men, and that does not allow for divorcees and remarrieds.

b. The second problem is that we still aren't teaching our children and church people what proper marriage is, nor are we speaking out against divorce and remarriage.

We must minister the Word and allow people to be confronted with it even if they don't like it. God has spoken - that is what they will have to dislike!

9. How do we handle the already divorced and remarried?

a. Do not allow them to condemn themselves. God still loves them! Teach them the proper principles of marriage/divorce and allow the Holy Spirit to lead them to the correct conclusion.

b. Help them to understand that any restriction on their usability is not the leadership's fault but that it is the leaders responsibility from the Word.

c. Remember Abraham, David, Solomon and others. bigamy is in the end, adultery and they were used greatly by God, however they did not have the indwelling Spirit of God as we do. Their short comings are more understandable. We will be held to a higher accountability due to our further revelation and the Holy Spirit's ministry to us.

10. It is a very hard subject for our day. There are multitudes of situations that are seen by some to be "special" or "different," but the fact remains that the Scriptures have made some very specific demands of the believer. It is our responsibility to look at the Scriptures and then in light of them, view every situation.

11. Divorce is not the best course, nor is it desired, but may be the legal protection a spouse needs to protect themselves from high bills and problems. The divorce in this case is only a legal tool and cannot be viewed as changing the marriage bonds in any way. God has set the standard, not man.

The most liberal view that has any basis in scripture would be that divorce and remarriage is okay in view of adultery. Even if you ignored the above pages of proof against that position and believed it was okay, then you are still faced with the key thought of God waiting generations for his people to return from their adultery (That by the way is idolatry or leaving God for other gods.) and always desiring to have them come back to Him.

12. I Cor. 6:9-10 is a verse to consider.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Just how does this relate to our problem? A reading of vv 9-11 will show that Paul is listing types of unsaved people. He uses this to contrast the proper living of the believer, or at least the hoped for living of the believer.

13. Perhaps some questions and answers would help to put some of this information into perspective.

Question: What is adultery? Adultery is a married person having relations with other than their spouse. In our society a single person having relations with a married person would also be considered in adultery, I would suspect, however the single person, Biblically, would probably be guilty of fornication.

Question: When is adultery adultery? Every time the sexual relations occur.

Question: Is adultery pre-salvation forgiven after the person is saved? Yes.

Question: Is adultery post-salvation forgiven because of the pre-salvation forgiveness? No. This sin can, and will be forgiven any time the person uses I John 1:9. Any blanket forgiveness post-salvation is not a Scriptural concept.

Question: How can adultery be considered as a one time act in the remarriage situation, but not continuing in the case of a man cheating on His wife? It cannot. Both MUST be the same. Both are ongoing.

Question: Can a continuing sin which stems from a pre-salvation remarriage be forgiven once for all because of the cross? No.

Question: Does not everything belong under the blood? This question is of recent consideration. I have not seen, read or heard it until recent years.

All sins - pre and post salvation - are or can be forgiven, however on a different basis. Pre-salvation sin is automatic in the acceptance/redemption process. Post-salvation sin is cared for only as the person seeks forgiveness, and attempts to rectify their improper action. If post-salvation sin were automatically cared for then license would be the result in our lives.

Question: Is there any indication that adultery is not sin each time sexual relations occur? No. Adultery of the mind is a one time act (aorist tense), yet it can be repeated and would be adultery each time as would actual relations.

Question: Is there a difference between continuing in the same sin week after week and being a

person that has a different sin each week? Are not both people the same - in sin?

In God's eyes, yes, sin is sin, however there is a difference and I believe that God views the two people differently. The one that continues in the same sin is not changing as the idea of repentance and confession imply. The person that is in different types of sin is a person that deals with this weeks sin and puts it behind them. When they find themselves in another sin they need to deal with it. This person is progressing in their spiritual life, whereas the other person is continuing in their sin with no attempt to correct their lives.

Question: If I am in a divorce/remarried situation, what are my alternatives?

1. Abstinence: This should be on the basis of mutual consent according to I Corinthians 7:5, however this will be a very hard alternative. This may sound terrible, and it would be a serious strain on the relationship, however many couples have continued through their life in marriages where one partner was unable to have sexual relations due to physical limitations.

2. If the remarriage has not yet occurred, then wait until the first spouse is dead. Many people that have found themselves divorced by their spouse have remained single until the spouse died.

3. Separation or divorce. This would be the step which corrected the problem. Again, a very hard alternative.

4. If you find yourself divorced, then do not allow yourself to enter into friendships that might lead to a desire to get married.

5. Continue in your present situation. This is not a recommendation, but is a very real solution of many believers around the world. It can be observed that God continues to use the divorced/remarried person. The question is, just how much more the Lord could use them if they were not in this situation.

One item of information that has not been discussed in this paper and that I have never heard brought into the divorce/remarriage discussion is the item of vows. The wedding vows are promises that the people make to one another before man and God. A brief word study in the Old Testament concerning vows and God's view of them would be good for anyone considering divorce.

This paper is not designed to give all the answers to all the questions that might arise in the readers mind. It is, I trust an honest look at the Scripture as it relates to the topic.

To reject the conclusions of this paper cannot be a simple mental rejection of the conclusions. To reject you must find different conclusions based on the texts given. You must not fall into the temptation to spiritualize or allegorize. We believe in literal, plain, easy interpretation of Scripture and must practice it in ALL studies we do in the Word.

You must deal with the present tense verbs that the Gospel writers use. You must deal with the Malachi passage that tells us that God hates divorce and treachery. You must deal with the teaching of the Lord concerning the subject.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ON RELATED WORDS:

ADULTERY

The Greek word "moichos" is the noun form of the word. It means according to Vine, "...denotes one who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another...." "moichalis" is the term for the woman, "an adulteress" according to Vine. ("moicheia" is the adjective form, "moichao" and "moicheuo" are the verb forms.) See complete word study in divorce/remarriage file.

FORNICATION

We need to consider for a moment the thought of fornication in the Gospels. Most, I have read and heard consider this to be adultery within the marriage. The Greek words are as follows: Noun forms, "porneia" and "pornos", Verb forms, "porneuo" and "ekporneuo."

Vine on the word:

"pornia": "...of illicit sexual intercourse...." It is also used metaphorically of idolatry. Vine mentions that it includes adultery but can be distinguished from adultery. (Matt 15:19)

"pornos": "...denotes a man who indulges in fornication, a fornicator...."

"poneuo": "...to commit fornication...."

"ekporneuo": "...a strengthened form of No. I...to give oneself up to fornication, implying excessive indulgence...."

So fornication can be adultery, but may be other things as well.

Matt 15:19 states, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemeies:" The text goes on to state "These are the things which defile a man...." Not an activity that a believer ought to be involved in once, much less on an ongoing basis.

Adultery in the Matthew text is the Greek word "moicheia."
Fornication in the Matthew text is the Greek word "porneia."

References that contain the term with some comments: 2 Chronicles 21:11; Isaiah 23:17; Ezekiel 16:29; Matthew 5:32; Matthew 19:9; John 8:41; Acts 15:20; Acts 15:29; Acts 21:25; Romans

1:29; Rom. 7:2-3 This is an illustration of the persons relation to the law. Under the law, it has dominion over you for life. Thus in marriage the vow has dominion over you all your life. Paul's clear statement is that the person that remarries while the spouse lives is an adulterer! His other clear statement is that death breaks that bond and that the person is free to remarry. In essence, because Christ died and fulfilled the law we are free to take Christ since the old bonds and dominion of the law are broken; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Corinthians 7:2; I Cor. 7:10ff This is a series of orders. vs 10 the wife shouldn't leave husband/vs 11 the wife if leaves remains unmarried or reconciles/the husband is not to send her away/vs 15 if there is an unbelieving mate that leaves then let them go but live in peace. They are free from the need to keep the marriage together. Ezra 10 may relate to this. vs 39 the wife is bound to the husband as long as he is alive/free to marry when he dies --"IN THE LORD"! HOWEVER, Paul mentions she may be happier alone and not remarried. It is of interest that this may have been written before Matt. If this is true then was Paul not very remiss in not mentioning the exception clause if indeed it exists? The term bondage is never used in relation to divorce in the New Testament. Remarriage in the case of abandonment is not found in this text. The text is clear that marriage is for life; 1 Corinthians 10:8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Eph. 5:21-33 The marriage relationship is used to illustrate the relationship of Christ to the church. If the marriage bond is separable then the bond between Christ the head and the church His body is also separable and this is unacceptable. Both bonds are permanent; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 1:7; Revelation 2:14; Revelation 2:20; Revelation 9:21; Revelation 14:8; Revelation 17:2; Revelation 17:4; Revelation 18:3; Revelation 18:9; Revelation 19:2.

The term is not well defined by the passages. The fact that it is used allegorically of nations or kings fornicating with the great whore could lead us to believe that it is illicit relations, but whether it is among singles, or among a married and an unknown, is not clear.

It would seem easiest to understand the word to refer to literally, any improper sexual activity, and allegorically any improper relationship with those you should not be having relationships with.

Since the Gospel texts are in the context of married partners and new married partners, it would seem that fornication is adultery. Adultery would cover any improper activity outside of the marriage, which also fits into the definition and usage of fornication.

Two other Greek words that need to be mentioned:

Both of these terms are related to divorce. "apoluo" which is a term used in secular Greek for dismissal from the army, or from jail. It also is used of setting a debtor free. (From Wayne A. Detzler's book, "NEW TESTAMENT WORDS IN TODAY'S LANGUAGE"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 124.) This is the term translated "put away" in the Gospels.

"apostasion" which is used of the bill of divorcement. The Septuigent writers used this tern to

translate the word in Deut 24:3. This is used in Matt 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4. This is also the term the Septuigent writers used in Jer. 3:8 for bill of divorcement.

ESCHATOLOGY

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PREFACE TO THE STUDY OF ESCHATOLOGY

Having just finished the study on Ecclesiology, I am very excited to look into the future for the Church. The study of the Church was exciting and fulfilling, but as we looked at the Word for that study we must do the same for this study. The Church was exciting, and we know it to be the same in our experience in local assemblies, however that is a portion of what God has planned for us as we assemble in eternity as the Universal Church to enjoy our wonderful Savior and Head, Jesus Christ.

God has created for us here on earth the temporal church to minister to our needs and problems, but in Eschatology we will see that not only is He tying up all the prophetic loose ends, but He is laying out the future eternal habitation for those of us that have decided to follow His Son.

As this study begins, a few explanations are in order. First these thoughts are not my thoughts alone. The Lord has led me through the theology courses of four colleges and seminaries, so you can imagine that much of what I relate to you is coming from many other men, and many books that I have had the privilege of reading. As I have worked through this information, I have evaluated and adapted it to my own thinking and theological system. There are more complete works on the subject of future things, but I trust this will be the most practical of these books. Eschatology should, if nothing else demand that we change our manner of living. We say we believe that Christ could come at any minute, yet we are amassing temporal things by the truck load as though He has revealed to us that He will not appear in our life time. Future things should definitely affect our present life as well as give us great hope and joy as we look forward to that day when we will be with the Lord.

The study will be divided into topics and as the topics are discussed they will be related to the other areas of discussion.

I trust that the reader will gain an overall view of the subject.

I trust that not only will the reader gain a proper understanding of what the Bible presents, but a general understanding of some of the false teachings in the area of future things. I also desire that the facts will motivate the life to changes that the Lord might direct in individual lives.

At the end of the book is a series of appendixes which contain some miscellaneous information

that may be of help to the reader. There is a test to see just how much you really know about Eschatology, as well as other information. You should browse through these to acquaint yourself with the items.

One that might be of great assistance is a listing of authors/books and their approximate theological positions.

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OVERVIEW OF THE FUTURE

It is recommended that the reader take the test found in appendix one to see where they are in their knowledge of the future. This will give you some idea of how you are in your eschatological prowess.

This section is designed to give the reader a quick over view of all that we will be looking at as we move through the study.

Don't get worried if you become a little overwhelmed or confused in this section. You can come back to this section as you read the other topical studies and refresh yourself concerning the topic and where it belongs in the big picture.

We will cover items of interest in chronological order beginning with God before He created.

GOD:

Before there was time, Lucifer, man, earth or anything else the Trinity conceived of a plan to bring glory to themselves. The plan was complete in its totality. This is important to the position that will be presented. It becomes important when Christ comes to earth as the Messiah of the Old Testament and was rejected by His people the Jews. Some view the events that follow the cross as something new and unique. This study will submit a position that states the church is a continuation of God's continuing program and not a new program.

I will submit to you that it was not a new program, but rather a continuation of that original plan that was set by the Trinity in eternity past. The church was an integrated part of that plan from the beginning.

THE CREATION:

At a point in eternity past, God specified that creation would occur. He created through the Son and by the power of the Spirit. Creation began with the angels and beings of the heavenly scene. Lucifer and his followers fell in this period before the creation of the heavens.

THE FALL OF MAN:

God created heaven and earth for the next step in His overall program. On the earth He placed Adam and Eve who soon after their creation fell into sin. The sin separated them from their creator.

Over time God worked with different men and women. These people followed the revelation that they had from God and found favor with God through a sacrificial system that is depicted in the early part of the book of Genesis and later in the law.

ABRAHAM:

God made a covenant with a man by the name of Abraham and made several promises to him. These promises were not conditional on Abraham's obedience. Abraham followed God's program through his life by faith in what God had told him. Abraham was the basis upon which God built the people of Israel. Israel was blessed through their father Abraham until the nation turned against Him in the time of the kings.

KING SAUL:

After many years of God dealing with His through the priestly system and leaders like Moses and Joshua, the Jewish people decided they needed a king to rule over them. This was because everyone else was doing it. All the nations around them had rulers so they decided they must have one also. God allowed Saul to be named king over Israel.

KING DAVID:

Saul's successor was David. David was not a prime example of purity in his life, yet he pleased God. God blessed David's ministry to His people.

KING SOLOMON:

David's son became king and ruled for many years. Under his reign the people become dissatisfied and ultimately his two sons became the kings of the divided kingdom. The ten tribes of the north went their direction, and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin went theirs.

The two peoples had a series of kings that ultimately brought the peoples to destruction. The northern tribes were taken captive by the Assyrians and the southern tribes fell into the hands of the Babylonians later.

THE PROPHETS:

Prior to the fall of these two peoples God sent messengers to His people to warn them of coming

tragedies if they did not change their ways. He gave them fair warning to turn back to Godly ways or reap the consequences. These men preached their message until the fall of the peoples. Even after the captivities God chose to speak to his people through prophets.

Throughout the Old Testament the thought of a savior or Messiah is given. These prophets proclaimed the Messiah and the kingdom that He would set up here on earth. That kingdom was the desire of the Jewish people.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST:

When we move into the New Testament John the Baptist is on the scene preaching repentance for the kingdom of heaven is near. The kingdom that he was preaching about was that Old Testament kingdom that the Jews were awaiting for.

Christ began preaching the same kingdom when He started His ministry. The message was not acceptable to the Jews and as a result they rejected their Messiah.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST:

Ultimately the Jews killed Christ on the cross. This was not a mistake or a glitch in the plan of God, but rather something that the Trinity had planned beforehand. Some theologians suggest that the fall of man was a surprise party for God and that He dreamed up the plan of salvation to salvage something from His creation. This is not true in any manner. All that has gone on in time is according to the plan that was set before the foundation of the world.

THE PLACE OF DEPARTED SPIRITS:

In the Old Testament period when a person died they were transported to the place of departed spirits, called Sheol.

This place is mentioned and defined in Luke sixteen in the account of the rich man and Lazarus. In short it was a two compartment area with a great chasm between that no one can cross. There has been much confusion as to why this place of departed spirits existed. Why would God send the saints there and then transfer them to heaven? What is the place for? Is this hell?

It seems that the best explanation of all this is that before the cross there could be no regeneration, thus no salvation as such. Yes, the Old Testament saints could please God by faith. Yes, they were eternally saved, however the provision was not made as yet. In God's eyes they would be in eternity with Him, yet there was the need of the death of Christ to make the provision. At the time of the cross all departed spirits were in Sheol. The lost were in the side of torments and the saved were in the side with Abraham. This place was temporary for the righteous until their salvation could be completed by Christ.

This was accomplished through His death on the cross for their sin. The Old Testament saints sins were covered so there was fellowship with God, but they needed Christ's blood to cleanse those sins.

After Christ died, He ascended to the heavenly tabernacle, according to Hebrews, and offered His blood once for all. He then proceeded to Sheol to empty it of the believing saints, to take them to be with the Father until the culmination of time.

At the time of the Great White Throne judgment the departed lost in Sheol will be brought forth to face their judgment and then they well be cast into the lake of fire for eternity. (Rev 20:11-15)

THE CHURCH:

The church is God's people in this age or dispensation. We are not something new and special, we are just a continuation of God's program and kingdom. The church is the gathering of all of God's people in this age, as Israel was God's people in the age of the Law.

THE RAPTURE:

At the end of the church age the Lord will remove His people from the world and prepare the earth and Israel for the final stages of prophecy, the tribulation and the events that will follow.

THE TRIBULATION:

The tribulation is a seven year period of great destruction and judgment upon the earth and the lost. During the tribulation Israel will turn to God nationally ending the great separation between God and His nation. The tribulation will be a time of preparation for the kingdom which is the next event in God's timetable.

THE RESURRECTION OF OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS:

At the end of the tribulation the Old Testament and Tribulation saints will be raised from the dead, and will enter the Millennial kingdom.

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM:

The saints of the kingdom will live for one thousand years with Christ ruling on the throne of David in Jerusalem. During the kingdom the Lord will rule the entire earth, and Satan will be bound. There will be peace in the kingdom until near the end, when Satan is released and will gather his forces for one final rebellion.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE:

The final preeternity act of God concerning his creation will be the Great White Throne. This will be the time when all the lost will appear before God for their final judgment.

THE LAKE OF FIRE:

The lake of fire is the final abode for all the lost, the Devil and all of his coworkers. This is not a time when they are destroyed, as in annihilation. They will be in eternal permanent torment which will not have end.

ETERNITY:

Eternal life, or eternal existence with the Trinity is the future of the believer. This existence will take place in the abode that He has prepared for the believers.

The overview that we have just had is called the pretribulational view of eschatolgy. We need to look at some terms that will become commonplace in our discussion.

PRETRIBULATIONALISM:

Pretribulationalism teaches that the church will be raptured or taken out of the world before the tribulation. There is no reason for God to allow His people to go through a time of judgment so will remove them to the heavenlies. During this time the judgment seat of Christ will take place. This is when the believers works not their souls will be judged. The marriage feast of the Lamb will probably take place at this time, though we have no text which really tells us this. Some feel that the marriage feast would fit well in the Millennial kingdom when the Old Testament saints are present, and others place it at the beginning of eternity when all the lost are taken care of and all believers are eternally with their Lord.

Where you place this occasion depends on your view of who the bride it. Most theologians follow the traditional thought that the bride is the church, while a few theologians suggest that the bride is Israel. Does that suggest a good topic of study for you? I trust that some of these suggested topics of study will tweek your interest and that you will dive into these areas as you have time.

MIDTRIBULATIONALISM:

This teaching holds that the church will go through part of the tribulation sees the church raptured at the middle of the tribulation, just before the Great Tribulation begins. There is indication that the first half of the tribulation will be bad, but the last half will be Great. The Great tribulation will be much worse than the first half.

There is a similar teaching called partial rapture which sees the righteous believers taken out before the tribulation, however the not so righteous are left to go through part of the tribulation

for purification. Those purified are either taken out all at once during the tribulation, or they are removed individually as their time of purification ends.

POSTTRIBULATIONALSIM:

Some feel that the church will go through the entire tribulation and will be raptured out at the end.

PREMILLENNIALISM:

The next item to consider is the teaching that we have given in this brief overview. Premillennialism teaches that the rapture and tribulation are before the Millennial kingdom.

POSTMILLENNIALISM:

Postmillennialism would teach that the rapture and/or the tribulation will occur after the Millennial kingdom.

AMMILLENNIALISM:

Ammillennialism teaches there is nor literal, real 1000 year kingdom. This teaching holds there is either no kingdom at all, or that the kingdom is going on at this time. The Devil is bound in this age and this age is not confined to a specific
time limit.

COVENANT THEOLOGY:

Those holding to covenant theology believe that God has and will operate with man through the Old Testament covenants. The covenants were set, and we are still under them. Sometime in the future the Lord will tie all things together.

People holding to this position mix all the teachings and promises of Scripture and apply them to believers in this age. In other words there is no difference between Israel and the church. All believers of all times are the same, and the promise to one is the promise to all.

ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION:

The method of interpreting Scripture that is called allegorical sees all of Scripture as a series of information that really has no valid meaning as it is, but we must look into the "real" message of the passage. The Scripture text itself is only a vehicle to carry the real message of God. Nothing in Scripture can be taken for face, literal value. You must find the spiritual meaning. Some view a text in more than one level of information. The recorded level which was for the man that recorded it and then there is the level that has the "real" spiritual message for us.

LITERAL INTERPRETATION:

The other method of interpretation is called literal because that is how you interpret. The passage means what it means in plain, easy, literal reading. There is no "hidden" or "spiritual" message behind the literal message. We will look into interpretation as we go along in the study.

KINGDOM THEOLOGY:

Kingdom theology is a newer system of thought which appears in many different forms. The common thread of these new lines of thinking is that the church has the responsibility for getting the world back into a condition that would be conducive to the Lord's return. In short, Christ cannot come back until we get a specific job done.

This thinking is seen in some of the modern missions efforts. The thought of reaching the world by a certain date is based on the need to evangelize the world so the Lord can return.

DISPENSATIONALSIM:

The system of eschatology that is opposite to Covenant Theology is dispensationalism. Dispensationalism sees a difference between Israel and the Church. The premillennialist will be a dispensationalist.

Dispensationalism teaches that God deals with man in different ways in different periods of time. We will look into this teaching in more detail later, however to prove that God deals differently in different periods of time is seen in the fact that the Old Testament saint was required to bring animal sacrifices for his sin, while we in the church age only have to confess and repent.

The dispensationalist will not apply the promises given to Israel to the church age saint. This system comes out of the literal interpretation of Scripture.

In thinking of many of these terms a list might help to solidify things in your mind. Normally if the person is premillennialist he will be those things listed below, and if a person is an ammillennialist he will be those things listed below that position.

PREMILLENNIALISTS	AMMILLENNIALISTS
LITERAL INTERPRETATION	ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION
DISPENSATIONALIST	COVENANT THEOLOGIAN
ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH DIFFER	BLEND ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

We trust that this overview will be helpful in placing the following studies into some perspective. It is similar to writing. If you have an outline to follow you know where you have been and where you are going. The information coming in can be placed where it belongs in time.

Reviewing this overview from time to time might be helpful for the newcomer to eschatology. It also might help the old timer to review what he has forgotten.

Perhaps a time line would be of value to the reader.

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and many positions have been drawn. These positions are being redefined and revamped all the time. There are new positions coming along from time to time, because some have found systems that have a better basis than some of the old thoughts.

Eschatology has been viewed as an extension of Soteriology at times. It is the final step in the overall program of salvation.

Others have just tacked it on to the end of their theology, because they know it needs covering, yet they don't know where to put it. In recent times it has become a section of theology by itself.

Erickson mentions some possible reasons for the rise in interest in eschatology in recent times. I have adapted and added to his thoughts in case his volume is not available to you. (Erickson, Millard J., "CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985, P 1149ff)

1. The other divisions of theology are fairly well set, and the area of end times is fairly open to new study and development.

2. The entire western world is interested in the future. Corporations are into futurism studies and predications so they can plan and market accordingly. Their continued existence is based on knowing what to do in the future. Indeed churches are realizing that they should be doing this so they can minister adequately in the future. The interest in the future will naturally create an interest in the far future. Many unsaved people have read Lindsay's books on the future just because they were interested in the future.

3. In the non-western world there is gloom and doom and nothing to look forward to in this life, thus many are interested in what the future may hold. There is a hope that things will become better. The third world church, is interested in the future times to know what is about to happen. It is a growing church and for the most part the end times information is new to them and their people.

4. The Socialism and Communism of our own day that predicts a take over of the world by their system of government may have been part of the reason for American interest in end times studies. This reason may be a historic reason soon with the seeming decline in Communism.

5. The threat of nuclear extinction, of winter scenarios, etc., that see the earth being destroyed by man, would naturally move some to look into the end times teachings of the Word.

6. Pastors want answers to the questions that their people are bringing to them. The alarmists that they read and see on the television are creating doubt and questions in the minds of people.

There are all varieties of interest in end times. Some people are real nuts and give all their efforts over to this study, while others could care less about the subject.

I had an employer that was a Lutheran. He asked me one day about the millennium and when it would be. I explained to him what I believed and gave him some charts. I warned him that I was sure his church would not teach this and that he might want to talk with his pastor about it. He asked his pastor one evening about what he thought about the millennium. His pastor replied, "We're all going to be dead and gone anyway, so why worry about it!" That was the total information that he had to share.

Somewhere we must find some middle ground to live on. We need to know what is coming and how it affects our lives, but there are many other things in Scripture that we also need to know.

Erickson also mentions in his book that he knows of college and seminary professors that conveniently never get to the prophetic books in survey classes, and others that teach theology that never get to section on eschatology. This is sad, for there is a lot of information in the Word that is prophetic and yet unfulfilled. It is information that we should be dealing with.

I will warn you up front that some schools are not teaching any school of thought. They give you all the ideas and allow you to sort through the information Many years ago in a sermon one of the prominent Bible college presidents made the comment that he made it a habit to ask any graduate he meets, where they stand eschatologically. He stated that very few from one of our leading seminaries know where they stand. They can give you a run down on all positions, but they have not settled on anything in particular.

We will see that the different views of eschatology will generally vary in certain directions.

1. There are some that see the prophetic information as present and others see it as future.

The amillennialist and postmillennialist see things as going on at this time rather than in the future as the premillennialist views it.

2. There is either an optimistic view or pessimistic view of the years to come. The amillennialist and post millennialist see the future as getting brighter and brighter till all is completed. On the other hand the premillennialist sees the future as becoming worse and worse till the Lord comes.

3. The end of things will either come from man, his becoming better and better, and his bringing about all good on earth, or as the premillennialist states, God will bring all things to pass in His own time.

4. The Old Testament promises are in the process of being
fulfilled or, as the premillennialist sees it, they are yet future and will only come to pass in the end time.

5. Is it the church that will finally be uplifted and honored in the end, or is Israel going to be the focus of the end time activities? The premillennialist sees Israel being the only focus of the end

times while others view it as God working with the church through to the end.

A chart should help to visualize these differences.

TOPIC	PREMILLENNIALIST	Ammillennialism
PROPHETIC TEXTS	FUTURE TIME	PRESENT TIME
VIEW OF COMING YEARS	PESSIMISTIC	OPTIMISTIC
ULTIMATE GOOD FROM	GOD	MAN'S EFFORTS
PROPHETIC PROMISES	YET FUTURE	FULFILLED NOW
ULTIMATE PROPHETIC RESULT	ISRAEL LIFTED UP	CHURCH LIFTED UP

There has been over the years some changes of thinking concerning the end times. If you are interested in further study concerning liberal thought you might try Erickson p 1154 ff. He gives some of their thinking.

With this introduction we need to move on into our study. We will look briefly into the purpose of Christ's first coming.

In Mark's gospel he recorded the Lord's words, "...The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the gospel." Mark 1:15

Christ told his listener two things in this verse that are closely related, indeed the two are inseparable. First of all He mentioned that a time had been fulfilled, which He states is the reason the kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom is on their doorstep and it is because a period of time has been fulfilled.

Just what time was the Lord speaking of? In Daniel nine there is a text that we want to introduce to you. We won't go into great detail because others have covered this topic many times in good detail.

Daniel in 9:24-17 mentions some prophetic information which Christ used in Mark 1:15. Let us take a look at Daniel.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

"Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end of it shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

We want to notice some items in this passage.

The portion that states, "going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem...." relates to the edict of Ezra 1 which allowed the return of Jews to Jerusalem. They returned specifically to begin the rebuilding of the city. This was in 445 B.C. (SEE NOTE AT THE END OF THE FILE)

The statement, "the street shall be built again, and the wall" relates to the fact that the construction was completed. This event is recorded in Neh. 6:15 and 12:27 This completes one week of prophetic time which is seven years.

Another period of time is mentioned when Daniel records, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off" which speaks of Christ being crucified. The threescore and two weeks works out to be the exact amount of time between the completion of the walls and the time when Christ speaks of the Jews "day" (Lu 19:42) on the occasion of His weeping over Jerusalem. He has entered Jerusalem on the donkey knowing that the nation has rejected Him, His message, and His salvation. Within hours of this time He tells the disciples that it is time for Him to be crucified.

Dr. Pentacost in "THINGS TO COME" works through this timing in detail if you care to do further study on the subject.

The time is fulfilled - the kingdom is at hand - "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" (Lu 19:42) Christ knew that He was fulfilling Daniel nine, but He also knew that His people had rejected Him - their day had come and gone without their reacting properly.

The point of all this is to show that Christ was offering the Old Testament kingdom to the Jews at that time, but because of their rejection He did not set it up. Indeed there is one week of prophetic time left in Daniel nine that we will see later is the seven year tribulation when the Jews DO turn to their God and the Millennium then is set up for the Jewish people at the end of

the tribulation.

There are other phrases in Daniel nine that are of importance also. "bring in everlasting righteousness" - Look at Matt. 3:15; "to anoint the most Holy" - Look at Matt. 3:16.

All was set to continue on with the last week of Daniel's prophecy, but things were placed on hold for a time. This created the Church Age in which we are now living in. I would like to repeat what you have read before, that this was not a surprise party for God - He had all of this planned out in advance.

A pastor in Denver pointed out a problem in what is said in this file.

I state in this file, "....relates to the edict of Ezra 1 which allowed the return of Jews to Jerusalem. They returned specifically to begin the rebuilding of the city. This was 445 B.C."

Technically this is incorrect. The Ezra 1 edict is not 455 B.C., but rather 538 B.C. The 455 date is the correct date for the beginning of the prophetic weeks of Daniel, but the edict should not have been the Ezra 1 edict. SORRY!

Some info to clarify the chronology of this topic:

TIME LINE:

This is a compilation of several sources.

538 BC

FIRST RETURN under Zerubbabel (have seen 536 BC also)
One author shows a return in 538 and Zerub. leaving in 537.
Ezra 1.14; 6.3-5; II Chron 36.22-23

516 BC

Temple completed. Ezra 6.16

458 BC

SECOND RETURN under Ezra. Ezra 7-10. (I've seen 459 on this as well.)

445 BC

THIRD RETURN UNDER Nehemiah. Neh 1-13.

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Dr. Prewitt suggests the following dates for the kings of this era:

521 BC	Darius I
486 BC	Xerxes I
465 BC	Artaxerxes I
425 BC	Xerxes II (some list this man as 424-423)
425 BC	Sogdianuus
405 BC	Artaxerxes II
359 BC	Artaxerxes III
338 BC	Arses
336 BC	Darius III

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MISC INFO GATHERED FROM READING:

Walvoord in DANIEL THE KEY TO PROPHETIC REVELATION suggests four decrees.

1. Cyrus for the building of the temple/II Chron. 36.22-23; Ezra 1.1-4

2. Darius confirmed Cyrus decree/Ezra 6.6-12 (Leupold suggests 517 BC)

3.Artaxerxes/Ezra 7.11-26 (Leupold suggests 458 BC)

4. Artaxerxes for the city/Neh 2.1-8 (Leupold suggests 445 BC)

Leupold in EXPOSITION OF DANIEL held that Cyrus had the city in mind when he set his decree. The temple was the focal point of the decree, but that the city was assumed as part of the temple project. (The number of people involved would have required the building of many houses for people to live in while the temple was built.

"decree of Cyrus mentions the temple and implies the city; the passage in Daniel mentions the city and implies the eternal temple." (P 419)

He agrees with the 538 BC year for the decree of Cyrus.

He suggests that the final command recorded in Neh. 2.7-8 is just a lumber order, so to speak, to fulfill the work that had been in progress for years.

Pentecost in THINGS TO COME p 244 mentions, "When we turn to the decree of Artaxerxes, made in his twentieth year, recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-8, for the first time is permission granted to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. This then becomes the beginning of the prophetic time

appointed by God in this prophecy." This is in the context of stating that none of the other decrees specify the city to be rebuilt.

He mentions that from secular history we can date this as the month of Nisan BC 445. He also shows with comments from Sir Robert Anderson in THE COMING PRINCE that the 483 years fits perfectly with the triumphal entry of the Lord into Jerusalem to proclaim His Messiahship. (p 246)

To recap. I goofed, I was wrong, I was not correct. Actually, I included this mistake on purpose so that I could one day prove that I am not perfect. HA!

Thanks for pointing out my problem Dave!

07150

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH:

We need to understand that God has one overall program designed to bring glory to Himself, while within that context He deals with different sub-programs. Two of these sub-programs are Israel and the church.

God did not create the heavens and the earth and then create Israel. Israel came along much later in history. He had dealings with man long before He made His promises to Abraham which resulted in Israel. Then generations later the church came into being.

The basis of dispensationalism is the difference between Israel and the church. There is a difference and that difference must be maintained as you read and interpret the Bible. If the distinction is not maintained, it will result in confusion and error.

I must admit that most denominations and groups follow the practical aspect of distinguishing between Israel and the church. None of them bring blood sacrifices. They would reject the thought that Israel and the church are separate however.

May I remind you of the three parts to the "sine qua non" of Dispensationalism? Sine qua non is Latin for "without which not," or something that is indispensable to a belief or item. For example liquid is a sine qua non for a cake. There are three items which the dispensationalist will believe if he is going to be a dispensationalist. First, the dispensationalist holds to a difference between Israel and the church. Second, the dispensationalist holds to a plain, easy interpretation of Scripture. Finally the dispensationalist holds that God's overall program for all ages is the bringing of glory to Himself. (Salvation is one of the manifestations of that overall program of glory.)

TOPIC	ISRAEL	CHURCH
BIRTH	PHYSICAL (BORN A JEW)	SPIRITUAL (BORN AGAIN)
PROMISE	LITERAL (LIVING)	SPIRITUAL
POSITION IN THE KINGDOM	DEAD - RULING LIVING - RULED	RULING
POSITION TODAY	GOD'S PEOPLE (SET ASIDE)	GOD'S CHILDREN
SEED OF ABRAHAM	PHYSICAL	SPIRITUAL
ABRAHAM	HEAD OF ISRAEL	SPIRITUAL FATHER
LAND	PHYSICAL	RULING/GLORIFIED BODIES
NATIONALITY	JEWISH NATION	FROM ALL NATIONS
SALVATION	LOOKING TOWARD CHRIST	UNDER CHRIST'S BLOOD
GOD'S DEALINGS	AS A NATION	AS INDIVIDUALS
GOD'S GOVERNING SYSTEM	MOSAIC LAW	GRACE
TRIBULATION	WILL GO THROUGH	TAKEN OUT BEFORE
HOLY SPIRIT	HELPING BELIEVERS AT TIMES	INDWELLING AT ALL TIMES
STANDING	UNDER PROMISE	UNDER GRACE
GOD'S MEANING TO THE BELIEVER	ALMIGHTY GOD	GOD THE FATHER
CHRIST	KING OF ISRAEL	HEAD OF CHURCH

DIVINE POWER	NONE	SPIRIT EMPOWERED
CHRIST'S RETURN	IN POWER AND GLORY	QUIETLY TO RECEIVE US
INTERCESSION	PRIESTHOOD	PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

We've seen multiple items which show that the church and kingdom are different and separate. The kingdom for all practical purposes is Israel.

From this we can apply our study of contrasts to our interpretation of scripture. They, Israel and the church, are different and should be treated as such. The promises of the kingdom or to Israel are not ours to claim. We are in the church and should seek those promises aimed at the church for use in our daily life.

It could be easily observed that the bulk of Scripture is directly aimed at Israel, though we can find much application in that majority for use in the church age. We cannot, however, take each promise of God to Israel for ourselves.

Some texts to consider:

Acts 3:12 shows that Peter viewed the church people as separate from Israel.

Acts 4:8,10 show distinction between the people of the church and Israel.

Acts 5:21 shows a difference between some in the church and the children of Israel.

Romans 9:3,4 shows that Paul felt there was a difference between himself, a Jew, and his fellow Jews.

1 Corinthians 10:32 shows the distinction very nicely.

07200

INTERPRETATION

When I move into a study of interpretation, I am reminded of a cartoon I saw once. The picture

is of a little wimpy person who is standing by a huge strapping motorcycle person, with a skull and crossbones on his leather jacket. The little person says something to the effect that he is sorry but he will have to interpret the other man's last remark as a compliment.

Interpretation has always been a little subject to the context. In the late 1900's most believers find that their context allows them to sidestep the Bible's command to greet one another with an holy kiss. We relegate that portion to only the apostolic time, or any time other than ours.

There are different methods of interpretation. The technical name for these systems of interpretation is Hermenutics. The purpose of any of these systems is to learn the meaning of the Word of God. The types of hermenutics vary, however the main two are literal and allegorical. We will look at these two types.

We need to understand that your eschatological system will probably be determined by which system of hermeneutics you chose. The allegorical method leads to Amillennialism and Postmillennialism, while the literal method leads to Premillennialism.

May I illustrate why the method you use is important? Turn to Rev 1:14-16 and interpret it.

Using the allegorical method I would say it is a sword swallowing albino with sunburned feet, dressed in his bahai robe. A former student of mine claimed that it was an old time bath tub with brass feet in which the water is running. Neither of these interpretations can be proven correct, so we have a very serious problem in interpretation. Whose interpretation do we follow? Indeed, your interpretation might well be completely different that the two mentioned.

As a sidelight, it might be mentioned that when literal interpreters enter the book of Revelation, they usually leave all principles of interpretation behind. They usually end up using the allegorical method rather than the literal method. Just one brief example. I read a commentary on Revelation written during World War II and the creatures coming from the abyss were identified as the bombers of that war. A more modern commentary lists these creatures as the Huey helicopters of the Viet-Nam era. When a person leaves literal interpretation they leave themselves open for all sorts of discussion and confusion.

I. THE ALLEGORICAL METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

Ramm defines this system as follows: "Allegorism is the method of interpreting a literary text that regards the literal sense as the vehicle for a secondary, more spiritual and more profound sense." (Ramm, Bernard; "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, p 21)

In this method the historical and literal sense of a text is ignored, while the interpreter goes on to some deeper meaning. The use of this method allows for easy proof of different religious views and systems of thought.

Pentecost makes a statement that on the surface may be a little strong however it is worth considering. "It would seem that the purpose of the allegorical method is not to interpret Scripture, but to pervert the true meaning of Scripture, albeit under the guise of seeking a deeper or more spiritual meaning." (Taken from the book, THINGS TO COME by J. Dwight Pentecost. Copyright 1958 by Dunham Publishing. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 5)

This method sees very little historical importance to the text. The method may even ignore the original words and meaning entirely, while looking only to the message that those words convey. The method would see the words of scripture as the vehicle that carries the deeper spiritual truth. They seem to feel that scripture is a dump truck that is carrying the load of spiritual information to you the reader, and interpreter.

There are some dangers with the allegorical method. I will quote from Pentecost for our headings in the first three items (p 5-6) and add a fourth. (Taken from the book, THINGS TO COME by J. Dwight Pentecost. Copyright 1958 by Dunham Publishing. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.)

1. "it does not interpret Scripture."

Terry states: "...it will be noticed at once that its habit is too disregard the common signification of words and give wing to all manner of fanciful speculation. It does not draw out the legitimate meaning of an author's language, but foists into it whatever the whim or fancy of an interpreter may desire. As a system, therefore, it puts itself beyond all well-defined principles and laws." (Terry, Milton S.; "BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, no copy right, p 224)

If the authors of Scripture had thoughts to convey, would they cloud these thoughts in a menagerie of words? NO!

2. "the basic authority in interpretation ceases to be the Scriptures, but the mind of the interpreter."

If the man decides what the meaning is then the Scripture, and the authors of Scripture can give the man nothing by which he may interpret. He is on his own to do as he would please with the Word.

To think that some men are setting the Word of God aside for the PREFERRED THOUGHTS OF MAN!

3. "...one is left without any means by which the conclusions of the interpreter may be tested."

Who is correct? Who determines if I am correct, or if you are correct?

I sat in a study group in a fundamental church one evening. There were about 25 present. The leader read one of the Beatitudes and asked what it meant. Almost everyone had some thought about the meaning of the text. The study ended when the leader said, "Well I'm not sure which of these ideas is the correct meaning, but I'm sure one of them is." There can never be any proven valid interpretation!

If God wanted to communicate with man through the Word and could do no better than that, then He is not a God with which we should desire communication.

4. It perverts Scripture.

Example: One author, when interpreting a passage concerning Joseph fleeing from Potifer's wife, surmised that Joseph had many mental hang ups concerning sex, and that his attitudes toward sex were very mixed up.

Allis (an amillennialist I believe) is quoted in "THINGS TO COME." His thoughts are recorded in relation to the idea that the system is in danger of doing damage to the meaning of the Scripture. "Whether the figurative or "spiritual" interpretation of a given passage is justified or not depends solely upon whether it gives the true meaning. If it is used to empty words of their plain and obvious meaning, to read out of them what is clearly intended by them, then allegorizing or spiritualizing is a term of reproach which is well merited." (Pentecost, J. Dwight; "THINGS TO COME"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958, p 6 quoting from "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH" By Allis, Oswald T. p 17)

Let us look at some further examples of allegorical interpretation.

Isa 11:6-9 mentions that the lamb and wolf will be together. An alogorist could say that this was Paul and Barnabus, and that Barnabus is trying to get along with the wolf Paul. Someone prove that this interpretation is incorrect.

Ezek. 37:16-18 speaks of two sticks with two names on them. One of the names is Joseph and of course the Mormon Church mentions that the Joseph is Joseph Smith! This is their basis for bringing all of his false teachings into a Biblical context. In truth the text speaks of Israel and Judah being reunited. (See vs. 19-22)

The allogorist believes that Israel in the Old Testament is the church now, and that all the promises for Israel are being fulfilled in the church today.

If that is true, then God promised me a chunk of the promised land. I want the corner of Tel'Aviv and Jericho for my mansion. That is in the upper middle class section of Jerusalem, mind you!

Luke 10:30-37 the account of the good Samaritan might be interpreted like this:

The man is Adam; The robbers illustrate the Devil; The priest depicts the Law; The Levite represents the Prophets; The Good man would probably be Christ; The Beast would be the physical body of Christ; The Inn is the Church and the 2 pence could be Christ and the Father. I think that you are beginning to get the picture.

II. THE LITERAL METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

A. Defined

Literal interpretation is giving to the words the same meaning they had when they were originally spoken or recorded. This demands that we attempt to determine how the term was used in the time when it was used. This would be the definition as well as the way in which it was used.

The system is known as the grammatical-historical method of interpretation. This is due to the fact that both the grammar and historical setting are important to the proper interpretation.

Ramm states:

"The customary, socially-acknowledged designation of a word is the literal meaning of the word.

"The 'literal' meaning of a word is the basic, customary, social designation of that word. The spiritual, or mystical meaning of a word or expression is one that arises after the literal designation and is dependent upon it for its existence.

"To interpret literally means nothing more or less than to interpret in terms of normal, usual, designation. When the manuscript alters its designation the interpreter immediately shifts his method of interpreting." (Ramm, Bernard; "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, p 64)

B. Evidence of the literal method:

Pentecost summarizes Ramm's comments on literal interpretation. (Taken from the book, ALL THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE by Herbert Lockyer. Copyright 1964 by Zondervan Publishing House. Used by permission. p 10.) Ramm's comments are located on p 123ff in his tenth printing of "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, if you would like to study further. We will use these comments as a basis for further comments.

1. "That the literal meaning of sentences is the normal approach in all languages."

There is no known society that communicates in allegories. When a person says something, it is interpreted literally. Indeed, a society could not function if everyone was interpreting what others said to their own allegorical desire.

2. "That all secondary meanings of documents, parables, types, allegories, and symbols, depend for their very existence on the previous literal meaning of the terms..."

We cannot understand allegories unless we understand the text in which they appear in a literal sense.

Parables often are interpreted within their context so we can KNOW their meaning from the text instead of our imagination.

3. "That the greater part of the Bible makes adequate sense when interpreted literally."

Even the book of Revelation can be viewed in a literal sense unless the context states that some other mode of view is to be used. For example, a phrase such as "it was like unto" would alert the reader that the item to be described is "like," not an exact replica.

4. "That the literalistic approach does not blindly rule out figures of speech, symbols, allegories, and types; but if the nature of the sentence so demands, it readily yields to the second sense."

In John 1:29, "Behold the Lamb of God" we see a figure of speech. John the Baptist did not mean a little woolly animal that came to be baptized! He was depicting Christ as the Lamb that would die for the sins of the world. Ps 98:8 mentions, "Let the floods clap their hands...." This is obviously not literal. You might look up Isa 55: 12 for another example.

Let me give you a modern illustration: "John is black." Please interpret that for me. The allegorically method might suggest that John has psychological problems, and that he has a very dark personality. The literal method on the other hand would submit that he is a Negro. This is from our view today, however this literal interpretation may change with a number of items.

HISTORICAL SETTING: He may have been a chimney sweep in past days.
GEOGRAPHICALLY: He may be a coal miner if he's in the south.
CONTEXTUALLY: John is black since he fell into the vat of ink.

Do you get the point? The historical setting, the geographical setting and the contextual settings may well vary your interpretation of a certain statement.

5. "That this method is the only sane and safe check on the imaginations of man."

When we remind ourselves of the suggested interpretations of John's vision of Christ in Revelation 1"14-16, we must admit that insanity would reign if we interpreted allegorically.

6. "That this method is the only one consonant with the nature of inspiration. The plenary inspiration of the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit guided men into truth and away from error. In this process the Spirit of God used language, and the units of language (as meaning, not as

sound) are words and thoughts. The thought is the thread that strings the words together. Therefore, our very exegesis must commence with a study of words and grammar, the two fundamentals of all meaningful speech."

The idea is this, if the Bible we hold is to be the message from God to man then the logical method of knowing what it means is to assume that God communicated it to man in a manner that would be consistent with his understanding, and not in a cloaked form that we cannot immediately understand.

Probably one of the prime examples of literal interpretation and fulfillment would be the prophecy against Tyre in Ezekiel 26. A study of history will show that this prophecy was fulfilled very precisely and very literally.

Within the literal camp we realize there are some methods of writing that the authors of scripture used which can alter how we view a particular text. We will take a brief look at these.

1. HYPERBOLE: To use exaggeration to draw attention to a point. For example: "I'm going to die if I don't get a coke!" A Biblical example of this is seen in Ps 6:6, "All the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears" See also Ps 78:27; 107:26.

2. ANTHROPOMORPHISM: This is the practice of assigning some body part to God to show one of His attributes. Ps 31:2, "Bow down thine ear to me" We know that God has no ears, for He is a spiritual being, yet we know that He hears us when we pray. Also see Ps 11:4; 18:15; 32:8.

3. IMPLICATION: The use of an item that illustrates the feeling you want to convey. In Ps 22:16, "For dogs have compassed me" we see that the enemy has surrounded the psalmist and his view of these enemies is one of fear that he might have from a pack of dogs. (Jer. 4:7; Matt 15:13 also.)

4. METAPHOR: This is a comparison of two things where one is said to be the other. Ps 84:11, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield" This implies that God is light and protection. Jn 10:9, "I am the door" - Christ declares with this phrase that He is 7 3 Šthe entrance through which man must approach God and not that He is wood and hinges! Hosea 7:8, "Ephraim is a cake not turned" He is half baked! NO! Ephraim is a man - not flour and water! (Ps 23:1; 84:11; 91:4 also.)

5. METONYMY: The using of one noun in place of another to describe a similarity between the two. Ps 73:9, "Their tongue walketh through the earth" This implies that wrong speech is heard everywhere. (Ps 5:9; 18:2; 57:9)

6. ZOOMORPHISM: A zoomorphism is the ascribing of an animal part to God so the reader can understand some concept about God. Ps 17:8, "Hide me under the shadow of thy wings" This

depicts the protection offered to the believer by God. (Ps 36:7; 63:7; 91:4)

7. RHETORICAL QUESTION: The use of a question that requires the reader to accept or reject a fact. Ps 106:2, "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all his praise?" The implication is, that no one can do either. (Ps 35:10; 56:7; 94:6)

8. SIMILE: The simile is used to compare two similar items. Ps 1:3, "He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water" would indicate that the "He" is going to thrive as the well watered tree. (Ps 1:4; 5:12; 17:8; 131:2)

9. PERSONIFICATION: Giving a characteristic of a human to some inanimate object. Ps 35:10, "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee" This implies the inner depths of the psalmist. (Ps 77:16; 96:11; 104:19)

C. ADVANTAGES OF THE LITERAL METHOD:

Pentecost lists several advantages of the literal method from Ramm and then adds some of his own. I will paraphrase and combine these.

1. This method attempts to base its findings on facts and not the whims of man's mind. Facts gained from "grammar, logic, etymology, history, geography, archaeology, theology...." (Ramm)

2. The method requires similar controls upon interpretation to those controls that are imposed upon science. The information must be based upon fact.

3. The method has literally opened the scriptures since the reformation when Luther and others realized that the Word had a message for all of mankind. Many have followed through in history by using this method.

4. The method becomes its own standard of authority. The Word becomes the authority and not the theological system or whims of a man. The interpretation is compared with other Scripture instead of a theological system for correctness.

5. We are free to offer the Word to the common person that can read and understand it, instead of limiting its interpretation to only those that are trained in the mystic method of finding that illusive true meaning behind the words.

In short the allegorical method can only be limited by the number of people interpreting. They can each go his or her own way and none can disprove the other.

GUIDES TO THE LITERAL METHOD:

1. Interpret using all tools available. Meaning, grammar, logic, culture, geography and all

others.

2. Interpret contextually.

3. Interpret figuratively only when necessary.

4. Interpret in light of how the scripture interprets. Look to see if the context has the Lord's interpretation included, before you go into long dissertations of error.

I trust that this has been adequate to convince all to interpret literally. When we read the newspaper we interpret literally, when we read road signs, we interpret literally and in all of life we interpret literally unless there is something in the context which indicates we should do differently. So as we approach the most important Book in all of life, we must be consistent and interpret literally.

It would seem that the application of this section if obvious. The method of interpretation is critical to a proper understanding of scripture, thus be sure that your method is correct.

By the same token, you might be sure that your teachers and church leaders use the same method, rather than a method that could lead your church off into false doctrine.

There is the thought of your own family as well. As you take time to teach your children, be sure that you tell them how to interpret the Bible. This is a major doctrine they will grasp quite easily. They understand you because they already interpret literally and would see any other method of interpretation as foolish.

Teach the method in your Sunday School as well. All believers need to know this doctrine!

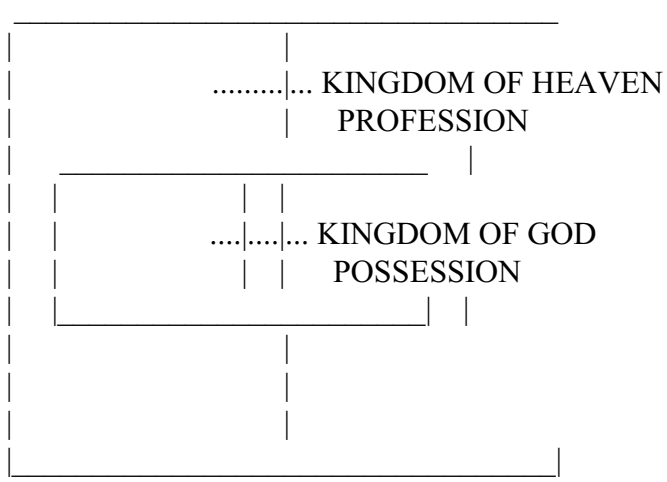
Finally, know that any method other than the literal method will lead you into false doctrine. You may also know that if you run into someone that is not interpreting literally that you are talking to someone that holds to false doctrine. BEWARE.

07300

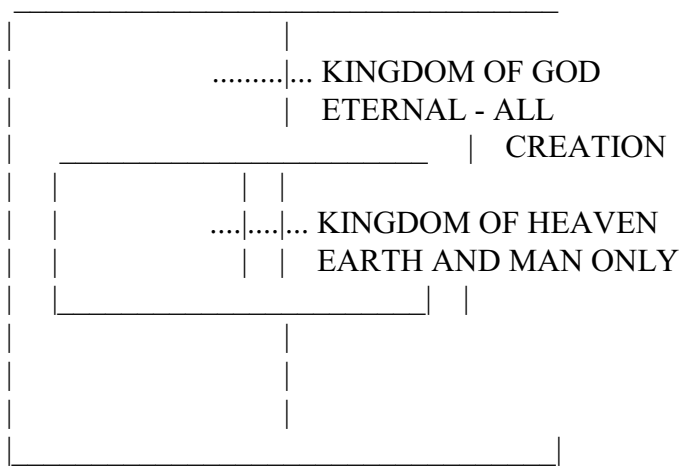
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Before you begin this section there is an assignment that would add to your overall study in this area. In appendix five you will find a listing of all of the references to the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. Take time to look these references over for yourself. Find out what the two kingdoms are in your own mind before going on with the study.

There are several thoughts on the relationship between the two terms, Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God. A few charts will depict these thoughts:



This view would see the two kingdoms as existing at the same time (The Millennium) with the distinction that one contains only believers, while the other would have both saved and lost for occupants.



This position would view the Kingdom of God as the rule of God over His entire creation of all eternity, while the Kingdom of Heaven would be His rule over man and the earth during the time beginning with creation and ending with the start of eternity.

Others would picture the two kingdoms as two overlapping circles. While there are differences there are similarities where the two kingdoms overlap. Others would see no distinction between the two terms and would use them interchangeably.

J. Lewis Smith reportedly held that the two kingdoms were the same and that the kingdom was

equal to the church. He felt that John The Baptist began proclaiming the kingdom, and that it came into being at Pentecost. He felt that it would run through the return of the Lord.

The "INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA" suggests that the terms are completely interchangeable. The author of the article equates the term heaven and God. The two are the same in his thinking.

Larkin suggests that the kingdom of heaven is earthly - the Millennial rule of Christ on earth. The kingdom of God will be merged into God's eternal, heavenly, and universal kingdom, the kingdom of God. Ironside, as I read him, viewed the kingdom of God as the eternal kingdom, while viewing the kingdom of heaven as the period from the ascension to the second coming. Barnes sidesteps the issue as far as I can find in a brief search. Matthew Henry seems to hold the idea that the kingdom of heaven was present from the day of Pentecost and ran on into eternity.

This study will discuss the thought that the two kingdoms are referring to the Messianic - 1000 year kingdom in the end times, while understanding there is a slight difference in the two.

SOME TERMS TO CONSIDER:

MILLENNIAL KINGDOM: This is the kingdom of the end times which comes to us under different terms: The Millennium, the Davidic kingdom restored, the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth and at times the mediatorial kingdom. The term mediatorial seems best reserved for the idea which follows.

MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM: The mediatorial kingdom would be the thought of God's rule over man, either via spokesmen or directly. This would include the rule of God through the priestly, kingly and prophetic systems, while also the rule of the church (kingdom in mystery form), and ultimately the rule of Christ in the Millennium.

UNIVERSAL KINGDOM: This is not a Biblical term but will help us understand the kingdoms, or the different ways in which God rules over man. This kingdom is the overall rule of God over all that is in His domain. This would be the pre-creation rule over the angelic host, as well as the post creation time of eternity.

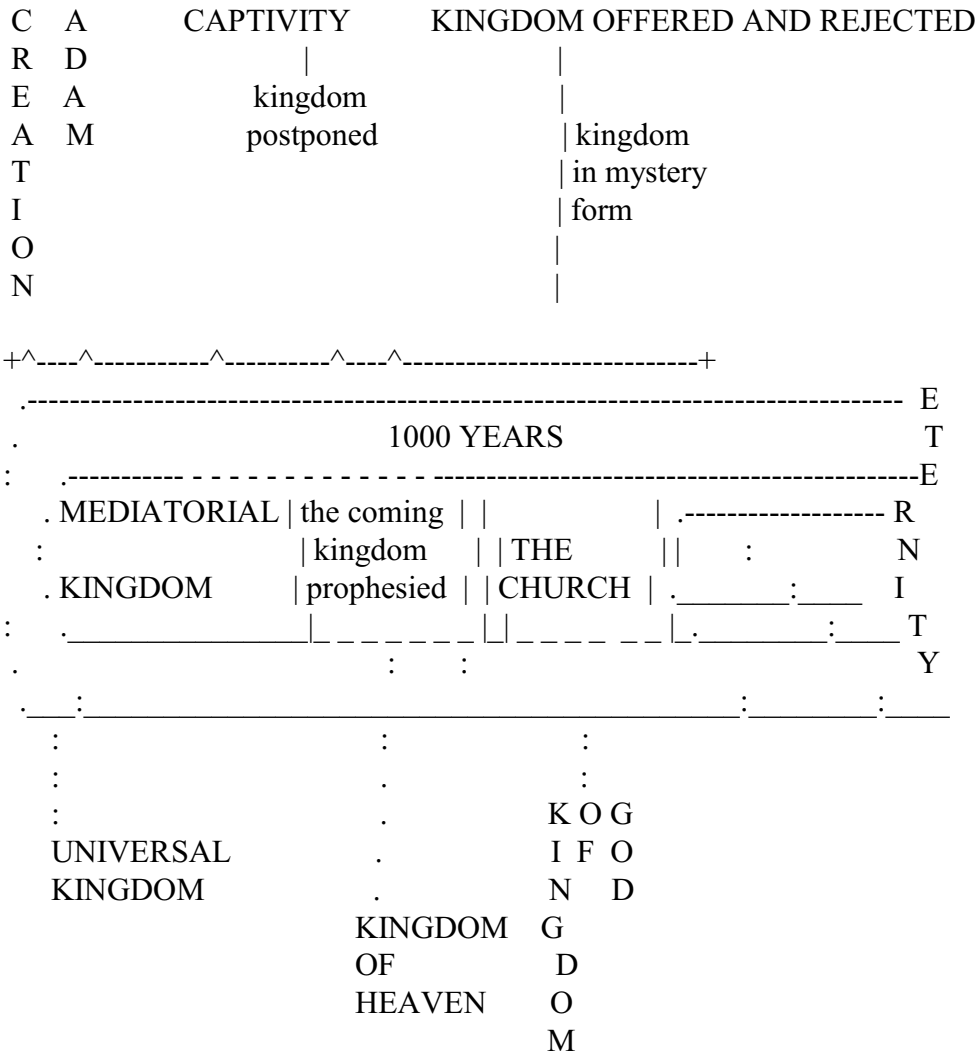
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: Specifically this term is introduced in the Gospels and seems to refer to the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth in the end times. There may be three aspects to this kingdom. 1. The Kingdom was offered to the Jews by Christ, and was rejected by the Jews. This would have been the Messianic kingdom. 2. Some view the kingdom in existence at this time in mystery form. The kingdom in mystery form is the time between the cross and the second coming, or as we know this time - the church age. 3. The kingdom is future and is the Millennium. The emphasis in the gospels seems to be on the millennial kingdom.

KINGDOM OF GOD: This is the kingdom of only believers that God is ruling over. Again

there may be several aspects to this kingdom, though the gospel emphasis seems to be on the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.

Thus, the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God are a unique aspect of the mediatorial kingdom, while all of these are within the universal kingdom. A chart should help.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
AND
THE KINGDOM OF GOD



THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS GOD'S RULE OVER SAVED PEOPLE IN THE MILLENNIUM. JOHN 3:3

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS THE RULE OF CHRIST OVER ALL PEOPLE, SAVED AND LOST DURING THE 1000 YEAR KINGDOM.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS DELIVERED TO GOD BY CHRIST AT THE END OF THE 1000 YEARS. I COR 15:24

GOD WILL REIGN FOREVER. REV 11:15

Now we need to concentrate on the topic of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. There are basically four differences between the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God. 1. In the Kingdom of God there is no mixture of good and bad. On the other hand the kingdom of heaven has a mixture. 2. The kingdom of heaven is all inclusive - all that are in under God's control. (this includes the angels.) The kingdom of God seems to contain believers only. 3. The means of entrance into the kingdom of God is via the new birth, while all are automatically in the kingdom of heaven. 4. The Kingdom of God is inward and spiritual while the Kingdom of Heaven is outward and physical.

BIBLICAL EVIDENCE: The concept of the kingdom is an Old Testament concept.

The Kingdom of heavens is mentioned in Ps 103:19, "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." This suggests that the rule is over lost as well as saved and is clearly in the heavenly realm.

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom yet future according to Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This will be an ongoing kingdom that transcends time.

There are many references to God's kingdom in the Old Testament. Zech 14:9, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." This seems to be an earthly kingdom. Zech 14:16, "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles." Again, we see an earthly kingdom. Thus, we should not be surprised that the term kingdom is not defined in the New Testament. The New Testament Jew knew what was being spoken of, when people spoke of the kingdom. The thought of a coming kingdom was uppermost in the Jewish mindset.

Christ and John the Baptist both used the terms in the Gospels without giving definitions to them. Indeed, the disciples, nor the people questioned them as to what they meant. From this we must assume that the kingdom mentioned in the Old Testament is the kingdom offered by Christ and John The Baptist.

The question is this. ARE THE TWO KINGDOMS THE SAME? (Kingdom of God and

Kingdom of Heaven) We need to consider this for a time.

PARALLEL PASSAGES IN RELATION TO TIME

The Gospels seem to use the two terms interchangeably.

1. The preaching of the kingdom. Matt. 4:17, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mark 1:14-15 "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." It seems that these are the same event and both terms are used.

2. Mystery of the kingdom. Matt. 13:11 (vs 11-17) This passage tells us that the parables were given to keep some from understanding the Mysteries of the kingdom. Mark 4:11 Is the same. Again this seems to be the same sequence of events and both terms are used. (Luke 8:10 may also be the same event.) (The order of events in Matthew depict Christ by the seashore, Christ then entered the ship, the parable of the sower, the call to hear, the purpose of teaching in parables, the beginning of the teaching on the mystery.)

The idea of keeping them from understanding is not a refusal on God's part to allow them to be saved, but rather a refusal on God's part to allow them entrance into the kingdom they had rejected. An illustration might help. The Jews were in the wilderness 40 years wandering around. This was not entirely for the purpose of punishing the Jews. It was also an opportunity for God to allow the Amorites dwelling in the promised land time to turn to God. The Israelites at the end of the forty years then entered the land destroying the Amorites, the people who God had judged due to their rejection of Him. God kept the Israelites from the Land because they were not worthy of receiving from Him that which they had rejected. Matt 13: was a condemnation of the Jews because of their rejection.

3. The preaching of the 12 disciples. Matt 10:7, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke 9:2, "And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." The events are very similar and both terms are used.

4. John the Baptist in prison. Matt 11:11, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Luke 7:28, "For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." As before, we see the same context with the different terms used almost interchangeably.

PARALLEL PASSAGES IN RELATION TO TEACHING

1. Entrance into the kingdom: Matt. 7:21-23 mentions that entrance into the Kingdom of

Heaven is by doing the will of God. Only a believer can do the will of God and understand God's will.

Entrance is also linked to conversion in Matt. 18:2-3, "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. It is linked to acceptance in Luke 18:17, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." Both terms used in the same context.

2. The problem of the rich: Matt. 19:23-24, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Mark 10:23-25, "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Verse 23 of both texts are identical passages and both terms are used. Indeed in Matthew the statement is made in two ways using both terms.

3. The time of the Kingdom of God: Luke 16:16 seems to indicate that John the Baptist's appearance on the scene introduced a new emphasis, that of the preaching of the Kingdom of God. (Luke 11:20; Matt. 12:28) In Christ's time it was presented.

4. The poor - an integrated part of the kingdom: This may be linked to the fact that the poor and the down trodden are often more receptive to the message of the Savior. He offered peace and good in the next life, even if there were neither in this life. (Matt. 5:3; Luke 6:20; Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28-29)

5. The expectation of the kingdom: The Jews were looking and waiting for the Davidic kingdom. Mk. 15:43 mentions that Joseph of Arimethia was waiting for the Kingdom of God. He was an Old Testament believer. (Luke 23:51 also)

6. The kingdom and the Lord's table: Matt. 26:28-29 Christ won't partake of it again until in "my" Father's kingdom. (Mk. 14:25 and Luke 22:18 both mention this in ref to Kingdom of God.) THIS KINGDOM IS YET FUTURE!

7. The relationship of the living disciples to the kingdom: The transfiguration was a glimpse of this kingdom, which tells us that it was yet future as well as that it will be quite glorious. (Matt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Luke 9:27)

THE USE OF THE TERM "KINGDOM OF GOD" OUTSIDE THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

1. In Jo. 3:3 it states that rebirth is the requirement for entrance into the kingdom. In verse 10 Nicodedemus asked Christ a question concerning the kingdom, and Christ confronted him with the fact that he taught Israel and did not understand the kingdom. This shows that the Old Testament saint should know of the kingdom.

2. Acts 1:3-6 shows that the kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God are the same and yet future to the ascension.

3. Acts 8:12 shows there are two parts to the message. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." It seems that the apostles saw no clear distinction between the kingdom message and the claims of Christ. They were involved in preparing the world for the kingdom that was yet to come. Even in the last chapter of Acts, Paul is preaching the coming kingdom. (Acts 28:30-31)

Paul saw the kingdom as coming, yet future, and directly linked to the claims of Christ. (Acts 14:22 also shows it future.)

4. Acts 19:8 Shows that the message of the Kingdom of God was to the Jews.

5. Acts 28:23,31 Indicates that the kingdom in question is the kingdom of the Old Testament. He spoke to them of Christ, and the kingdom from the law.

6. I Cor. 6:9-10 lists many that won't be in the Kingdom. (Gal 5:21 also)

MATTHEWS USE OF THE PHRASE "KINGDOM OF GOD"

1. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN SPEAKING TO ALL JEWISH PEOPLE. It is used in 6:33 where he is speaking to multitudes and the disciples. There is no indication that Jewish leaders were present thus indicating that the message was for the masses as well as the national leadership.

2. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN HIS POWER WAS IN QUESTION. It is used in 12:28 when Christ is accused of casting out demons in the power of Satan.

3. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN HIS AUTHORITY WAS IN QUESTION. It is used in 21:23-32 when the elders and priests questioned his authority.

4. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN HIS PERSON WAS IN QUESTION. It is used in 21:43 when He is rejected by the nation of Israel.

5. CHRIST USED THE TERM WITH THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. It is used in 19:23-24 when He equates the term Kingdom of God with the term Kingdom of Heaven. (There may be

significance in the passage following this in that the disciples in contrast have forsaken all to follow Christ.)

We must conclude from these items that this kingdom is of great importance to and of close connection with the Lord.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Biblical evidence seems to indicate that the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are referring to the same time, or kingdom, and that is the physical kingdom of Christ on earth which follows the tribulation (the Millennium).

2. These terms were not defined in the New Testament - just used. Both John The Baptist and Christ began their ministries with the terms as though everyone knew what they were talking about, and indeed they did. They were accustomed to the terminology from their spiritual upbringing.

Some might wonder - if the two are so similar why were two terms used? Matthew used the term kingdom of heaven to Jews for they were looking for an earthly kingdom, thus he stressed the "heaven" aspect to show that the kingdom was coming from heaven. Matthew may also have used it as a substitute for the term "God" which was sacred to the Jewish leaders. The other writers were not writing to the Jews so they used God. The term heaven has a different meaning to the Gentile mind of Christ's day. The gentiles had many god's and they could send a kingdom from heaven, however when the Gospel writers mentioned a kingdom from God they would know they were speaking of the God of Jesus.

3. The Kingdom of Heaven will contain both lost and saved. (The lost come from those born into the millennium.)

4. The Kingdom of God seems to consist of only believers.

5. Matt 19:23 and Mk 10:23 show an interchange of terms within two writers view of the same statement.

6. Difficulty: On the one hand the scriptures show that the Kingdom of Heaven has lost and saved, while the Kingdom of God has saved only in it, yet on the other hand, scripture seems to use the terms interchangeably. Matt 19 23; Mk 10 23. There are two possible answers:

a. The terms were very general in Matthew and Mark, but took on more specific meaning later in time. (Matthew preceded Luke and it is probable that Mark was the first gospel written, so it would have preceded both Matthew and Luke.) We know John was later so this leaves Matthew and Mark being written early, using the terms in a general sense, while later we have Luke and John using the terms more specifically.

b. The Matthew 19 and Mark 10 passages seem to show that the two terms are used interchangeably and there is no difference between the kingdoms. It is possible that the Matthew 19:23 and Mark 10:23 texts mention entry into the kingdom only, and the terms were used generally. There may well have been a distinction and they were not interested in conveying the thought of that distinction.

Let us end with a dispensational fundamentalist quoting a dispensational fundamentalists. Dr. Pentecost in THINGS TO COME (P 144) quotes Lewis Sperry Chafer's SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY Vol. VII, pp 223-224.

"In regard to the terms kingdom of God and the kingdom of the heavens it is to be observed that, while not synonymous, they are used interchangeably. What distinctions there are are not inherent in the words themselves, but in their usage in the context. Both of these terms are used to designate the millennial kingdom, the spiritual kingdom, and the mystery form of the kingdom. While we recognize the distinctions between the earthly and the eternal aspects of the kingdom program, we must guard against making the terms absolute. Only the context can determine the meaning intended to be conveyed by the terms."

The need is to look at the context to see if there is a specific, while normally using the terms interchangeably.

07350

THE SECOND COMING

Before we begin, I would like to raise a question for your consideration. If I could zap you into a full day without need of working for a living, without family responsibilities, without studies - NO I CANNOT BRING HEAVEN TO PASS - but if I could do that for you, what would you do with your day? Go fishing, camping, shopping, buy a car, sleep, visit friends - just what would you do?

Okay, let us go on to our subject, and then at the end of the section we will look at this thought of "a day off."

THE SECOND ADVENT

Cambron gives statement to the importance of the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord in Scripture.

"It is said that one out of every twenty-five verses of the New Testament speaks of the Second Coming, while in the Old Testament there are eight verses concerning the second Coming to

every verse concerning the First Coming." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 264)

The term ADVENT means simply, "arrival." Webster's first definition is the Catholic idea of four Sundays before Christmas. We view the Christmas arrival, or advent of Christ as the first advent, and we look forward to His second advent, when He comes to take care of the program of God, and bring it to a final culmination.

The fact of the event is seen in the following passages.

a. Christ Himself spoke of the coming in relation to His preparing a place for the disciples in Heaven. This is a very joyful contemplation for the believer. His Lord and Savior is now at this time preparing an eternal abode for each of us personally.
What a thought! Jo 14:3

b. The angels spoke of it when they spoke of the Lord's ascension. It should be noted that He will return in like manner - that is physically and visibly. This will be the second coming and not the rapture. Acts 1:11

c. Peter spoke of it in one of his sermons. Acts 3:20, "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:"

He also spoke of the coming in his two epistles. I Pet 5:4, II Pet 1:16.

d. Paul spoke of the Lord's return several times. I Cor 1:4-7; Rom 11:26; Philippians 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; I Thess 5; II Thess 1:7,10; I Tim 6:14; II Tim 4:8; Tit 2:11-14.

Some might question some of the references that are listed. Some of them are normally listed as rapture texts. If you consider Paul and his every looking for the Lord's return and relate that to the preaching that he did, it is not hard to think that he was speaking of the second coming rather than the rapture. The texts are prophetic of the rapture, however from Paul's viewpoint, I believe that he was talking of the coming. We will look at this in more detail later.

e. The author of Hebrews spoke of it. Heb 9:28

f. James spoke of it. Acts 15:13-16; James 5:7

g. John spoke of it. I Jo 2:28; I Jo 3:2; Revelation 19:11-18.

h. Jude spoke of it. Jude 14

i. The prophets spoke of it. Jude 14; Isa 45:23; Ezek 21:25-27.

Years ago I ran into a Roman Catholic while doing some door to door visitation that really thrilled me for a time. As I shared the gospel with her she agreed with everything that I said. When I asked her if she had received Christ, she said that she had. I left thinking that she was probably a believer. Some time later I discovered that the Roman Catholic receives Christ every time they go to mass. The eucharist is Christ's very body. The woman was talking about mass and I was talking about salvation.

As you talk with people be aware that their meaning for words may not be the same as your meaning. This is true in relation to the term "second advent." It has different meanings to different people, so you need to find out what a person means. Some of the possibilities are as follows:

a. Some view the rapture as the second advent. Christ coming to earth to receive His own unto Himself. This may or may not be differentiated from the coming to set up the kingdom.

b. Others view the rapture as the introduction to the entire second advent time. The second advent includes the rapture, the tribulation, the second coming to introduce the kingdom and the kingdom age.

The first advent was 33 plus years long so the second one needn't be an event, but can be a number of years in length.

This would be seen in two phases, as Cambron mentions (p 266). The first phase is viewed as being the rapture of the church, and the second phase the second coming in glory to set up the kingdom.

c. Another possibility is that the coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation is the second advent. At that time He will set up His Millennial kingdom.

The rapture is not the second advent in that the first advent was a coming to the earth and the second will have the same idea (a physical visible appearance). The rapture is not a coming to the earth, but only a secret coming in the clouds for the saints.

d. There are some that view the second advent as a spiritual coming and that it will not be a physical return of Christ. This may take a number of forms. One man that I knew held that the second coming was when the Lord comes to take a believer home (at the point of physical death). The problem with this view is that the world system as we know it can never come to an end. Christ will never come to finish up unfulfilled prophecy and earth would have to continue for eternity.

Chafer mentions that Dr. William Clarke held the spiritual coming view. He sees the coming of Christ in a spiritual sense - that Christ is here in His church. The new Jerusalem mentioned in the revelation is the "ideal church" and not a coming literal city. Chafer deals with the belief on

page 283 and following of Vol. V.

and from rapture to the consummation we have THE DAY OF THE LORD, and following the consummation we have THE DAY OF GOD.

THE DAY OF MAN: Some have suggested that from the fall to the rapture we have the day of man.

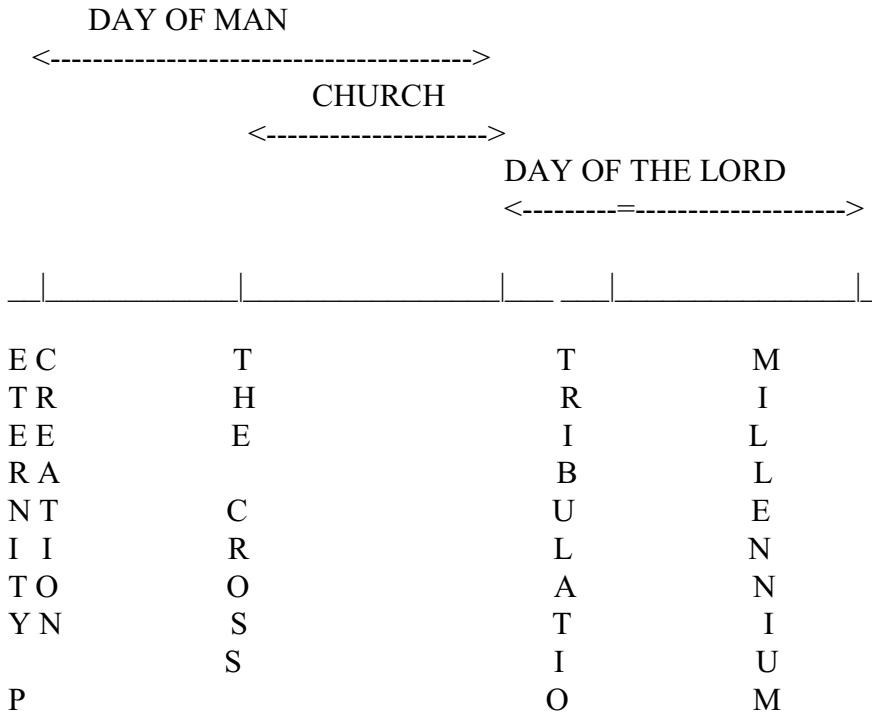
THE DAY OF THE LORD, I Thess 5:2, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

This shows that the day of the Lord is introduced by the rapture, yet we see within the context some items that might indicate that it covers more territory. In 5:23 there may be an element of judgment for the believers, which would indicate the judgment seat of Christ.

Verse three could indicate the trouble of the tribulation that was to come as well, thus the term may indicate much more than just the rapture.

THE DAY OF GOD, II Pet 3:12, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

THE DAYS OF GOD'S PROGRAM



A S T N N U T U R E

DAY OF CHRIST: Philippians 2:16
I Corinthians 1:8
II Corinthians 1:14

DAY OF GOD: II Peter 3:12 (consummation)

SOME MISCELLANEOUS TEXTS AND TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

The day of Jesus Christ: I Cor. 5:5; Philip. 1:6

The day of Christ: Phil 1:10; Phil 2:16; II Thes. 2:2

The day of God Almighty: Rev. 16:14

The day of the Lord God: Jer. 46:10

The day of the Lord: Acts 2:20; I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 1:14; I Thes. 5:2; II Pet 3:10

We want to list some of the differences between the rapture and the second coming.

	RAPTURE	2ND COMING
1.	The devil is still free	The devil will be bound soon
2.	The Lord comes in the air	The Lord returns to the earth
3.	Saints go up	Saints come with Him
4.	Living saints translated	No translation
5.	Dead church age saints raised	Old Testament saints raised

6. World unchanged	World changed physically
7. Imminent	Preceded by many prophetic events
8. New Testament truth	Old and New Testament truth
9. Saved only involved	Saved and lost involved (lost will be destroyed)
10. Christ coming for the church	Christ coming for Israel
11. To remove church	To establish the kingdom

The fact that Christ stated that He would return is plain from Jo 14:1-3.

We might make note of the fact that one of the purposes of the Lord's return is to gather His people unto Himself. There are other events that come along with this, but in Christ's mind at this point in time (early in His ministry) was the gathering of His people.

THE FACTS OF THE RETURN:

Acts 1:11 In like manner would indicate a number of items to consider. a. The leaving was visible and witnessed. b. The leaving was from the earth's surface. c. The leaving was in a physical form. d. The leaving was from the Mt. of Olives (Acts 1:12) To be in like manner, then we should look for all of the above to be true at the second coming of Christ. A literal, visible, physical return to the surface of the earth.

There are other references to the second coming in the Old Testament that you might want to read. Ezek. 43:1-7; Zech. 14:4.

Matthew 24:27 also mentions that it will be very visible.

Bancroft in his Elemental Theology (p 356 ff) lists the signs of the second coming. I will list those for you with the references that he uses. This is for your future consideration.

War	Matt 24:7
Famine	Matt 24:7
Earthquakes	Matt 24:7
Industrial unrest and lawlessness	II Thess. 2:7
Multiplied transportation	Dan 12:4; Nahum 2:4

Apostasy and demonic interest I Tim 4 1
Commercial signs Rev 13:16-17
Political signs Dan 2 & 7
Jewish sign Matt 24:32-34

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Turn to I Thess. 5:1 for a few moments and we will make a few observations.

a. Paul mentions, in verses 1-2, that they need not discuss the time of the return of the Lord. It will be as a thief in the night. They would not know when it will occur. The Lord told the disciples in the book of Acts that no man knew the schedule of the end times Acts 1:6-7. They were seeking information, but Christ gave them none, other than that the Father will take care of the schedule. (Some other refs that picture the swiftness that is in mind are: Rev 3:3; Rev 16:15; II Pet 3:10; Matt 24:43; Lu 21:34.)

b. In verse 3 Paul tells them that when people cry peace and safety that they should look out for destruction is coming.

c. In verses 4-10 Paul lets them know that they needn't worry of the coming, nor should they go to sleep to wait for it. They are to prepare and watch for the coming of the Lord, but they are to be busy with living until it comes.

He encourages them to realize that they are of the light and not of the darkness. (John 2:11; Acts 26:18 may be of interest to you along this line.)

d. Paul encourages them to bring one another along in the proper spiritual life so they will be properly prepared at the coming of the Lord in verses 11-23 (vs 23) "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I'd like to just list the things Paul encourages them to bring into their lives. Be not in darkness, let us not sleep, let us watch, be sober, put on breastplate of faith and love, put on helmet of salvation, comfort yourselves together, edify one another, know those that labor among you, know those that are over you, know those that admonish you (May I suggest that this is a strong indication that you have a responsibility to chose of your leaders and get to know them?), esteem the three above highly, be at peace among yourselves, warn the unruly, comfort the feebleminded (Who are the feebleminded? The mentally handicapped, the mentally injured, the senior citizens that are loosing their ability to operate properly mentally), support the weak, be patient with all, don't render evil for evil, follow that which is good, rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, give thanks in everything, quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesyings, prove all things, hold fast to the good, and ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL.

WOW, WHAT A LIST TO LIVE BY! Can you envision a church that is attempting to live according to that list? Would it not be an awesome body to behold?

I would like to relate a story that describes some people who were serious about their Lord's return, and how they were living.

The occasion was some revival services in Alliance, NE at the Evangelical Free Church. The people involved were witness to people being saved, marriages coming back together, baptisms, and backsliders returning to their Lord. This was all due to the fact that the church people and the evangelist were serious about living their life as if the Lord could come at anytime.

The evangelist lives as the Lord provides and does not have charges for his services. All that they receive goes to "get by" and the rest is put back into the ministry. They live in trailers and log cabins to conserve on expenses at their home base.

2. Let us return to our question about the day off that I would like to give you. How do those things you wanted to do relate to the fact that Christ is returning at any moment, at any time? Would you like to be doing those things when Christ returns?

IN LIGHT OF CHRIST'S SOON RETURN, MIGHT WE WANT TO BE SERVING HIM TO THE UTMOST OF OUR ABILITY?

I WOULD THINK THAT THIS WOULD BE OUR DESIRE!

We believe in the immanent return of the Lord, but we practice the someday return of the Lord.

I have often used an illustration that might help you in your thinking. Most of us know who Mr. Spock is. The Vulcon on Star Trek that is the ultimate in logic. I often suggest that congregations and classes think of a scenario which states that Mr. Spock is orbiting the earth and is observing the fundamental churches of the world trying to find out what Fundamental Christianity taught. Just what would he deduce logically from the facts that he observed. Might I take the liberty to just suggest a list of possible observations?

Fighting, arguing, division, materialism, segregation, arrogance, pride, lack of interest in spiritual things, lack of acting on belief systems, etc. Now, just what would Mr. Spock deduce? Would he ever think of the second coming of the Savior of this people?

I trust that as you consider the truth of the second coming that you will consider how you live. Are you living as if you could be gone tomorrow, or are you living like you are settling in for the duration of life?

07400

THE RAPTURE

Psalm two from the American Standard Version:

"Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing?

"The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, {saying},

"Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us.

"He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision.

"Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure:

"Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion.

"I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee.

"Ask of me, and I will give {thee} the nations for thine
inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

"Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

"Serve Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling.

"Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him."

The Psalmist spoke of a time coming when the Lord would rule a kingdom on earth. There will be much said of this kingdom before the end of this study, however there is an item of prophecy which the Old Testament is silent on. Indeed, much of the New Testament is also silent on it. The rapture or the taking out of the church is the next topic of study.

As we begin, we want to make known that the term "rapture" is not found in the New Testament. It is a Latin translation of the term "caught up" in I Thess. 4:17 which means "seize" or "snatch". The Latin term is "rapare". (I Cor. 15:50-58; II Cor. 12:1-4; Rev. 12:5)

The Greek term is "harpazo" which is translated "take," "catcheth," "pluck," "caught away," and "pulling" in the New Testament. There is a bit of irony in this snatching away in that the meeting of the raptured saints both dead and alive will be in the air, the domain of Satan himself. (Eph.

2:2) The end result of this catching away will be "so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:17)

John 14:1-3 mentions that the Lord went to prepare a place for us and that he would return for us. It is that return for us that we are speaking of. He will come to take us home to be with him during the tribulation period, and then we will return with Him at the Second Coming to assist in the kingdom.

I Cor. 15:51-52 mentions that Paul shared a mystery with the believers at Corinth. "Behold, I show you a mystery:" A mystery in the New Testament is something that has not been revealed before. Rom. 16:25 shows that Christ is a mystery that was "kept secret since the world began,"

Our text shows that the living believers will be changed and the dead will be resurrected. The Old Testament saint knew about the coming resurrection, but what Paul shows here in I Cor. is something new. (Job 19:25, Is 26:19, and Dan 12:2 indicate that the Old Testament person knew of the resurrection.)

We need to look at some texts that may cause some confusion in the area of the rapture:

Acts 1:11 "...This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This is speaking of the 2nd Coming and not the Rapture, for the Lord will not return to the earth as such at the Rapture. It is mentioned that he will return in the air, but the second coming speaks of Him returning to earth.

Matt. 24:40-41 seems to be the rapture however it fits much better at the end of the tribulation when some will be taken in judgment and others are left on the earth to enter into the Millennial kingdom. The rapture relates to New Testament saints only, as is very evident in I Thess. 4:10, "in Christ".

One other text which may need clarification is I Thess. 3:13, "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." (Also I Thess. 4:14 is a similar verse.) These verses speak of the fact that the souls and spirits of the New Testament saints that have been in the presence of the Lord will return with Christ at the rapture and will be reunited with the new bodies, while the living saints will be changed. The great meeting of the saints will be in the air.

The question that is prevalent in most theologians minds is when does this occur? Some throughout history have attempted to set dates for the coming of the Lord. Recently the Sword Of The Lord printed the following about one of our popular evangelists. "Promoting his new A.D. 2000 - The End? video, Van Impe says, `For the first time in my life and ministry, I'm willing to declare that this decade of destiny will bring us into close proximity to the return of Jesus Christ.' He went on to say. `The year 2000 holds special significance in terms of time left for mankind!'" (Sword of the Lord, Vol. LVII, No. 22; October 25, 1991)

The scripture does not give us a time table for the end times so we must deduce when the different events happen. Scripture gives us a great deal of information which can help us to have a general picture of what is going happen, but we must not fall into the trap of setting dates for the beginning of these events. Indeed we should not assume, as some have, that we can bring about the beginning of these events by works that we can accomplish.

Rev 4:1 states, "After this I looked and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up here, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." Many believe this refers to the rapture of the church. The rapture will occur at this juncture in the chronology of Revelation even if you don't view this reference as speaking of the event.

INDICATORS OF A RAPTURE AS WE LOOK BACK TO THE SCRIPTURE:

1. Israel's prominence in the tribulation demands a rapture: Israel is the focal point of the tribulation time and there is no reason for the church to be present. (Rev. 4-20 shows the tribulation.)

Rev 4:1-2, mentions, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and [one] sat on the throne."

The first three chapters speak of the church and 4:1-2 is a transition to the tribulation period which is contained in the following chapters. Through out this section the Jews are in focus, though the gentiles are also present.

2. The distinction between Israel and the church demands a rapture: There is always a distinction between Israel and the church throughout the New Testament. Why would the church be mixed together with Israel for seven years through the tribulation? It does not seem sensible.

Points to ponder: a. There is no mention of the church in the tribulation. b. Would Christians worship in a temple? No. c. Rom 11 shows Gentiles being grafted in for a time, but also they will be set aside and the Jews grafted back in indicating the absence of the church as the Lord draws to a close His dealings with Israel.

3. The immanent return of Christ demands a rapture: The doctrine of the immanent return of Christ requires an unexpected return, not one that is announced by seven years of trouble and destruction. (I Thes 5:1-2 shows the immanent return.) I Thes 5:11 tells the believers to encourage one another. If the tribulation was what they were to face, how could they encourage one another with the fact that terrible times were coming.

4. The government of the tribulation demands a rapture: During Daniel's 70th week the earthly

government comes under the control of Satan. The New Testament teaches that the believer is to be subject to the government placed over them. (Rom 13) This would place believers under the control of Satan which is inconsistent with the teaching of the New Testament.

5. The silence of the New Testament demands a rapture: The New Testament writers never mention how the believer was to react to the terrors of the tribulation. The New Testament writers knew of the terribleness of that period of time. They knew texts such as, Joel 1-3; Jer. 30 7, and the other writings of the prophets. If they knew these terrible times were coming, why did they not help us understand what to do, and how to react to these times.

6. A promise of the Lord demands a rapture: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10 God through John promises deliverance to the church of Philadelphia from a ruff time, that was yet future. If he is delivering them, then He will most likely deliver all church age believers, unless you like the partial rapture theory.

7. God's actions demand a rapture: God always delivers the righteous before a judgment. Let me just list three examples of such delivery. Noah from the flood. Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah. Joshua and Caleb from death in the wilderness.

8. The removal of the Holy Spirit during the tribulation demands a rapture: Take a moment to read II Thess. 2:6-10. Most view the "he" in verse seven as the Holy Spirit, and He is to be taken out. In case you didn't know, where the Holy Spirit goes, I go, for my Bible tells me that the Holy Spirit is my guarantee of resurrection. It is illogical to think that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of this world, and the New Testament believers be left behind. This would contradict the promises of Scripture that tell us that the Holy Spirit will indwell us always.

9. Christ's army demands a rapture: Rev. 19:11-16 tells of the second coming of the Lord with His army. Verse eight states of this army, "...arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Verse fourteen tells us, "...clothed in fine linen, white and clean." If you relate this terminology to the letters to the churches you will see a close similarity. (Rev. 3:4; 3:5; 3 18; Indeed 4:4 shows the elders in the same clothes, in heaven. That is another indication of a rapture before the tribulation.)

If the church is to come with Him at His second coming, then they must be removed at some time. The logical time would be before the tribulation when the trouble begins.

10. Our appointment to salvation, not wrath, demands a rapture: I Thess 5:9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." We aren't appointed to wrath, indeed why would God want to send His peculiar people through such a terrible time?

The question comes to mind, "Did Paul know of and teach the rapture, or did he understand only a second coming?" Reread the "rapture" texts of Paul's with this question in mind and see what

you come up with. It may be that he saw a second coming and was teaching it, but at the same time, unknown to himself, was prophesying a rapture.

The Old Testament prophets wrote down many things they did not clearly understand, thus this would be consistent in Paul's case, and this does not detract from Paul in any way, shape, or form.

Indeed, did Paul even know of the tribulation? It would seem doubtful that he did. If he did, he certainly kept quiet about it. It would seem that had he known of such a mess coming, he would have mentioned it in some of his writings.

The rapture is seen from our vantage point, but I'm not sure it was from Paul's. Had he had revelation on the subject, I would think that he would have mentioned it.

The rapture and tribulation are really a revelation of Christ through John in the book of Revelation, though the events were prophesied previous to that revelation.

SOME TEXTS TO CONSIDER:

I Cor. 15:51-57: In reading this text, I wonder if Paul from his good Jewish perspective was looking at the second coming when the living would be translated, and the dead would be raised to serve with the Lord in the kingdom. His entire being was filled with the gospel of the kingdom. He was still preaching it in the last chapter of Acts (28:31), which was late in his career.

I Thess. 4:16-17: This verse mentions that we will meet Him in the air, indicating that the Lord does not come down to the earth. Zech. 14:5 shows Christ touching down on the earth. It would seem to some that Paul was speaking of some occurrence other than the second coming. I don't think there is any reason to feel that Paul was inconsistent with Zechariah, in that he just did not mention all of the details of the return. He is interested in the fact there is a resurrection and it will happen when the Lord returns.

John 5:25-29: May we observe several things here?

a. There is no indication of a time frame. We have no idea when John is speaking of. It could be the rapture, but he did not know of the tribulation until many years later when he was given the Revelation.

b. Since vs 28-29 mention righteous and lost both, it would seem that this is a general reference of the resurrections. Indeed we have judgment in the context, which would also indicate that this is a general statement of all that will go on in the end times.

c. It is a distinct possibility that this is a reference to the resurrection just prior to the Great White

Throne. Many believe there will be some righteous that die in the Millennium and that this would be a fitting passage to show these righteous ones being raised with the lost of all time. Some to life and some to damnation.

d. Actually vs. 24-25 are speaking to the living that are lost when Christ was speaking and then He shifts gears to the judgment in the end time.

John 14:1-3: Christ will return for the apostles. When? Most view this dwelling place as the New Jerusalem which is in Rev. 21 1-2. The New Jerusalem comes down between the tribulation and the millennium.

Again if we see Paul speaking of a rapture we have some problems. It seems that John, when he wrote the gospel also viewed all things as centered on that second coming rather than a rapture. We see here a general statement of Christ coming for His own with no real statement of when in relation to end times events. Indeed it is quite possible that the New Jerusalem is ready at the rapture and that we will dwell in it till it descends.

OTHER REFERENCES THAT RELATE BUT DON'T HELP SHOW THE RAPTURE IN TIME:

Rom. 8:19-23; II Cor. 5:1-9; Philip. 3:11, 20-21; Heb. 9:28; II Pet 3:4.

Did Paul know of the tribulation and of the rapture? I suspect that he did not, even though there was an element of prophecy that related to these events in what he said in scripture.

We know, teach and understand the principle of progressive revelation, yet at times we fail to understand scripture in light of it. Adam did not know Christ. Adam did not know of the second coming. Adam did not know of the Church. They acted and lived under what they knew. Each dispensation lived as they had knowledge. Scripture was revealed over many hundreds of years.

Adam and Eve were the first drops of melting snow to form a pool in the mountains. Cain and Abel were the first trickle down the mountainside. Seth made it into a small stream running through the rocks. Noah made it into a small river running into the valley. Abraham made it into a river coursing through the land. Moses was a new river which merged into the main stream. Christ added another stream to the larger flow. Paul added another tributary. John was the final addition to the flow of Scripture. He led the flow into eternity, the ocean.

What Paul knew may be questioned, but as you attribute information to him consider carefully the thought of progressive revelation and just what had been revealed to him.

Some conclusions:

1. Looking backward a rapture seems very evident.

2. Looking forward from Paul's time the hope was a kingdom set up by the Messiah. The Messiah accepted!

3. Paul, the apostles, and many Gentiles had accepted the Messiah. They wanted all to turn to the Messiah so that He would come to set up the Kingdom.

4. Paul knew the Old Testament. He knew that the nation of Israel would have to turn to God for the kingdom to be set up. He was looking for the kingdom to come soon. He knew Zeph. 3:20 and its teaching of a regathering near the time of the kingdom. He was looking for a kingdom and looking for it soon.

5. Believers of Christ were looking for a kingdom next. Acts 1:6

6. The Jews that crucified Christ did so because He was claiming to be offering the Kingdom.

7. Christ spoke of the second coming. Matt. 24:27-31

8. The Corinthians and Thessalonians needed this soon coming concept for proper Christian living.

9. Paul may have been knowledgeable of the rapture, or taking out of the Church, however this is doubtful for he taught doctrine. This would have warranted more writing had he known.

10. Paul used the term "Church." Church is the Greek word ekklesia. Acts 7:38 uses the same term in reference to Israel as a group. Paul did not think of a building when he used "church." He was thinking of a group of God's people. Man has given Church the concept of building, of something special over and above Israel. We are a kingdom in mystery form (Matt. 13:11). Paul was shifting Judaistic beliefs to conform to a Messiah that had come. He did not switch from Judaism to some new concept of "Christianity." They are the same. One looks for Messiah and the other worships the Messiah come. There is a difference between the two in that the church will not have the physical blessing.

11. John was privileged to give us hint of a new prophetic occurrence in his construction of the book of Revelation through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

12. Paul may have put all of the Old Testament together and seen a need for coming trouble, then surmised that God would take the righteous out, however we do not have indication of this. Paul had in mind the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, to set up His kingdom.

I stated before that Paul's writings might have centered on the second coming yet held a prophetic aspect as well. Is there Bible basis for a prophecy - that is, a man talking of something in His own day, but also referring to other things future? Yes. Let's list some examples.

When Ezekiel mentions the king of Tyre and Isaiah mentioned the king of Babylon, most realize there was information concerning the Devil as well. (Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 14:4ff)

John's revelation to the churches of Christ's message, was of a certainty for his day, but he knew nothing of its obvious prophetic nature known now due to church history and hindsight.

In Ps. 16:8-11 David speaks from his time, situation and experience and it is identified as prophetic in Acts 2:24ff.

In Acts 28:26-27 Paul quotes the Old Testament (Isa. 6:9,10). Isaiah was giving prophecy to the Jews concerning their future. He did not know Paul. He did not know Paul would use this thought to apply to another generation of Jews in rebellion.

Job 19:25-26 Seems clearly to be looking to the end times yet Job was speaking to three men about the fact that he would be vindicated in the situation he was in - he would be proven righteous. Job did not have end times in mind, nor did he even know of the end times.

There is no indication that Paul taught the rapture, or indeed knew about it. Even the church fathers of the first and second centuries knew nothing of the rapture as far as I can see from history. Indeed compare Zech. 14:5-9 with I Thess. 4:13-18 and you see that the latter may have been drawn from the former.

If you are interested in the church fathers see EARLY CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES"; J.N.D. Kelley; Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1978, p 462 ff. See also "THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES"; by Louis Berkhof; Baker Book House; 1937; Grand Rapids.

Feel free to disagree, but if you do you must prove that Paul knew of the rapture, that he was looking for it, and then explain how we can tell what he was talking about, for there would be great difficulty in determining which coming he is speaking of in his writing if he spoke of both.

07450

THE TRIBULATION

As we move on in our study of future events the next one on the horizon is the tribulation. There is much discussion as to the question of whether the church will go through the tribulation, yet there is little difference of opinion as to the fact of the tribulation.

The tribulation is a seven year period of time in which many dreadful things happen to the earth and the people living at that time. I am reminded of a cartoon that I saw once where two dogs outside a church have just heard of the coming tribulation. One says to the other, "That's 49 years of tribulation to you and me!" Even with only seven years of it, I think most will agree that it is not a time that a person would care to go through.

The information we have concerning the events of the tribulation are contained primarily in the book of Revelation chapters four through twenty. Other references relate to the time, however this is the most descriptive of actual occurances.

We will look at the different ideas as to whether the church will go through this time or not. There are a number of positions that we will consider.

The pretribulational rapture position will follow immediately a brief introduction to the topic of the rapture. After this we will consider some of the other positions that have developed over the years.

The tribulation is a period of time during which God deals with national Israel to draw them back to Himself. It will be a terrible time of destruction and death upon the earth. The book of Revelation describes this time of trouble for us.

The time is called the tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble, and the seventieth week of Daniel. The time is divided into two time frames, each three and one half years long. Some describe the first period as tribulation while contrasting it to the final period which is entitled the Great Tribulation.

The tribulation as a whole is a time of God showing all of mankind that He indeed is over all and the display of destruction is quite convincing for men will call for the rocks to bury them so they can escape God. This does not seem to be a time for a person to desire to live through.

As we move on, we need to consider the teaching that the church will be taken out of the world before this terrible time on earth.

THE PRETRIBULATION RAPTURE POSITION

Those that hold this position believe that the church age saints will be taken from the earth before the tribulation period begins. The living saints will be translated as were Enoch and Elijha, the dead church age saints will be resurrected and united with those translated, in the air.

There is some discussion as to whether the translated go through death on their way up. There is a possibility there is a cessation of life as we know it today, but if there is it will be instant and not something that should be feared.

I suspect there is an instant change in the person. The fact that these people will be changed from flesh and bone to glorified bodies is evident. They are prepared for the spiritual realm and there will be a cessation of normal life. I do not feel that it will even be noticed by the believer.

This pretribulation rapture is based on the following line of thinking. Several of these will be similar to what we covered the last time, but the review will be good.

1. This belief is the position which allows for the closest to the literal interpretation method which most fundamentalists hold. The literal method of interpretation seems to be the most logical method.

2. Israel seems to be the focal point after Revelation 4:1 for there is no more mention of the church as such in the book. Daniel 9:24 also shows that the tribulation is a time for Israel. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people...." (God is speaking to Daniel of Israel.)

3. The tribulation is the wrath of God -- God wouldn't put us through it. The death of Christ frees us from judgment and the tribulation IS judgment!

4. There are literal distinctions between Israel and the Church in Scripture so we must carry literal distinctions throughout the Bible. Other positions fog this distinction when end times are considered. You must have a mixing of Israel and the Church if you have the rapture anyplace but before the tribulation.

Israel was set aside during the Church age but as the tribulation opens God is ready to begin His dealings with them once more. Romans 11:13ff shows the Gentiles being grafted in after branches were broken off. Vs 25 shows Israel's blindness is only until the end of the Gentile age (the Church age). This also indicates the distinction between Israel and the church.

There is no need for the church to be present for this period of time. It would be strange for the Lord to ask us to place ourselves under a Jewish system of worship and life (the temple etc. will be a part of the tribulation).

5. The doctrine of imminence taught by the apostles requires that we can't know when the tribulation begins. The Revelation has gives great detail concerning events in the tribulation. If believers saw these events occurring they would know that the Tribulation had begun. If we knew the tribulation was upon us then we would know when Christ was coming. This is not an imminent return. (Titus 2:13 tells us to watch; Acts 1:6-7 mentions that the apostles were looking for Christ to come at any moment; I Thess. 5:1,2 teach imminence as well - it mentions the return will be as a thief in the night; John 14:1-3 where Christ mentioned that he would return.)

I would like to just recap some information from "THE RAPTURE QUESTION" by Walvoord, and suggest that you read pages 52 and those following for more detail.

Historically the church has held to the imminent return of Christ. That is, the sudden return of Christ, or the fact that His return could be at any moment. The apostle Paul was always looking for Christ's return. Moffat quotes the early Jewish belief in the fact that some would not go through the tribulation. Clement of Rome (1st century) mentions, "Of a truth soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished as the Scriptures also bear witness, saying, 'speedily will he come, and will not tarry;' and, 'the Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Holy One for

whom ye look.'" The Didache (120 A.D.) mentions to watch for the Lord. (Taken from the book, THE RAPTURE QUESTION by John F. Walvoord. Copyright 1979 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 52ff.)

There are indications that the early Church fathers did not grasp the details of the Lord's coming, but all seem to have been looking for the return at any time. Now, in light of all that, we cannot say they believed in a pretribulation rapture. They believed in the imminent return of Christ. They mention nothing of a tribulation, but of a sudden return.

This is an indicator! They had the revelation and would have understood something of what was being spoken of so, surely would have mentioned a tribulation if they were planning to go through it. I would guess they did not really understand the Revelation enough to see the tribulation as such, but saw only some things to be interpreted allegorically!

6. In Daniel's 70th week the earthly government comes under the control of Satan. (Rev 13 hints at it.) Romans 13 commands us to be under the authority of the government. This gives the believer a bit of a conflict if he is still living in that period of time and system of government. If the believer is going through the tribulation as the other positions dictate there would be a real problem. Some might mention the mark of the beast in this regard, however those refusing the mark will die, and if the saints all die there will be no one to rapture.

7. Let us consider an argument from silence. Never in the epistles is the Great Tribulation mentioned. If the church was going to go through such a horrifying time don't you think that the Lord would have warned us of the coming trouble through the writers of the New Testament.

8. After a study of the other positions, one is left with only one position that is logical and consistent - the pretribulational position.

9. The tribulation and the Day of the Lord are prophesied in both testaments. The translation, or rapture, of the church people is a mystery that is revealed to us (I Cor. 15:51-52). The two must be separate.

10. Revelation 3:10 states, "Because you have kept the word of my perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth."

11. Joel 2:28-32 seems to indicate that someone is to be delivered from the tribulation, but the church saints are the only ones that fit. Part of this prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, however it will have it's ultimate fulfillment in the end times. (V 32 mentions that those that call on the Lord will be delivered.)

12. Zephaniah 2:1-3 indicates that God saves some out of His anger. (Day of the Lord - tribulation)

13. God usually delivers Godly people before divine JUDGMENTS. (Noah from the flood; Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah; Moses and Israel from the loss of the first born; Joshua and Caleb were permitted to enter the promised land while the others were not allowed to enter.) The tribulation is certainly judgment and the Godly people will be taken out if God follows His usual pattern.

14. John 14:16 mentions that Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would indwell us forever. "...give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;"

II Thess. 2:6-10 shows that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the world. Verse 7 mentions the restrainer. The term is in the masculine and must be more powerful than Satan to restrain Satan and only God can fill this qualification. We must assume this is speaking of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit indwells us, if the Holy Spirit is going, then the believers must go also to keep John true to what is said.

15. If you hold to the interpretations that the 24 elders of Revelation are representative of any Old Testament or New Testament saints you must have a taking out of saints of one kind or the other before the tribulation (the elders are there). Some set forth the belief the elders are angels however the two classes are held as distinct in Revelation 5:11, "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders...." (Those holding to the twenty-four elders being representatives of the church, suggest the following as basis for their belief: a. The number is a representative number relating to the priesthood: I Chron. 24:1-19. b. Believers will wear white: Rev. 3:5; 4:4. c. Crowns and the term redeemed are related to New Testament believers: I Thessalonians 2:19, I Corinthians 6:20.)

16. I Thess. 4:13-5:10 indicates that the coming will be as a thief in the night (vs. 2) which indicates before the tribulation. The whole text seems easiest to interpret if it is pretribulation. Also, the only way it can be a surprise is if its before the tribulation.

17. The rapture in the New Testament speaks of church age saints only. The 2nd coming speaks of Christ's return to set up a kingdom. All Old Testament prophecy fits into two areas. Messiah the lamb or Messiah the King. His coming at the cross was as a lamb. He next will come as a king.

Question: Is the church ever promised a nation - land - kingdom on earth? NO!

Question: Is Israel promised these things? YES! All through the Old Testament. Israel is of prime interest in the end times.

18. The rapture does not see Christ on earth - only in the air. The 2nd Coming is when Christ touches down on Mt. Zion. This and number 17 show the rapture and the 2nd coming are two events. The 2nd coming is before the millennium thus the rapture needs to be before the tribulation. (Unless you have it very very close to the 2nd coming, as some posttribs do.)

19. The rapture is never spoken of as more than one taking out. There is no inference whatsoever that it is in waves as the partial rapture folks indicate.

20. Daniel 9:11 shows the tribulation to be the trouble of the Jews.

21. I Thess. 3:13 mentions that the saints will be coming with Christ at the 2nd Coming. They have to get up there before the 2nd coming some how and a pretrib rapture would make more sense than the posttribulation.

We want to look at some of the other thoughts concerning the time of the rapture.

THE PARTIAL RAPTURE THEORY: (G. H. Lang, G. H. Pember, J. A. Seiss and Austin Sparks hold to this thought.)

This position is one which teaches that only the worthy will be taken out before the tribulation and that the unworthy believer is left on earth to go through a time of purging. Indeed this sounds like the reformations answer to purgatory, the only difference being is that we know how long the tribulation is, while the Roman Catholic has no idea how long they will be in purgatory.

They base this position basically on Hebrews 9:28 which states, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Ira E. David indicates they will be raptured out as they are prepared to go. The indication is that those ready when the tribulation starts will go, and then there will be waves going every now and then.

Some suggest Paul was trying to catch the first boat over when he mentions: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Phil 3:10-12

Problems:

1. They do not tell you how many good works, or how pure you must be to make it in the first wave.

2. They do not deal with I Corinthians 15:51 which says, "we shall all be changed".

3. The church is termed the body of Christ. It would be of interest to know which part of the body, Christ is going to rip from the rest of the body when He takes part of His body to heaven.

4. We see in this position, that old doctrine of works coming into the scheme of things. If I work hard enough, then I will please God!

References they use.

Look to the context on these, and you will certainly fail to see any hint of a partial rapture.

Matthew 24:40-51 Speaking of two in the field and one taken. There are several possible explanations to this text. To begin with there is no indication of waves of believers going from time to time. There seems to be a set separation.

a. This could be prophetic of the rapture. It could be speaking in general of all mankind and the fact that some will be taken and some will not.

b. This would fit with the second coming when Christ comes with His armies and removes all of the lost from the face of the earth to set up His kingdom with all righteous Jews. Mark 13:24-26 indicates that Christ will gather the saints at His second coming. It may be that He gathers them into one spot, then deals with the lost on a world wide basis.

c. This would fit nicely with the end of the Millennium when there will be some that are taken by death at the great sweep of the lost from the kingdom.

Matthew 25:13 speaks of the ten virgins - some are taken and some are left. The context of this is given in 25:1, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins...." This is a millennial text. To use this in relation to the rapture, you would have to be posttrib.

Mark 13:33-37 This asks the believer to watch, and not be caught sleeping. It is clearly speaking of living a life that depicts someone believing He were coming at any moment. This is a good imminence text. Stay awake! The context would again be speaking of the Second coming. Verse 24 mentions, "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Then v 26 mentions, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory."

Luke 21:36 Again the context identifies this as a text belonging to the kingdom. v 31, "...know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

I Thess. 4 13-18 If it is those that are watching, how can the dead be involved as this text tells us?

I Thess. 5:6 Again the thought of watching is the purpose.

II Tim 4:8 This speaks of reward for loving and watching for His appearing. Time nor waves are present in the thought of the verse.

Titus 2:13 The thought of looking and watching is prevalent.

Hebrews 9:24-28; Revelation 3:3; 12:1-6.

My over all question might be something like this. I know of people that are watching, but are doing nothing else. This seems illogical to say that the watchers will go and the workers will stay. Indeed, the people that set dates for the coming of the Lord are watchers.

I think the better idea is for us to be watching, looking and anticipating the day, but to labor in the fields that are white unto harvest until He comes!

MIDTRIBULATION VIEW OF THE RAPTURE

Norman B. Harrison states that the rapture occurs with the sounding of the 7th trumpet of Revelation 11:12 and the catching up of the two witnesses. He feels that the two witnesses represent the church.

The problem with this is that we have no indication that the two witnesses represent the church. Indeed it would seem there is evidence that the two witnesses are Old Testament resurrected saints. Malachi mentions Elijah coming back. (Mal 4:5)

The two witnesses are killed and this is not a very clear representation of the church.

He feels that the church must suffer tribulation. I suspect they use Acts 14:22 for a proof text. "...that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." They feel the last half of the Tribulation is the wrath of God. I Thess 5:9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,"

Rev. 6:16-17 mentions that "the great day of his wrath is come," and this is in the 6th seal. They need to place the trumps and seals in the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation. Thus, the church is removed before it.

The following was added to and adapted from the Rapture Question - Walvoord.

1. They are in truth pretribulation rapture people for the rapture is before The Great Tribulation.

2. They reject the thought that all of Daniel's 70th week is tribulation.

3. They at times call themselves pretrib and not midtrib.

4. They view Revelation 1-10 as fulfilled, or being fulfilled today. Chapter 11 and on are yet future.

5. They place emphasis on the trumps. The last trump of Rev. is the last trump of I Cor. 15:52. However, no scripture links the two trumps. The trump of Rev. is sounded by an angel but we don't know who sounds the I Corinthians trump. The Rev. trump is to wrath while the I Corinthians trump is to escape from the world. The Revelation trump is not the last LAST trump, for Matthew 24:30-31 says there is one at Christ's 2nd coming. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Concerning trumps: In the Roman army there were three trumps sounded when they were striking camp. 1. Strike tents and prepare to depart. 2. Fall into line. 3. Last - march away. The church is marching away so to speak. This is the last trump for the church but may not be the last trump of the end times. You see, the last bell for a class period is not the last bell of the day.

Problems with the position:

1. If we can read Revelation then we can look for the events of the 7 trumps and first six seals and know when the rapture will occur. Has it occurred to you that this eliminates the possibility of an imminent return of Christ. We could indeed know and predict it if the rapture wasn't until half way through the tribulation.

2. They forget that the 70th week is to for dealing with Israel only. The church would not need to be present.

They argue that the temple was not destroyed until 70 AD so God mixes things also. However, Acts 10 seems to be a definite turning point where God began to work with Gentiles. (We have synagogues today but it isn't to say that God is working with both Israel and the Church today.)

3. Their thinking on the first 3 1/2 years is that it isn't really tribulation. Let's look at some of those non-tribulation events. Famine, 6:5-6; death for 1/4 of the world, 6:8; stars falling, moon turned to blood, mountains and islands moved (6:12-14). This isn't the wrath of God?

POST TRIBULATION RAPTURE THEORY (George Ladd (Taught at Fuller), Leon Morris, and Harold Ockenga hold to this thought.)

This theory views all living saints as going through the entire tribulation, and that the rapture is actually a part of, or very close to the 2nd coming of the Lord, just prior to the Millennium. This is usually held by Amills and Postmills.

The people holding this position are normally split into two camps.

1. Those that hold to the theory that the present age is the tribulation. In Acts 8:1-3 there was a

great persecution which was called tribulation in Acts 11:19. Therefore the tribulation started with the church age.

The term used here is also mentioned by Christ in Matthew 24:21, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

2. Those that hold to a seven year tribulation at the end of this present age, and prior to Christ's second advent.

Ryrie in a Survey of Bible Doctrine lists the following points of this theory. Following each point an answer will be given.

1. "The rapture and the second coming are described in the Scriptures by the same words, which indicates they occur at the same time (I Thess. 4:15 and Matt 24:27)."

Matt 24:27, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." I Thess. 4 15, "...the coming of the Lord...." Why do they have to be the same thing and at the same time? There is no proof.

Might I mention something about that word coming? It is Strong's number 3952 if you want to look it up. It is used in I Cor. 16:17 of Stephanus, and in II Cor. 7:6 of Titus. This is the term "parousia". It is even used in II Pet 3:12 of a coming day. Thus, the usage of the term in relation to two events does not require that the two events are one.

2. "Since saints are mentioned as present during the tribulation days, the church is present on earth during that time (Matt 24:22)." "...but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." There are "elect" in the passage which can relate to elect of any age. The Church need not be anywhere near.

3. "It is predicted that a resurrection will occur at the beginning of the millennium, and since it is assumed that this is the same resurrection as that which occurs at the rapture, the rapture will take place just before the millennium (Rev 20:4)."

An assumption which has very little basis. This would be the resurrection of all righteous dead and they would meet the living righteous in the air. All changed - glorified bodies. Only ones left to enter Christ's kingdom are glorified saints and lost from the tribulation. Problem: The entrance into the kingdom requires rebirth, thus the lost can't enter, and glorified saints can't be reborn, thus no one can enter the kingdom. There also is no one to produce children for population to rebel at the end of the Millennium if there are only glorified saints.

4. "The church can and will be preserved from the wrath of the tribulation period by supernatural protection while living through that time and not by deliverance from the period (as Israel was protected from the plagues while living in Egypt)."

Not one ounce of evidence to this thought is given in Scripture. Indeed Rev 6:9-11 shows that the righteous will be martyred in the tribulation. That is NOT supernaturally protected!

5. "The Scriptures do not teach imminency; therefore, the rapture can be after the known events of the tribulation."

A study to show imminency would be needed here, but it would seem that as a thief in the night indicates imminency!!!

6. "Posttribulationalism was the position of the early church." So were several doctrines that more modern theologians have proven to be in error.

References that are used: Matt. 13:37-43 These verses show a gathering, but again the time is not mentioned; Matt 13:47-50 These verses also mention a gathering, however both saved and unsaved are mentioned - this is not so at the rapture; Matt. 24:4-14; John 14:3 This verse really has nothing to do with when but that He will return for us; I Thess 4:17; II Thess 2:1; Rev 8-16.

So, what do we do know that we've gone through these positions?

1. Take time in your future ministries to dig in, and see what some of the fundamental writers say on the subject of the rapture. Next study literal interpretation, dispensations and then the imminency of Christ.

2. When you have that firm in mind go to some of the other writers and see what they teach, and why they believe what they believe. Remember they mix terms that literal interpretation cannot. (Israel and Church)

3. I think that a good study of the subject will leave you feeling as I do - that of all the evidence and opinion, the pretrib position is the easiest to see in scripture. It fits well with the scriptural references that we have to deal with.

4. Study and think and consider. The questions are not answered solidly no matter what some may say. There are good and bad in all of the positions. The pretribulation position seems to present very few difficulties to me.

5. I am not sure that the subject has been studied as completely as it should be by any of the scholars. Many of our doctrines today were formed over hundreds of years of study and restudy. Men discussed and studied until they arrived at the best teaching involving all of the texts. Historically there does not seem to be any real statement on premillennialism.

The Trinity was not an established doctrine until A.D. 325. Human depravity wasn't a settled doctrine till the 5th century AD. The sufficiency of Scripture and the priesthood of the believer weren't settled until the reformation. So, we may not settle the end times discussion for many

more years! I think that as years go by, we may see more definitive statements concerning the pretribulation rapture.

6. Realize that this is nothing that you are going to loose your salvation over! When we went through this in my first year of college I was on the skids for two or three months trying to figure out what I was. There was a much greater emphasis on prophecy at that time. I wasted a lot of time that I should have been using for study!

I am not saying it isn't important. I am saying, give it some good study and time for thought!

The thoughts that we have considered are basically a compilation of the thinking of several pretribulation men.

This may be an overstatement, however I don't think that it is. The pretribulation position fits into the literal interpretation that most fundamentalists hold to. To hold some of the other positions, you have to accept other forms of interpretation which are not consistent with historical fundamentalism, nor logical principles of interpretation.

The system fits well with what scripture states. The logical and scriptural arguments seem to be very consistent with the Word.

Dr. Pentacost states, "Pretribulation rapturism rests essentially on one major premise - the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures. As a necessary adjunct [something that accompanies] to this, the pretribulationist believes in a dispensational interpretation of the Word of God. The church and Israel are two distinct groups with whom God has a divine plan."

As I have studied the other positions I find it hard to believe that you can hold to any other position without doing damage to these four doctrines:

a. Literal interpretation.
b. Dispensations.
c. Distinctions between the church and Israel.
d. Imminency of the return of Christ.

Dr. Pentacost on pp 193-194 of THINGS TO COME, mentions that Allis one of the key Amillennialists of our day admits, GET THIS, that if one is to interpret scripture literally and not figuratively that one MUST BECOME a premillennialist. That is the proven end of literal interpretation. He further admits that if you hold to literal interpretation you must also become, as a result of your study of scripture a pretribulationist.

Dr. Pentacost of p 194ff details the pretribulation rapture position in great detail. I believe he hits most of the points that we have mentioned.

Concerning literal interpretation those taking other positions must spiritualize the texts concerning prophecy. Walvoord gives some examples in the following quote.

"Postribulationists usually ignore the distinction between Israel and the church much in the fashion of the amillenarian school. The reason for this is that none of the tribulation passages in either the old or new testament ever mention the "church" or the ecclesia. In order to prove that the church is in the tribulation period, it is necessary to identify key terms as equivalent to the church. Hense, Israel becomes a general name for the church and in some contexts becomes an equivalent term. The term elect is taken to be equivalent to the church, regardless of the limitation of the context, and saints of all dispensations are considered as members of the true church. In order to make these various terms equivalents, it is necessary to take Scripture in other than a literal sense in many instances - the use of Israel as equivalent to the church being an illustration." (Taken from the book, THE RAPTURE QUESTION by John F. Walvoord. Copyright 1979 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 57)

In short, I think what I am saying is this. Present a position other than the pretrib without damaging the doctrines of literal interpretation, dispensations, distinctions between Israel and the church or the imminent return of Christ and I will consider it!

I MAY BE WRONG, BUT I DON'T THINK IT CAN BE DONE!

07500

THE MILLENNIUM

Before beginning this study please read the following texts: Isa 65:17-25; Jer. 31:33-34; Ezek. 36:25-31.

Eusebius tells of a feast at the end of the Nicean Council as being really special. (He was an early church historian. The council was in A.D. 325)

"It felt as if we were imagining a picture of the Kingdom of Christ, and that what was happening was no reality, but a dream."

I think that we can draw from this that the Eusebius was not Amillennial, and that he viewed the kingdom as yet future and literal.

I would suggest a couple of items that we did not cover previously concerning the fact that the Lord was offering a kingdom while here the first time around.

Jn 1 41, "...We have found the Messias which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Andrew viewed the Lord as the Messiah.

Jn 1 49, "Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

They viewed the Lord in more than a friendly way!!!

It is not easy to tell how much of the gospels we can relate to the kingdom. It would seem that much of the information would directly relate to the kingdom, in that the Lord was offering it, and preparing people for it.

Will there be healing in the kingdom? The healing and miracles were a sign of the Messiah's having come, so may not be. Yet, Luke 8:1-3 mention that the Lord was "...shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God...." The context mentions some that had been healed, and they were ministering to the Lord in a material manner. This may be a part of the millennial form of things.

The kingdom is yet future, due to the fact that the Lord has never returned to set it up. We certainly are not in a kingdom ruled by Christ now!

When He instituted the Lord's table, He mentioned that He would not partake of it until the kingdom (Lu 22 18). He is not partaking at present to my knowledge.

Lu 24 30 is of interest. It shows the Lord with the folks on the road to Emmmaus, and as they fellowshipped together He broke bread with them, but did not share of the cup.

Let us just list some topics of the mill. and their basis.

This is a brief look at things. The verses listed are only a sampling of many many more that you could use in preparing lessons, and sermons.

CHILDREN WILL BE BORN:

Jer. 30 20, "Their children...."

Isa 65 20 mentions children's death.

The children born to these godly parents will have opportunity to follow the God of their Fathers, yet it is evident that some will not. Indeed, the indications are that many will not.

CHRIST WILL RULE:

Isa 2 4 mentions judging

Isa 11 3-4 mention that He will judge righteously.

Jer. 23 5-6 tell that He will be king. His name will be "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Ps 72 6-11 mentions that all the kings of the earth will bow before Him.

He will be here, and in control of all that is going on. He evidently will have help in ruling, which we will see later.

DAVID WILL RULE:

Isa 55 3-4 indicates it.

Jer. 30 9 states it. "But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."

Hos. 3 5, "...and seek the Lord their God, and David their king...."

Ezek. 37 24-25 This text mentions David as their prince, and also shows him as the servant of God.

Let us set our progress aside for a moment and consider this problem of both Christ and David ruling.

Some have suggested that "David" is equal to, or
the same as Christ. Since Christ came from the line of David and there was a promise of a Davidic king, then Christ was the fulfillment of that.

Some see the branch coming from David in the prophets as a literal son of David's line that will be born in the end time. There is no real proof of this thinking. That would add to the confusion, for the texts state David will reign and now we would add a son of David along with Christ and David himself.

The easiest, most literal interpretation, would fall along these lines. Christ will rule for it is His kingdom, yet David will rule. In Biblical times it was not uncommon for co-regents to exist. One being the actual king in office and name and the other in practice of ruling under the guidance of the king. Christ may use David as a ruling regent. Ezek. 37 24-25 may indicate this in that David is shown as the servant of God, and the Prince of the people.

It might also be suggested that Christ will reign over all the earth from the heavenly sphere, or possibly the New Jerusalem, while David is over Judah proper.

I don't think that it would hinder prophecy one bit to limit David to ruling over Israel, while having Christ ruling over the whole earth.

DEATH:

Isa 65:20, "...for the child shall die an hundred years old...."

Though there is death in the kingdom, there is indication in this same verse of long life. This long life will lead to a quick population growth, which would allow for many rejectors at the end of the kingdom.

EVIL DOERS WILL BE CUT OFF:

Ps 37 9-11 shows the evil doers will be cut off and the context seems to be similar to the beatitudes. "...the meek shall inherit the earth...." (vs 11)

HEALING IS INDICATED:

Isa 35 3-6, "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing...."

Ezek. 34 16 mentions, "...will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick...."

HOLY SPIRIT WILL BE FOR EVERYONE:

Joel 2 28-32, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh...." (28a)

Though the kingdom will have many aspects in which it is similar to the OT way of things, there seems to be some new parts as well.

It would be an interesting study to see if the cross wasn't the difference between the OT saints not having the Holy Spirit and the church/kingdom believers having Him indwell them. It certainly seems logical.

JERUSALEM WILL BE A CENTER OF HOLINESS:

Zech. 14 21, "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts...." The same verse goes on to say there will be no Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts, indicating there will only be Jews.

The Jew of Christ's day saw Jerusalem as the center of the earth, but now in the millennium this will be fact. All roads will lead to Jerusalem, so to speak.

JERUSALEM WILL BE THE CENTER OF GOVERNMENT:

Isa 2 2-4 states this.

JOY:

Isa 9 3-4, "...they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil."

Isa 12 3-6

Indeed, anywhere the Lord is there certainly should be joy!

There will be many attributes of Christ that will rub off on the kingdom. The joy, the love, the glory, the peace etc.

LAND:

Ezek. in the later chapters goes into great detail as to the divisions of the land.

Ps 69 35-36 indicates a continuing possession of the land.

LANGUAGE:

Zeph. 3 9 indicates a universal language, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent.

That should reduce culture shock for missionaries. HA!

LONG LIFE:

Isa 65:20

OFFERINGS:

Ezek. 42 13

We don't know what the significance of these offerings will be. They may just be symbolic in some manner, or they may be a memorial to things of the OT.

PEACE:

Isa 2 4, "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

The Sermon on the Mount - (The Beatitudes) would indicate the life in the kingdom will be very peaceful.

Isa 65 25, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock...."

PRIESTS:

Ezek. 42 14

RULE WILL BE WITH A ROD:

Isa 11 4, "...and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." This is the context of Him being the judge.

Ps 2 9, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

SACRIFICES WILL BE OFFERED:

Ezek. 42 13

SAFETY FOR JERUSALEM:

Jer. 33 16, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely...."

SAINTS ONLY:

At the beginning. It seems there will be offspring due to the fact there are lost at the end when things are coming to a close.

Matt.18 3, "...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Jn. 3 3, "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jer. 31 33-34;

Some feel there may be some gentile believers from the tribulation that enter into the Mill. We have no text to show this, yet there is that possibility. Many feel that the gentile believers will be martyred in the Trib. and come with the church at the second advent.

Since the Mill is primarily an Old Testament concept and the gentiles of the Trib. would be in the Old Testament concept this might be a possibility. This might well account for the nations that seem to be present in the Mill.

SAINTS WILL REIGN:

II Tim 2 12, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him...."

Rev 5 10 also.

Some suggest that the apostles (Matt 19 28) and the church (I Cor. 6 2-3) will reign and rule in the Mill. This may be so, however these texts show them judging and angels are involved in the Cor. text, thus it would seem better to say they will judge in some manner.

Whether this judging is in the Great White Throne, ruling, or some area that we aren't aware of we don't know.

I would personally assume that we will be judging in some manner. This may be in the area of reigning with the Lord, in the idea that as we see wrong we will take care of it.

SATAN BOUND:

Rev 20 1-3 HAVE SOMEONE READ IT.

SIN:

It exists: Zech. 14 17-19

It will be judged quickly: Zech. 14 17-19

It will be judged justly: Isa 11 4, "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smit the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

TEMPLE:

Ezek. 41ff

Zeck. 14:20 mentions the pots of the Lord's house.

THE EARTH'S TOPOGRAPHY WILL CHANGE:

Zech. 14 4-10 shows some major changes. There will be fresh water going out from Jerusalem. Indeed, it is indicated they will flow into the Dead Sea. ("hinder sea")

Ezek. 47 9-10 show that the Dead sea will once again live.

Engedi in verse ten is near the Dead sea and fishermen will be there.

UNIVERSAL WORSHIP OF GOD:

Zeph. 3 9, "...that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

This would not include those that will not be converted, though it would indicate they may outwardly worship until the end of the Mill when they rise up in rebellion.

WAR WILL NOT EXIST:

Isa. 2 4 speaks of the beating of swords into plowes.

IT SHOULD BE A GREAT TIME!

Miscellaneous Millennial texts: Ps. 24:7-10; Hos. 6:1-3 seems to indicate that the Lord would have set up the kingdom immediately upon Israel's turning, after their rejection. The turning has never been forthcoming so this prophecy still awaits its final fulfillment.

07550

THE MILLENNIAL POSITIONS:

I would like to begin with a quote from Boettner in Tan's book (Tan, Paul L.; "THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY"; Rockville, MD: Assurance Publishing, 1974, p 269-270) "'There is a logical connection between Premillennialism and Dispensationalism. Most of those who take Premillennialism seriously and become enthusiastic about it go on to adopt Dispensationalism. Conversely, we believe that most of those who becomes convinced of the errors of Dispensationalism proceed to throw Premillennialism overboard to.'"

(Boettner/MILLENNIUM p 158)

PREMILLENNIALISM (as we see it)

A. The Basis: The basis of premillennialism is found in the Old Testament Covenants given to Israel. The premillennialist sees these covenants as yet unfulfilled. These covenants will find their complete fulfillment during the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.

"Premillennialism insists that all the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant must be fulfilled since the covenant was made without conditions. Much of the covenant has already been fulfilled and fulfilled literally; therefore, what remains to be fulfilled will also be fulfilled literally. This brings the focus on the yet-unfulfilled land promise." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 457)

B. The definition: "Premillennialism is the view that holds that the second coming of Christ will occur prior to the Millennium which will see the establishment of Christ's kingdom on this earth for a literal 1,000 years. It also understands there will be several occasions when resurrections and judgments will take place. Eternity will begin after the 1,000 years are concluded. Within premillennialism there are those who hold differing views as to the time of the Rapture." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 450/Ryrie has a brief history of premillennialism on p 451-452.)

C. The System:

1. They believe in a literal historical grammatical system of interpretation.

2. They believe that today is not a golden age. (Corruption is the norm in our day and things are not getting better and better. We are pessimists according to the present day lingo - 1990.)

3. There is a definite distinction between Israel and the Church.

4. Prophecies concerning Israel were fulfilled literally to this point and will one day be completely fulfilled - literally.

5. They hold to a literal, visible, bodily and glorious return of Christ in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

6. They hold to a literal Abrahamic Covenant which was extended into the future.

7. They recognize the Church as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Gal 3:29

8. They recognize the difference between physical and spiritual seed of Abraham. Rom. 9:6-8

9. The Abrahamic covenant was unconditional.

10. They use a Dispensational approach to Scripture.

11. The Church was formed separate from Israel. (Although early Christians were Jews.) I Cor. 10:32 and Rom. 11:26 shows this distinction between the two.

12. An overview of the system's teaching. They hold to the following points:

a. Soteriological program (God is in the process of providing salvation for accepting mankind.) Gen. 3:15

b. Promises given to Abram that were to find fulfillment in his life and his people. Gen. 12

c. Palestinian Covenant Deut. 30:1-10

d. Davidic Covenant II Sam. 7:12-16

e. New Covenant Jer. 31:31-24

f. Kingdom prophesied by the Old Testament Prophets.

g. Kingdom offered and rejected by Christ at His first advent. Matt. 10-12

h. Church was indicated in Matt. 16 -- Church was started in Acts 2

j. God will again deal with Israel. (They are only set aside at this time. This is national Israel. Individual Jews may and do come to the Lord for Salvation through the Messiah that has come.)

k. The Millennial kingdom is yet future. (Rev. 20:1-6 and Old Testament references to future kingdom)

l. Final resurrection and judgment. This will follow the kingdom and will deal with all unsaved of all time. Rev. 20: 11-15

D. Problems of the system (from those outside the system)

1. Premillennialists are accused of not being scientific in their study of the Scripture. This would have reference to the not using of the liberal's methods of criticism and interpretation. To this the premill suggests, they lack of knowledge of the system.

2. Premillennialists base their whole system on one text, Rev. 20:1-7. The fact that Scripture mentions a 1000 years is disputed by the other positions. Some feel that the 1000 years is not to

be taken as a literal 1000 years, but rather be viewed as a period of time. They would suggest that we are in that period of time now. The truth is that this text fits only to the Old Testament Kingdom when you use a literal framework of interpretation. John The Baptist and Christ came on the scene preaching a kingdom, but never defined it or told the Jews what it was. The only kingdom they would know about is the promised Davidic kingdom of the Old Testament. The whole of the New Testament is a continuation of the Old and its program. God did not dump the Old Testament kingdom, just postponed it and mentioned it through John to allow people to know that it is still coming.

3. They are inconsistent in their literal interpretation. (We are not literal literalists.) This refers to the fact that the premillennialist allows for the allegories, etc. of the Old Testament. They charge that if we are going to be literal, then we should be literal in all passages. In otherwords when the Psalmist mentions that David was the apple of God's eye, we should see this as God having an apple in His eye named David.

Premillennialists recognize types, signs and other language oriented quirks that literal interpretation would require.

4. They hold to a reinstitution of sacrifices and this contradicts Heb. 8:8-13. Yes, we see sacrifices in the Millennial kingdom because the Bible prophecies this. We do realize there is no need for sacrifice for sin, however there are other sacrifices, and these sacrifices in the Millennium may be similar to the Lord's Table in meaning. They may have commemorative value.

The problem is that the objectors probably misinterpret Hebrews, and ignore that the premill. always mentions that the Millennial sacrifices are a memorial or some other form, rather than the sin sacrifices that are no longer needed.

5. They interpret the Old Testament and fit the New Testament into it. Amen. Since we believe in progressive revelation, we would certainly look at the oldest and understand the new in light of that knowledge. This is only logical and correct.

6. A future work with Israel (kingdom) is inconsistent because Jew and Gentile are one now. Eph. 2:14-16 They do not see any distinction between Israel and the Church, so this is a charge that is to be expected. The two entities are separate and the Bible is clear on this.

They wrongfully mix Israel and the Church. They also wrongly interpret the Eph. text along with all of the texts which show that the two are different and distinct.

7. Literal interpretation is not a valid method.

This concept should turn their own minds to the illogical and profane. How can we understand a message given to us unless we use the literal method? If they were to receive a telegram from

their Aunt Tilda, wouldn't they use literal interpretation to understand it? God wanted to communicate with man thus the literal method is the only logical method.

8. A difference between Israel and the church is inconsistent with Rom. 11:11-24.

On the contrary, this text depicts clearly, if interpreted literally, the distinction between Israel and the Church. They have a misconception of the Romans illustration.

9. The New Testament doesn't interpret the Old Testament literal so why should the premillennialists? James spiritualizes Amos 9:11 in Acts 15:14-17.

True the New Testament writers do not always use the Old Testament literally, however they do use it literally at times. They drew information from the Old Testament to use for their own day much as we do. A spiritualizing does not remove the need for a literal fulfillment. Peter in His first sermon in Acts mentions the fulfillment on the day of Pentecost as a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, however that prophecy was not literally, completely fulfilled. It will have a complete literal fulfillment yet future.

10. Premillennialists ignore Matt. 21:43 when Christ removed the kingdom from Israel.

How can we have a millennium if God is not dealing with Israel? This is the crux of the system. God is not dealing with Israel today, but will one day resume His dealings with them. We do not ignore the removal of the kingdom from Israel, we view it as a literal occurrence. Indeed, the Matthew text is a precursor of the Romans 11:11ff text. The removal of the kingdom is not ignored, it is recognized and this is an integrated part of the system.

11. Gal. 3:28,29 says there is no difference between Jew and Greek. Premillennialists should apply Jewish truth to Gentiles.

True, there is no difference, but this is speaking of the spiritual realm and not the physical. (Rom. 9:6-8 show a difference between the two.) In this age there is no difference between Jew and Gentile within the church and indeed, within the need of salvation and its availability to all of mankind. The phrase "in Christ Jesus" limits the thought to believers.

The whole problem of problems is that we cannot answer them adequately enough to convince the other side. We can find no arguments strong enough to convince them. We have no text good enough to stir their solidarity in their position Why? Because they interpret differently than we do. If they accept literal, historical, grammatical interpretation then they must, by their own lips, accept Dispensational Premillennialism. They realize that the Dispensational premillennial position is the end product of the literal method of interpretation. We realize their position is due to their method of interpretation, thus there is a great gulf fixed that no man can cross (unless he changes his method of interpretation).

COVENANT PREMILLENNIALISM

A. Basis: This system is based on the Old Testament Covenants which are now being fulfilled in and by the Church.

B. The System:

Tan defines the system as follows: "A system of eschatology which attempts to reconcile premillennialism with covenantism while avoiding dispensationalism and pretribulationism. (P 364; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.)

He mentions (p 269) that, "They want what one writer describes as 'amillennial covenantism with a premillennial topping.'"

They view the program as beginning at Genesis 3:15 in the promise of one that will overcome evil. From that point forward there is a kingdom rule by God, over man. This rule takes different shades of meaning as time passes. In the Old Testament it was a direct rule through the judges, kings, and prophets. When Christ came to earth and died, then ascended to the Father the Kingdom took on a spiritual aspect. He is now reigning from heaven and will continue to do so until the end times. At the end, there will be a literal kingdom over Israel, yet they do not see it as an all Jewish kingdom.

It seems that they view much of prophecy allegorically, yet when it comes to Revelation 20 and the 1000 year kingdom, they turn to literalism.

The position views the second coming as the introduction to the kingdom on earth. The Devil will be bound during this time of the kingdom while Christ will be ruling here on earth. They view the church age as a kingdom which is ruled from heaven. The tribulation also occurs prior to the kingdom.

They would view the kingdom in the book of Matthew as this spiritual kingdom. They would view all the book as applying to that kingdom - today. This has been taught in many churches over many years. I was raised on this idea in a church where the Gospel was seldom taught. I have heard it taught in Evangelical churches as well.

It seems that they view things very similarly to us, however there is one distinction. They believe that the covenants are being fulfilled in the church today. They want to have covenantism but remain premillennial.

1. Their system views the Church as spiritual Israel. Rom. 9:24

2. Abraham is the Father of all believers. Rom. 4:11

3. They view Jer. 31 as fulfilled in this age. They see the Hebrews 8 passage as contradictory to the thought of a religious system for the Jews in the kingdom future.

4. They do accept a literal Israel. Rom. 11:26

5. They do differ with premillennialism about the prophesied sacrifices of Ezek. 40-48. They view them fulfilled by Christ completely with no future fulfillment. Heb. 8

6. They believe in a literal national future salvation for Israel.

7. A literal 1000 years is recognized, however this is not taught in the Old Testament or the Gospels, only Rev. 20:1-6. It is some new kingdom that was never mentioned, or indicated prior to Rev. 20.

8. Christ preached a salvation message. He was not preaching a kingdom message.

9. Today we are in the mystery or spiritual form of the kingdom.
Matt. 13

10. Christ reigns in heaven today, but on earth during the 1000 years.

11. The covenants and the kingdom find their fulfillment in this mystery form of the kingdom today.

12. The kingdom was promised in the Old Testament. This would be the mystery form - the church.

13. The kingdom is being fulfilled today.

14. The kingdom will be concluded at the 2nd return of Christ for a 1000 year earthly reign.

15. They hold to a resurrection of the saved premillennium, and unsaved post millennium for judgment.

16. It would seem that they reject a literal tribulation.

17. Tan submits that they affirm, "that the church and Israel are somewhat blended, though not fully amalgamated." (p 246; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.)

C. Problems of the system.

1. They deny the dispensational system yet operate within one. They view different governing relationships between God and man thus accepting one of the basics of dispensationalism.

2. They improperly view Rom. 9:24 and see the Church as spiritual Israel.

3. They reject literal fulfillment of Ezek. 40-48 because of not viewing Heb. 8 properly. They feel there cannot be a new temple in the future because the Lord's sacrifice in the heavenly tabernacle was once and for all.

4. They fail to relate the Rev. 20:1-6 1000 years to the Old Testament Kingdom. It is hard to conceive why they would find a new - unrevealed kingdom in the book of Revelation. The easiest and most logical view is that this is the kingdom prophesied.

5. They spiritualize most of the Bible's prophecy yet take Rev. 20 literally.

Tan in THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY, mentions that they spiritualize the 144,000 to be the church while holding to a literal 1,000 year kingdom. He terms their interpretation as "selectively inconsistent" (p 268).

6. Someone that believes Satan is being plundered today has a problem. A look at any city newspaper will show the decadence of our society and world. To say that Satan is bound in this age is to attribute all evil that goes on to God and his kingdom that is being ruled from heaven by Christ. Satan and evil are free and active in this present age.

7. They see no distinction between the Kingdom and Soteriological programs. The kingdom is a program in and of itself to bring man to God.

8. Their system requires a non-chronological book of Revelation. Passages showing saints in heaven will be out of sequence if it is chronological in their system.

9. They mix Israel and the Church.

AMILLENNIALISM

A. The Basis: Amillennialism is based on the Old Testament covenants which were transferred over to the Church for fulfillment.

B. The System:

In a nutshell the position views the world ruled by the one that is in a position to do so. Adam was the ruler until his fall into sin when the Devil took over the rulership of the earth. He ruled throughout the Old Testament period. His rule was interrupted when the Lord came to earth to setup His kingdom. Not only did Christ set up His kingdom - the millennium - the Davidic kingdom - the 1000 years - but He also bound Satan for the duration of this new kingdom.

Their view of Daniel is that the kingdoms that are mentioned are Satans kingdoms here on earth

(Babylon, Media Persia, Greece). The 70th week, or tribulation is past and it ended in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem.

Christ is now ruling from the heavenly Jerusalem. When Christ returns to earth at the second coming he will introduce eternity in which the Old Testament will be fulfilled.

Tan suggests that amillennialism is, "A system of eschatology which, among other things, interprets the millennium as symbolical of present life in heaven." (P 363; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.)

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SYSTEM:

1. The seed of Abraham is equal to all of God's people. Israel and the Church age people are one.

2. God dispensed with the Land and Promise. The promises are no longer to be considered. This is due to the following: a. The Jews have lost their lineage; b. The promise was fulfilled literally in the past; c. The promises were conditional and Israel didn't meet the requirements.

3. The promise was for any group of God's people in any age. (If this is correct, then why don't we go claim Israel for the Christians in the United States?)

4. Israel lost their promises and the Church inherited them. (Church = Israel)

If the promises have been dispensed with, how can any group of God's people claim them? Illogical.

5. They see no justification for a total literal interpretation of Scripture.

6. They agree with Covenant Premillennialists that Rev. 20:1-6 is the Millennial Kingdom, but disagree as to what it is.

7. They feel Rev. 20:1-3 is today. Satan is now bound. (He can't prevent spread of the Gospel however.)

8. Rev. 20:4 is speaking of martyred saints.

9. Christ reigning literally 1000 years is not required. This would indicate that the millennial kingdom to them may be quite different from the kingdom of the Old Testament.

10. The Old Testament Kingdom came in Christ's time. Matt. 12:28

11. They do allow for a future phase of some sort. (This would be the Revelation Millennium, even if they don't define what it is.)

12. Overview of their teachings.

a. Satan has a series of kingdoms Dan. 9 (Babylon, Medio-Persia, Greece and Rome)
b. God's kingdom takes over. (Fall of Rome)
c. Satan cast out of Heaven at the cross.
d. Satan bound at fall of Rome.
e. Kingdom offered by Christ.
f. Kingdom set up A.D. 70. (fulfilled at fall of Rome.)
g. Resurrections and judgment just prior to eternity.
h. Jesus reigns in Heavenly Jerusalem Gal. 4:26.
i. The book of Revelation deals with the fall of Jerusalem and fall of Rome.
j. The 1000 years is only representative of an ideal time.

C. Problems:

1. They interpret literally in theology but allegorically in prophecy. Any system that switches between methods of interpretation should be suspect of interpreting to show their position rather than to see what God has to say. The person who believes in allegorical interpretation is much more honest in what he is doing.

2. All prophecy is fulfilled in this current age. Anyone reading through the Old Testament would realize that some prophecies are not fulfilled, and a look around our world would show that this is not a golden age.

3. Today is a golden age with Satan bound. How can anyone believe Satan is bound today.

4. They reject dispensations even though they have them in their system. Any system that does not offer blood sacrifices today is a quasi-dispensational system. They must realize there are differences in how the Lord deals with man.

5. Their arguments are very weak, and their textual interpretations are very stretched.

6. They admit Scripture doesn't say the Promise was conditional, but they assume that it was. To assume that something is true where the Bible is silent opens us to any man's assumption as truth. I might well assume that I am free to murder since the Scripture does not state, "Stanley shalt not kill." I could easily say that the "thou" of Scripture is everyone except myself.

7. They make no difference between Israel and the Church. This does an injustice to the Scriptures.

8. The land and promise are not out of the picture. Israel has never occupied the total promised

land. All this is yet future when the Lord returns to his dealings with Israel.

9. Basically the whole system is a problem in that it is not consistent with literal interpretation.

10. They tend to stretch your imagination. (Acts 1:6 Christ's answer to disciples' question is turning their attention from a Kingdom that is already set up to their coming responsibility of witnessing. To premillennialists he is saying the millennium is yet future.)

Among the amillennialists is the Roman Catholic Church.

COVENANT THEOLOGY

A. The system defined: Tan suggests: "A system of theology which, among other things, explains all relationship between God and man from the beginning to the end of time under the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Grace, and (sometimes) the Covenant of Redemption." p 364; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.

B. The system explained:

The system operates on the basis of two covenants. The first is the covenant of works which ended at the fall of Adam. Genesis 3:15 is the second covenant in cryptic form. The covenant is the covenant of grace. This covenant covers all of time since the fall.

Some add a third covenant of redemption which is introduced at the cross, but it is viewed as an integrated part of the covenant of grace.

The people holding to this position interpret Scripture very differently than we do. They use figurative, or allegorical views of Scripture and find new, deeper meanings behind the words of the Scriptures.

They see two covenants neither of which appear in Scripture. The covenant of works and the covenant of grace. The covenant of works carried mankind all the way to the fall.

The verse they use to show the covenant of works is Rom. 2:7-9, "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek." (It is strange that they give a New Testament reference to back up a system that occurred hundreds of years before.) They also use Psalm one as proof text. (This is at least a little closer in proximity.)

The covenant of grace was given in cryptic form in Gen. 3:15. At the time of Abraham, God instituted the covenant of grace which has other covenants or administrations within it. A

Covenant has three elements to it: Parties, Promises, and Conditions.

The covenant of works, I gather, is the fact that Adam and Eve could live in the garden as long as they worked in the garden and kept their noses clean. This is also called by other names such as, Edenic covenant, and covenant of life.

This covenant had three stipulations. THE EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY, lists them as follows: "(1) a promise of eternal life upon the condition of perfect obedience throughout a probationary period; (2) the threat of death upon disobedience; and (3) the sacraments of paradise and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Elwell, Walter A. Ed.; "EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984, p 279)

The covenant of grace is really poorly named because it is actually a second covenant of works. God in this new covenant requires obedience to His revealed will. As He sees obedience, then He will bless the person. This covenant is between God and the elect, for it is God's promise to save the person who believes.

As you can see, the Covenant Theologian is required to mix the Church and Israel into one large group of God's people where there are no distinctions. The mixing of Testaments can be seen in the fact that they use Rom. 2:7-9 to show the covenant of works which ended at the fall. All of Scripture as now complete is the basis for their system. It would seem to me that no person prior to the completion of Scripture could really know what God wanted because all Revelation was not given.

In keeping with this they would view all promises of both testaments as theirs for the choosing. A further mixing of the testaments results in some cases with infant baptism. The rite of Old Testament circumcision for babies is carried over into the thought of baptism. Both being a sign of the covenant. (A note of interest: Circumcision was a male right, so how can it be a precursor for baptism, a male and female right?)

Ryrie quotes Allis's book "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH," "The law is a declaration of the will of God for man's salvation." They feel that we are to be obedient to the revealed will of God so that He will bless us.

Amillennialists and their books:

Jay Adams, "THE TIME IS AT HAND"
O. T. Allis, "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH"
William E. Cox, "AMILLENNIALISM TODAY"
Floyd E. Hamilton, "THE BASIS OF MILLENNIAL FAITH"

As I understand their thinking, the first covenant was given to carry man through time, but Adam

blew it. Finally God found Abraham, a man that would obey, and so God set the second covenant, out of His grace, another covenant of works to carry man through.

Some see a third covenant, a covenant of redemption -- I have not done any research on those that present this. Elwell in his "THE EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY"; p 279-280, shows this covenant to be as follows: "According to covenant theology, the covenant of grace, established in history, is founded on still another covenant, the covenant of redemption, which is defined as the eternal pact between God the Father and God the Son concerning the salvation of mankind."

"The Father loves the Son, commissions him, gives him a people, the right to judge, and authority over all mankind... the Son loves the Father, delights to do his will, and has shared his glory forever...."

"On this foundation covenant theology affirms that God the Father and God the Son covenanted together for the redemption of the human race, the Father appointing the Son to be the mediator, the Second Adam, whose life would be given for the salvation of the world, and the Son accepting the commission, promising that he would do the work which the Father had given him to do and fulfill all righteousness by obeying the law of God."

POSTMILLENNIALISM

A. The system defined: Tan suggests: "A system of eschatology which, among other things, sees the millennium ushered in through a gradually Christianized world. Christ comes at the end of this 'millennium.'" ("THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY" P 367)

In recent days there have been many taking on this line of thinking. Ten years ago Boettner and J.M. Kik were the only men alive that seemed to hold this position. In recent days many in the Charismatic movement have been accepting this thinking and teaching it. They see the Church as the power to bring in the Millennium.

They see that the Church is responsible to reach all peoples of the earth with the Gospel and then the kingdom will be set up. Rev. 7:9a is used to help show that the earth must be reached before the Kingdom can come into existence. You will be seeing more and more about this in the future. This is behind many of the evangelism movements of our day.

They are calling this the "Kingdom Theology." Some fear that this theology is playing into the hands of the New Age Movement which is teaching a very similar philosophy. They feel that the new Christ is about to be revealed and that he will soon set things right here on earth for his rule over man.

We will have a serious look at Kingdom Theology in a future section.

PRINCIPLES OF THE SYSTEM:

1. The preaching of the Gospel to the world will bring mass world wide conversions which will usher in the 1000 years of peace. Sound like any recent evangelism push? 2000 for example.

2. Christ will return at the end of the 1000 years of peace.

3. There is one large general resurrection of all the dead of all times.

4. There will be a general judgment of all those raised and those living at the coming of Christ.

In the past the main deterrent to this position was the advent of the World Wars. Prior to the wars there seemed to be a peace coming, and people were coming to the Lord. Since the wars this position had little to offer. It may well be that the new crumbling of communism and the appearance of peace over the earth will bring forth a new movement toward this system of thought.

They deny Christ's reign on earth, and spiritualize the tribulation information. The idea of world evangelism was not a possibility until the 80's when the kingdom theology came into focus.

Many evangelical groups have taken up the 2000 concept which teaches that we will reach the world by the year 2000. Many have spent millions on strategy and labor to accomplish this goal. There is nothing wrong with the labor and investment of money to evangelize, however the goal of 2000 is foolish at best. When we evangelize the world, Christ can come according to the ologies of today. God will, however choose that time, not man, not man's plans, not man's efforts!

There is a real redefinition in world evangelization becoming popular today because of this thinking. They are now saying that if a people group has one church in it, then that people group has been evangelized. Based on this misconception they have announced that world evangelization is nearing a reality. Imagine, if there is one church in the Afro-American people group then that group of millions is considered evangelized!

"This viewpoint teaches that the second coming of Christ will occur after (post) the millennium. Postmillennialists look for a utopian state on earth to be brought about through the efforts of the church, and during this golden age the church, not Israel, will experience the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham and David. The kingdom will be on earth, but it will be a "church kingdom" not a Jewish kingdom, and the King, Christ, will be absent from the earth, not present on it. He will rule in the hearts of the people and return to the earth only after the millennium is complete. then will follow a general resurrection of all the dead, a general judgment of all people, and eternity will begin.

"Postmillennialism conceives of the unfulfilled Abrahamic promises as being fulfilled by the

church and, of course, not in any literal sense. Its method of interpretation is generally to spiritualize prophecy." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 162-163.)

POST TRIB PREMILLINNARIANISM

Men holding to this position that I have run across are: George Ladd, Mr. Krouse, and Mr. Kromminga.

Ladd wrote "THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM AND PRESENCE OF THE FUTURE." Walvoord has a review of this book and says that the premillennial position was totally left out and that he believes Ladd is closer to being Amillennial. Ladd says no to this. (The review was in Dallas Seminary's theological journal, Bib Sac. July 1974.)

They view the Rapture and 2nd Coming as one event between the Tribulation and Millennium. The believers are resurrected and the living unrighteous are judged at this point in time. This introduces Christ's literal rule for 1000 years on earth. At the end of this time there is a general resurrection and the unrighteous are judged. The righteous enter eternity.

They make no distinction between Israel and the Church. They feel that God's Soteriological program is the Kingdom program. They feel literal historical interpretation is wrong, thus arrive on the scene as Post Tribulational Premillennial.

Another group of postribulation people are the Seventh Day Adventists. The 7th dayers got into trouble, predicting the second coming because they were postrib and saw the Roman Church as the end times culprits. They figured up with their trusty calculator and decided on 1844 and blew it. (They viewed worship on Sunday from Rome and calculated the end of the spiritualized tribulation that they were living through.

REVISED DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLINNARIANISM

This position seems to be a cross between dispensationalism and Covenant Theology thus the name that has been given to them. There is little written on their position that I have been able to find.

This view doubts the view which we have set forth, that Christ and John the Baptist were offering a literal 1000 year kingdom. (Millennial kingdom of the Old Testament.)

As I understand the view they see the dispensational approach, but instead of viewing the church as parenthetical they see it as a grafting of the gentiles into the kingdom that is ongoing in God's plan. When the gentiles were grafted in they became the kingdom. The kingdom is one ongoing program with God and there has just been a slight change in clientele during the church age.

They view a pre-millennial return of Christ to fulfill the promises of Israel in a 1000 year reign of Christ. I do not know what they do with the tribulation for it does not appear on the charts I have seen.

There is strong reaction to the idea that Christ offered a kingdom and that it was rejected. They feel that it was Christ's person that was rejected rather than His kingdom. (We would agree that His person was rejected as was His kingdom.)

They view the sermon on the mount and other teachings prior to the rejection as the spiritual intent of the Mosaic law and that they are for this age as well as the kingdom to come.

They make a very valid point to the thinking of some pre-trib. people. They take issue with the thought that the church is a parenthesis. A period which God Super Glued in, to fill the gap till the 2nd Coming. Some almost make it appear that God didn't know that the kingdom was going to be rejected. This is consistent with what has been presented in this work. The church is a part of the ongoing program of God that was planned before the foundation of the earth. The church is the kingdom in mystery form. In this they would agree with our view.

Indeed, God did know the events coming, and had planned the church age all along. He had just not revealed it as yet.

They see Christ's offer of a kingdom as a spiritual kingdom (salvation) not the Davidic kingdom.

I'm not sure they are that far removed from Posttrib Premillennialism. They see the church age as a phase of the kingdom - which seems to be consistent with things. They keep Israel and the church separate except that we will be with Israel in the tribulation if there is one.

Their disagreement with our position would be basically two fold. They would believe that we are in a spiritual phase of the kingdom now and that Christ was not offering the Millennial Kingdom when He was on earth.

That concludes our brief look at some of the other views of the end times. It might be asked, "Does it matter what we hold?"

Yes, it does matter. If you are going to live life and declare that the Bible is your guide to faith and practice, then you must look at what It says and believe it.

When interpreted literally the Bible shows the Premillennial position very clearly. The system fits the facts given. If you reject literal interpretation, then you will find yourself in some other belief system. True, all systems lead to righteous living and that is to be admired in all that believe in any system.

The key in all of this is God's message. Did He deliver it in obscure hard to understand methods,

or did He deliver it in a very understandable form? The latter seems most logical.

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ULTRADISPENSATIONALISM

I would like to include a short study on what is termed ultradispensationalism. It is the dispensational system taken a few steps further.

Among these people there are a number of variations. The variety comes from the fact that they place the beginning of the Church at different places in time. This will automatically determine how they view the Lord's table, Baptism and their use of Biblical books.

The positions:

Some view the church as beginning at Acts nine, the conversion and commission of Paul. (Mr. C.R. Stam, "THINGS THAT DIFFER"; Chicago: Berean Bible Society, 1959/ He also wrote, "THE FUNDAMENTALS OF DISPENSATIONALISM")

Some view the church as beginning at Acts thirteen, when Paul and Barnabus were sent out on their first missionary journey. (Mr. O'Hair)

Others see the church beginning as late as Acts 28, as the ministry of Paul closes out. (Mr. Knoch)

Though I have not run across anyone holding to this position, I suspect there may be some that view the Church beginning with Acts ten when the gentiles were allowed into the picture. (The conversion of Cornelius and his house.)

Among their beliefs are the following: Some reject the Lord's table, some reject baptism, some reject both, some reject the ordinances and hold only to Paul's epistles, and some go even further and reject all of the New Testament except Paul's prison epistles.

Mr. Knoch believes there are four dispensations between Christ and Paul's prison ministry.

Most of these men view the Great Commission as to the Jews only and not incumbent upon the Church.

Another variation is the thought of Mr. C.F. Baker. He believes that one church began at Pentecost, but that Paul was sent and was writing to another, separate, church body. (Baker, C.F., "DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Grace Bible College Publ., 1971)

I THINK that all of these men would be pretrib/premill men and that they would hold to a literal Millennium. Some of them are very straight doctrinally. Indeed, IFCA, at one time, accepted a hyperdispensational man into their fellowship. This would require proper belief in many areas of doctrine.

07650

KINGDOM THEOLOGY

I would like to introduce this section with two quotes from a man that preached a similar type theology. The quotes will set the stage for our discussion.

"He [Christ] could have come back five hundred years ago. If we evangelize the world in this generation, He can come back in this generation. Everything depends on our obedience. We can hasten His coming by giving His Gospel to every tribe, tongue, people and nation."

"When the last nation gets the Gospel and there are some in the body of Christ from every nation, tongue and people, then, and then only, will God's plan be consummated. Only then can the Age end and Jesus Christ return to take over the reins of government." (Smith, Oswald J., "THE CRY OF THE WORLD"; London: Marshal, Morgan and Scott, no copyright)

You can see clearly from this that the Church, and the Church's efforts will bring about the return of Christ. Christ must wait upon us to do our job. He cannot return until we allow it. Now, I trust that you have seen the error of that already. How can we control Almighty God? We cannot!

Variations of this thought have come to us in a number of different groups, theologies and belief systems. Some that we will look at briefly are: Kingdom Theology, Dominion Theology, Reconstruction theology, Theonomy, Restorationism, Restitutionism, Third Wave, Latter Rain, and Kingdom Now.

Gary North divides the theological peoples of our day into two categories. The eschatological pessimists and the eschatological optimists. Simply put the pessimists see gloom and doom, and the optimists see vivaciousness and victory. The pessimist views the world situation and Biblical end times as declining until the Lord comes. These people are the dispensationalists.

The optimist views the world scene as getting better and better until the Lord comes. The world getting better comes from the activities of the believers. Those holding this are usually linked in some manner with Post millennialism.

Most agree that many of these people have simply adopted the old Postmillennialism and tacked on a new name with some new trimmings. DeMar does not seem to reject the title

Postmillennialist when used of him. ("THE REDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO DAVE HUNT"; Gary DeMar and Peter Leithard; Dominion Press; Ft Worth; 1988, p XXXV) He quotes Isa 11 9-10 as something that relates to what believers can do today. (in Reduction, p X) "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

To prove their teachings they state that Satan has developed counterfeits. Because their teachings follow closely the teachings of cults and isms, they state that their teachings are the true ones that the cults and isms are counterfeiting. Their teaching has been compared by some to the New Age movement. The New Agers believe that the true Christ is coming shortly, as soon as they can get the earth ready for him. The Kingdom Theology simply are looking for Christ's second coming when they can get the world cleaned up.

The following points are a compilation of information gleaned from the following books: "THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW" Pollock; "SEDUCTION THE BIBLICAL RESPONSE"; "PARADISE RESTORED", Chilton.

1. They view man as God: We can become god and create our own destiny. This is based on several things. First, they believe the church is divine - we are the body of Christ. This is the misuse of literal interpretation! We are not the literal hands, feet etc. of Christ - we are a body of people that belong to Christ and a body that Christ controls. The Scripture nowhere indicates that we are divine beings, nor that the church is divine. Relate the church at Corinth to this teaching. If the church is divine then we have divinity involved in immorality and many other sins. Intolerable!

Their thinking stems from Eph 4:11-16 and Matt. 5:48. They mistake maturing with becoming divine and perfect. We cannot in this life become perfect. We may become more mature and more pure, but never perfect. We may not in any life become divine. God alone is divine and He alone in all of eternity will be divine.

2. They view the church as taking dominion over the world before Christ returns: The Corinthians text is speaking of activities of the Lord in the end and have nothing to do with what the church is going to do. This is the context of the resurrections, not the church age. The Ephesians text is also speaking of the Lord and not the church. Verse twenty two and three mention that Christ is head over the church, but does not show that the church did all that is in the preceding text.

Even the lost understand the program. In the 1992 presidential campaign one of the "religious right" was introduced by a newsman as one that believes that the Christians should take over government and set up a theocracy in the United States. This is what they want to do.

I dislike being lumped in with them by the media as part of the religious right. It seems the media takes the most controversial of a group and label all others that are related to that one controversial belief. The media related all of evangelical Christianity to the religious right that wants a theocracy. I personally believe that only the Charismatic end of the spectrum wants the theocracy yet evangelicals, fundamentalists etc. are lumped with them.

3. All believers will become rich: Prov. 13:22 "...wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." They teach that the riches of the world will come to the church and this will assist in taking dominion of the world. This is the prosperity teaching of today. This concept is teaching that all believers should be rich and have all that they ask for.

My brother attended one of these churches in Washington. The pastor and his wife (both pastors in the church) both drove Mercedes and the ushers took up the offering in five gallon plastic buckets. If the offering wasn't enough, they would pass the buckets again.

4. The Church will evangelize the world, then Christ can return: Rev. 7:9 "After this I beheld and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues," This text simply states that there will be believers from all nations etc. in heaven. It does not state that the church must accomplish this before the Lord returns. The how of this is up to God, not man.

One final thought in refuting their thinking. Lu 18:8 seems to show that the righteous may not be in the majority when He comes. "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The teaching that we are studying requires that the believers overtake the world, not as this verse indicates dwindle to the point that it is questioned whether there will be faithful or not when the Lord returns.

SOME OF THE PLAYERS

I would like to list some of the different groups that I have run across and comment on their teaching. Some of the groups, I have found no information on so comments will be limited.

LATTER RAIN: A revival broke out in 1948 in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada. This was likened to the outpouring of the spirit upon those at the Azuza street church when the modern Charismatic Movement was born. (The Azuza street meetings were the foundation of the modern Charismatic movement. People were gathered and they were involved in an outpouring of the Spirit and speaking in tongues.)

Out of this revival came revelations that told the leaders that the church had completely misunderstood the great commission and the end times scriptures. This group later gave way to the Manifest Sons Of God.

MANIFEST SONS OF GOD: They were a pentecostal group in the 40's and 50's. They

preached a victorious gospel. Involved in their thinking was the beginnings of the Prosperity theology.

They felt that they could come to a point where they could think as God thinks, and operate at the same level of faith as God operates. If the above is true then you will have all that you want and lack nothing. They feel by the use of prosperity and bringing people to righteousness we will bring in the kingdom.

They are not reconstructionists as such. They felt that they could Christianize through prosperity, rather than reforming society and government.

Their new revelations were viewed as equal to, if not above the Scriptures.

KINGDOM NOW: Earl Paulk is the leader and has appeared on the PTL club (Jim Bakker's show). His church is the Kingdom Church. He has been appointed a Bishop by a group of Charismatic churches.

He mentioned in a newsletter called "The Omega Letter" that God wants Christians to be the vehicle by which all kingdoms of the world are brought to be the kingdoms of God. He called for the establishment of the Kingdom Of God now in this time.

He mentioned that Christians would begin taking public office in all levels of government. I might mention that this is a great idea, in that we as believers ought to be involved in our government. Indeed, we might be useful in helping turn this country around spiritually. I would disagree that God wants us to set up the kingdom and create a theocracy, however.

COALITIONS ON MORALITY: A gathering of very dissimilar groups for a common cause, such as abortion. One such group is CAUSA which was set up by Sun Myung Moon (Unification Church).

We have seen fundamental Christians beginning to work with Roman Catholics against abortion even though they have very dissimilar backgrounds.

THEONOMY: DeMar seems to tie theonomy and reconstructionism together in that he uses men from both to back up one of his statements in a footnote. ("THE REDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO DAVE HUNT"; Gary DeMar and Peter Leithard; Dominion Press; Ft Worth; 1988, p 31-32)

I would like to just adapt some information from an article in Bib Sac. The article was written by Robert P. Lightner. (Jan-Mar 1986)

WHO: Lightner mentions that they are from the covenant-Reformed, Westminster tradition. (P 26)

WHAT: They hold to the postmillennial position and preach that the Mosaic law is for our day. (p 26)

DEFINED: Theonomy comes from two Greek words. One meaning God and one meaning Law.

AIM: Basically they want to set up the theocracy that we have already mentioned. They want to institute the Mosaic law as the civil/religious law of the land. They feel that the Church should impose the religious upon all of society. Sounds like the Roman Church in Europe some centuries ago. (p 29)

PESSIMISTS: That's the good guys. Everything is getting worse until the end times when it will be the worst and Christ will come to restore the heavens and earth to the glories of God.

A listing of DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISTS might be in order. D.L. Moody, C.I. Scofield, Alva McClain, Herman Hoyt, Charles Ryrie, Dwight Pentecost, Hal Lindsey, H.A. Ironside, John Walvoord, and many many others.

DeMar includes Jimmy Swagart and David Wilkerson in this camp as well. Some of the writings of Jimmy Swagart indicate that he may be in this camp even though he would disagree in other areas. I have not read nor checked out David Wilkerson.

DOMINION THEOLOGY: DeMar suggests that Christ has a dominion. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Believers are co-heirs with Him so they should also have dominion with Him. This dominion is a bit premature and possibly overstated. The Scripture is plain that we will reign with Him and be with Him in the kingdom and eternity, however there is no indication that this ruling will occur before He comes to set up His kingdom.

They feel that as the world sees the believer living within His dominion they will see what the believer is like and the world will begin to change and improve, not by oppression, but by service to mankind. I THINK MOST WOULD AGREE THAT THE BELIEVER LIVING LIKE HE SHOULD WOULD HAVE A TREMENDOUS EFFECT ON HIS WORLD.

Adam was given dominion in the garden, but blew it when he fell. All now is a work to restore dominion. The believer is to work toward restoring dominion to man in every area of life and they do this through Christ. This by the way is part of the reason that Charismatics believe that women should pastor and preach. They are attempting to get the world back to the pre-fall days when Eve was EQUAL to Adam.

Chilton uses a quote by Spurgeon on the back of his book. (Chilton, David; "PARADISE RESTORED"; Ft. Worth: Dominion Press)

"'It would be easy to show that at our present rate of progress the kingdoms of his world never could become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Indeed, many in the Church are giving

up the idea of it except on the occasion of the advent of Christ, which, as it chimes in with our own idleness, is likely to be a popular doctrine. I myself believe that King Jesus will reign, and the idols be utterly abolished; but I expect the same power which turned the world upside down once will still continue to do it. The Holy Ghost would never suffer the imputation to rest upon His holy name that He was not able to convert the world.'"

I've attempted to locate this quote but have not been able to at this point.
I'm not sure that Spurgeon meant what the Dominionist means, but there is a lot of truth in what he said. We would agree that at the present rate the world cannot merge into the kingdom as a righteous body of believers. We would agree that the Holy Spirit could transform the world into a Christian world, however this does not mean that He is going to do it to bring in the kingdom.

He also quotes other big names and indicates that they were in agreement with his thinking. A study of each man's belief systems would be required to prove that they indeed, were in agreement with Mr. Chilton. He quotes John Milton, St. Athanasius, and others.

They suggest that man in salvation is resotred to his original state which assures that he will fulfill his calling and purpose. (Chilton, David; "PARADISE RESTORED"; Ft. Worth: Dominion Press, p 25)

They see the cross as the final and ultimate judgment on the Devil and that he is of no problem to the believer today.

He gives a lot of information that is not footnoted and as such very suspect to me. Example: He mentions that Columbus was not only looking for a new route to the Indies but that his journal was full of references from Isaiah that prove that he was interested in expanding the kingdom to the Indies. This may well be. I might suggest that he was looking to expand the Roman Church kingdom by seeking riches for the Queen. If fact the American Indians call him a very greedy person based on his desire to enrich the Queen. (1992 Columbus day celebrations were hampered because of demonstrations against Columbus.)

Chilton identifies solidly with the postmillennial position thus identifying dominionism with reconstructionism.

DeMar, on the other hand, seems to give the reconstructionist the stance of not using politics as a part of their movement.

Some question where Pat Robertson stands. He seems to feel that reform through government is right. This was the reasoning behind his running for president of the United States.

As I see it in my study, the postmillennialist, dominionist, reconstructionist, are all the same with the Manifest sons of God. I don't know if they would hold to the "new" revelation of the Manifest sons or not. (The Omega letter classes Pat Robertson as a reconstructionist.)

KINGDOM THEOLOGY: DeMar suggests that the terms kingdom theology and dominion theology are used by some interchangeably. The two are very similar in nature. Kingdom theology is an intellectualization of the dominion theology. The dominionist has the belief, and is working toward fulfilling that belief, while the kingdomist is doing all this plus trying to figure out when the kingdom is. Is it now, is it future, is it real, is it spiritual.

Both seek to gain good in the world by works of the believer.

TRANSFORMATION THEOLOGY: They believe that God is involved in saving the whole person, body/soul/spirit/social/etc., and that he is doing this in this life.

This is some information from a paper published by the Fellowship Of Missions. (The article was "Transformation Theology") "The term 'social transformation' was lauded as one that could include both the spiritual and the social aspects of the Church's duty and thereby a wholistic expression of its mandate."

In speaking of redemption, they don't "'...see the mission of the Church as the saving of disembodied souls to go to heaven' out there.' Rather, this statement is based on the premise that God intends to redeem whole persons...body, mind and soul, and God intends to redeem His creation bringing into being a new heaven and a new earth.'"

RECONSTRUCTION THEOLOGY: The following are some that I have seen listed as being in the movement:

R.J. Rushdoony	Greg L. Bahnsen
James Jordan	Ray Sutton
David Chilton	George Grant
Gary DeMar	Peter Leithard
Dr. Gary North	Abraham Kyuper
American Vision	Chalcedon Foundation
Geneva Ministries	Institute for Christian Economics
Counsel of Chalcedon	

They follow their roots at least back to the Puritans, but some indicate the current movement finds its beginnings in the 60's. They feel that the humanistic world order is in error, but that there is a Biblical world order that is to be brought in by the reconstructionists. The Biblical world order is founded in the Old Testament, in that the Old Testament was God's plan for the entire world and not just the faithful. The whole world is to follow the Old Testament ways to the restoration of the Biblical world order. This determines that the Church will be victorious over the world system of the Devil. The Churches victory will come through social reform or reconstruction.

The Church will not only be victorious over the world order, but over all of the isms of the day

including the New Age movement. It should also be observed that they are attempting to put down even pessimism - the dispensationalist.

They see the transformation in all areas of life including such things as Ecology, mandating lower taxes and governmental change. I assume by governmental change that he has in mind a reconstructionist government. Can you show me anywhere that the Lord desires of us to take over governments and set up our own?

DeMar charges that Hunt in "THE SEDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY", correctly shoots down the new age movement, but that he offers nothing in place of it. Reconstructionism, however replaces the error of the new age with the truth of reconstructionism. My first thought was that both new age and the reconstructionist feels that by faithful work of their followers they can bring in a utopia. If I were a reconstructionist I would feel very uneasy with being identical in goal and method with the new age movement.

They hold to hold that the Old Testament law is for use today. They seem to follow the philosophy and thinking of VanTil, however I don't think that VanTil was a reconstructionist. They view the entire world as ultimately coming under the authority of the Lord through their efforts.

Kuyper held that Calvinism related to every area of life and this led to the thought system of VanTil. Though they follow VanTil and Kuyper they differ in that VanTil did not hold to their thinking and Kuyper was an Amillennialist. He did not see the church as being ultimately victorious.

There are a couple of articles concerning this topic that might be of interest. Christianity Today, Feb. 20, 1987, Democracy as Heresy, Rodney Clapp. Voice (IFCA's Magazine), July/August (don't know the year), The Lure Of Reconstructionist Theology, Jarl K. Waggoner.

COALITION ON REVIVAL: This seems to be a coalition of both sides. They attempt to find common ground on the real meaning of the Kingdom of God.

People:

Gary North R.J. Rushdooney
Bob Weiner Bob Mumford
Ed McAteer R. E. McMaster
Dr. James Kennedy

The following are on the steering committee listed on their letterhead.

Dr. Gleason Archer Ph.D Gary DeMar
Dr. Duane Gish Ph.D. Dr. James Kennedy Ph.D.

Mrs. Beverly LaHaye Dr. Tim LaHaye D.Min.
Dr. Harold Lindsell Ph.D. Rev. David P. Mains
Dr. Josh McDowell D.D. Bob Mumford
Dr. Gary North Ph.D. Dr. Raymond Ortlund D.D.
Dr. J.I. Packer Ph.D. Dr. RJ Rushdooney Ph.D.
Dr. Robert Saucy Th.D. Mr. Franky Schaeffer
Dr. Jack Van Impe Ph.D. Brother Andrew

SOME CONCLUSIONS TO THE END TIMES POSITIONS: To draw the end times positions to a close, I would like to recap some items that need to be understood in the multiple views of how God will end His present age.

1. The people we have been discussing are believers for the most part, if not all of them.

2. We need to treat one another as such, even though we disagree.

3. All are dispensationalists of some sort, even though some of them deny it. None of them bring sacrifices to the church and most see different governing relationships between God and man.

4. When you have a new thought introduced to you or a new interpretation, take time to study that verse or the thought. Check several commentaries. Try it in relation to other verses you know relate. Check it out. Accept, reject or hold for further thought. When verses are used, be sure that you consider the context of the passage. Most of these varying positions misuse Scripture to arrive at their interpretations.

5. If you don't know if something is true - don't present it in a lesson or sermon. If you are fairly sure you have the truth and you've checked your thinking with some knowledgeable men - teach it.

6. The pretrib/premill position is:

The most logical position. If God is trying to communicate with us, the literal method of interpretation would be the best method for Him to use. We have seen that this type of interpretation leads to pretrib/premill.

This is the most trouble free position. You have few problem passages to deal with. All verses that relate to prophecy seem to fit into this system easily.

The system presents hope to the Church in that we will not have to go through the terrible time of tribulation that is coming to the earth. I might qualify that statement. The position offers more hope than any of the other systems that believe in a tribulation. Some of the systems just ignore the fact that there is going to be one. They spiritualize all of that prophecy and say that we are going through those problems today.

Lastly, what good, what purpose and what result would come from having the Church go through the tribulation? As I have studied the positions I have never seen an author that stated a need for, nor a purpose for the church being in the tribulation.

God seems in all ages to have a plan and a purpose. If there is a no purpose for the Church in the tribulation, if there is no profit for the church in the tribulation, then why would God allow the Church to go through such a horrible time?

Related to this - there is no proof text that says the Church will be in the tribulation. Indeed, to have the Church present in the tribulation would be an argument from silence.

07700

HEAVEN

The classic story concerning death and graveyards is the question, "Why do they have fences around graveyards?" People are just dieing to get in. In reality, people ought to be dieing to accept the Lord so they can enter into heaven.

Heaven, when I was a child was that which religious leaders talked about, and that place which I assumed that I would go to. It was in my mind a place, rather than an existence. It was up there somewhere above the clouds and beyond the stars, where God had prepared a beautiful utopia for those of us that were to go.

Heaven in reality is much more than a place. It is eternity, it is eternity with our Lord and Savior, it is eternity with all the saints of all time, and it is eternity with peace.

We might make mention of one other fact that was long in coming to light in my foggy mind. All of mankind, past, present and future have eternal existence! The quality of that existence is the problem. Some have eternity in all that is good, while others have eternity in all that is bad! We will spend eternity in one existence or the other! The choice is up to the person!

LENGTH OF ETERNITY:

Hendrick Van Loon a Dutch historian in a book called, "THE STORY OF MANKIND", suggests that eternity is something like this: "High up in the North, in the land called Svitjod, there stands a rock. It is one hundred miles high, and one hundred miles wide. Once every thousand years, a little bird comes to this rock to sharpen its beak. When the rock has thus been worn away, then a single day of Eternity will have gone by!" (Tan, Paul L.; "THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY"; Rockville, MD: Assurance Publishing, p 358)

Tan suggests another illustration:

"When a baby is born, he is -- 0 YEARS OLD. If properly cared for, he becomes -- 10 YEARS OLD. If very properly cared for, we add another zero -- 100 YEARS OLD. Now, suppose we continue to add zeros: If we should fill the remaining pages of this book with zeros, and cover the earth and universe with zeros - and then comprehend its total value - we shall have discovered the length of one day in Eternity."

AND, WE ALL KNOW THAT THE ILLUSTRATION IS NOT EVEN ACCURATE, FOR WE CANNOT COMPREHEND THE VALUES LISTED, NOR CAN MAN FATHOM THE LENGTH OF A DAY IN ETERNITY. Indeed, it could be 24 hours long!

REALITY IN AMERICA:

Newsweek March 27, 1989 had an article that listed some statistics of interest. It detailed the fact that many do not believe in a literal hell, and that many do not believe in heaven. That should key us into some thinking about how we witness! If many Americans don't believe in Hell, then we ought to use this concept in our witnessing to people.

CHANGING VIEWS OF HEAVEN: The article has some interesting information.

Roman Catholic: Since Vatican II much literature has been set forth from the church, yet nothing has been mentioned about hell. The Newsweek article mentioned a Catholic Theologian, James Burtchaell, that feels that eternity is underway at this point in time. What you do here determines your relationship with God as you go forward in eternity. You will change modes of existence somewhere along the line.

I would agree in thought to the fact that eternity is now going on - that when we change modes of existence we will have a set relationship with God. The difference between us would be that his relationship seems based on works while the Bible requires that the relationship be based on the person of Jesus Christ.

Evangelicals: The article mentions that the evangelicals are changing their thinking about heaven and hell. This is evident in the fact that they don't talk about hell anymore. The author suggests that some are having a hard time stressing the Christ only method of salvation. They struggle with good men like Gandhi spending eternity in hell.

UNCHANGING VIEWS OF HEAVEN:

Fundamentalists: The author mentions that the fundamentalists still have a strong belief in heaven and hell. I suspect that they may be wrong, however because many do not preach about hell anymore.

The article also gives some other views of hell that might interest you if you can find the magazine in a library.

Let us consider some facts about heaven:

1. There will be many mansions. Jn 14 1-3

2. We will recognize others. Lu 16:19-31 tells of the account of the rich man and Lazarus, and the rich man recognized those on the other side of Sheol. The transfiguration would indicate this fact of recognition as well.

3. We will have eternal life. The New Testament is full of references to our eternal nature with God. One we might mention is I Thess. 4:16-18. Vs. 17 mentions, "...and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

4. Some view Romans 8:22-23 as proof there will be animal life in eternity. The whole of creation was affected by the fall. There were animals before the fall, all creation was affected by the fall so the restoration of things should include animals. We know there is plant life in eternity, and there are animals in the millennium, so there may be animal life in eternity. I'm not saying, folks, there will be a kitty and puppy heaven, but there may be animals. We might mention the fact that Christ returns on a horse, thus possibly indicating animals in eternity. Rev. 19:11ff You must remember there will be 1000 years between this occasion and eternity, so it may not indicate animals in eternity.

4. We will have new bodies. Philippians 3:21

5. We will be with Christ. Jn 17:24, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me...."

6. We will have pleasure. Ps 16:11, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

7. We will have joy. Ps 16:11. The contrast of pleasure and joy would be the tortures of torment.

8. It is a specific place. I Pet 1:4 tells us that something can be stored there.

9. It will be with God. Lu 11:2

10. It will be with the angels. Matt 22:30

11. We will be like Christ. I Jn 3:2. Some heavy thoughts there! Be like Christ. See Him!

12. It is far better than this life. Phil 1:23

13. It will be beautiful. Rev 21 This describes the new Jerusalem.

LEST SOMEONE EMBARRASS YOU, MAY I RELATE THERE IS ONLY ONE STREET OF GOLD. (There may be more, but the Revelation only mentions one.)

14. There will be worship. Rev 19:1

15. There will be rewards. Rev 22:12

16. The light will be from Christ. Rev 21:23

17. It will be a holy place. Rev 21:27

18. There will be no tears/death/sorrow/crying/pain! Rev 21:4

19. There will be no curse. Rev 22:3

20. Based on our being like Christ and what we know of His post resurrection body, we assume the following will be true. Capacity to eat, if we want to. Capacity to move through walls. Some physical features - the wounds of the cross and lance. Communication skills.

21. It is up. Acts 1:9, in speaking of Christ being taken it states, "...he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."

22. Misc. items: Created by God, Gen. 1:1; Everlasting; High, Ps 103:11; God's dwelling place - Matt 6:9.

Eyewitness accounts of heaven:

1. Christ: He spoke of it, as one that has first hand knowledge in that it is his eternal home, both past, present, and future.

2. Paul mentions it: II Cor. 12:1-9 He mentions being caught up to the third heaven.

3. John: Rev 4:1-2 mentions him being caught up. He saw the throne scene of God.

4. Old Testament saints: Isaiah and Ezekiel both observed the throne scene.

I assume that heaven will be the complete opposite of the place of torment. This would mean that heaven will be as peaceful as torment is without peace. This would mean that heaven will be as beautiful as torment is dark. This would mean that heaven will be as neat as torment is

terrible. This would mean that heaven will be everything that torment is not.

AT ANY RATE, TORMENT IS NOT A PLACE TO DESIRE TO BE!

I would guess that a study of torment would give a real appreciation for what we will have in eternity with God. We will have a study on hell next.

In the practical area we might consider:

1. We will be able to accept ourselves as God accepts us.

2. We will be satisfied for the first time in our existence.

3. We will totally enjoy every moment of all of eternity. Never bored!

4. We will have total and free access to Christ and all the other saints of all times. Imagine those potlucks!

5. It will mean never having indigestion.

6. It will mean having hair, or not having hair - depending on which is really heavenly. If there is hair in the spiritual realm.

7. Never having those problems with the dentist.

8. This list could go on forever. INDEED, IT WILL!!!!

Heaven should be a glorious thought to the believer, not something to be shunned or avoided in preference to worldly things, activities nor desires. A couple of quotes will show how some believers have reacted to the thought of heaven.

"HEAVEN

"Origin of 'Sweet By-and-By

The origin of the familiar hymn, 'In the Sweet By-and-By,' is given by a writer in The Christian Advocate, and it is a story of unusual interest. Sanford F. Bennett was a New Englander with a gift of writing verses, who in 1836 removed to Elkhorn, Wisconsin, where he conducted a drug store. Joseph P. Webster, also a New Englander who had come to Elkhorn, had some musical skill, and Bennett and he became intimate friends. Webster, who was subject to moods of depression, one day in 1867 went into Bennett's store and stood at the stove without speaking to anyone. Bennett saw he was depressed, and here the story runs as follows: 'Seeing that something was wrong, the latter asked, 'What is the matter now?' 'It is no matter,' Webster

replied. 'It will be all right by and by.' Like a flash the idea of the hymn came to Bennett, who exclaimed,'The Sweet By-and-By. Would not that make a good hymn?' 'Maybe it would,' returned Webster indifferently. Bennett turned to his desk and in a few minutes handed Webster the paper containing his verses. Meanwhile two friends, N. H. Carswell and S.E. Bright, had entered. They watched Webster as he read the words. Bennett said: 'Ad he read it his eyes kindled, his whole demeanour changed. Stepping to the desk he began writing notes rapidly. Presently, taking a violin, he played the melody. In a few moments more he had the notes for the four parts of the chorus jotted down.' It was not half an hour from the time Bennett began writing before the four men were singing the hymn in the form in which it was afterward published in the 'Signet Ring.' It was while they were singing it that R.R. Crosby came in, and after hearing the song, cried out, with tears in his eyes, 'That hymn is immortal.'"

"'It was in 1876 that I wrote 'Beulah Land,' said Mr. Stites. 'I could write only two verses and the chorus of 'Beulah Land' when I was overcome and fell on my face. I could only weep and write no more. That was on Sunday. On the following Sunday I wrote the third and fourth verses and again I was so influenced by emotion that I could only pray and weep. The first time it was sung was at the regular Monday morning meeting of Methodist ministers at 1018 Arch Street, Philadelphia. Bishop McCabe sang it to the assembled ministers. Since then its story is known wherever religious people congregate.'" (Lawson, James Gilghrist, "Best Sermon Pictures"; Chicago: Moody Press, No copyright.)

Might I challenge you to come to a place in your life when you shed tears of joy over the thrills of eternity with the Father, but at the same time be able to shed tears of sorrow over the torment of the lost!

This study should not end without comment on what has been termed near death or after death experiences. These experiences are related to us from people that have died and then been brought back to life, or people that were very near death.

The experiences vary around the basic, seeing of bright light down a long corridor and a being at the end calling them. These people are certain they were on their way to heaven to be with God.

A couple of thoughts that you might be able to use in relation to this discussion. First, the fact that this is almost a universal experience with the near death people, leads me to believe they would have us believe that all people that die are going to heaven. The Scripture is quite definite on the falseness of that theory.

Second, in recent days doctors are finding out that the people that were pronounced dead, may not have been really dead. They have found that people with no pulse, may have a pulse so weak that the doctor cannot feel it with his finger. Research in such cases with new technology have proven that in some cases the pulse is there, but is very weak. The pulse is large enough to keep blood going through the brain, which would allow for impressions of light etc. to be retained in the memory. Indeed, this bright light may well be that viewed through their closed eyelids and

the voice may well be that of doctors or friends.

To accept these experiences as real and allow them to contradict the clear teaching of Scripture is foolish. We must take such experiences as suspect, but truly the experience of the person.

We might well be glad for the usual change of life for the better in the people that have had these experiences.

Heaven will undoubtedly be a picture of all that God is and all that He can do, so we can only hint at what it might be like.

07750

HELL

Hell is a subject that is very much misunderstood by many people, both saved and lost. As this study progresses some of these mistaken concepts will be mentioned.

We don't have a lot of information about the eternal state of the lost person, yet we have enough facts to give the thinking person reason to consider carefully the Lord's work on the cross for them.

Many today suggest that we shouldn't scare people into hell. To this I ask, "Why did Christ talk so much about it for then?" I have heard many many testimonies of people that accepted the Lord because they had heard of hell and did not want to go there. Fear of the Lord may well involve the fear of his judgments and justice!

Let us begin with a story. A man died and found himself near a large entry way. He was ushered into a large mansion, and was told that all that he desired would be presented to him. He began asking for the many things that he had enjoyed on earth. All these items were delivered immediately. He began to ask for things that he had never had on earth, and these as well were delivered.

He realized after a time that all of the items he had desired had grown common and uninteresting. He requested to see the earth again, and this was granted. He gazed upon the sickness, poverty and war. His return to his mansion and things left him yearning for something more.

The man finally asked if he could have a peek into the place of torment - hell. The man standing before him asked, "So where do you think you are?" (adapted from Woodson, Leslie H., "HELL AND SALVATION"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1973, p 35)

Many in our day question the existence of hell. It has been reported that someone said to Hugh

Hephner, the publisher of Playboy magazine, at a party, "If there is a hell - I'd sure hate to be you!"

VIEWS OF HELL:

There are four major schools of thought concerning hell.

1. IT IS EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT:

Some that have defended and preached this position: Tertullian, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Wesley brothers, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Wyclif, Savonarola, Whitefield, Edwards, Spurgeon, Moody , and many others.

Some creeds and works that have proclaimed this position: Athanasian Creed, Augsburg Confession, The City Of God by Augustine, Summa Theologica by Lombard, Institutes of the Christian Religion by Calvin, Paradise Lost by Milton, and Pilgrim's Progress by Bunyon.

Simply put the position views hell as an eternal torment for the lost of all ages. Hell is a general term for the place. It is also known in the eternal state as the lake of fire. In the pre-resurrections era it is termed Sheol.

Some view hell as a place where the lost go, but never realize that Sheol and the Lake of Fire are also involved.

2. IT IS ANNIHILATION:

This position holds that God and good are eternal, but that Satan and evil are temporary and will be destroyed in the end. This translates into the lost being annihilated in the end.

Some of those holding this thought: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Richard Wahatley, Richard Tothe, Albert Ritschl, Horace Bushnell Franz Delitzsh, and Henry Drummond.

3. UNIVERSALISM:

This view believes there is a remedial effect to hell, and that God is trying to turn His erring children around.

Some that teach the position: Origen, Charles Chauncy, Immanuel, Kant, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Alfred Tennyson.

4. SECOND CHANCEISM:

This view sees that during this time before eternity that the rejectors are in torment, but this is

only till the end at which time all will be given a second chance. Turn, and the torment is over. Indeed, I think that the Mormon's view that all will turn or be destroyed. When doing door to door evangelism in Colorado Springs years ago I was witnessing to a Mormon and he told me that he believed that hell was for the purification of those that did not believe in this life. All would one day accept Mormon teachings of God or be destroyed.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SEPARATION IS UNIVERSAL IN GOD'S PLAN:

1. This can be seen in the nature of the soul. Man was created in the image of God. From the beginning of a soul it must be eternal toward the future to be in the image of God. If an eternal soul is not in a fit condition to be with God, then there must be a place for that soul to reside throughout eternity.

2. Separation is a principal of life and nature. The dead are separated from the living. We separate the criminals from the good citizens. (At least in most countries. I'm not sure about the US anymore.) Garbage is separated from good food. Trash is separated from good items. Lepers were separated from healthy people before there was a cure for the disease. Christ will separate souls, the good from the bad. "Those who refuse life in God become 'refuse' in character sooner or later, and in the nature of things must be removed to a place apart." (Dixon)

3. From the principle of Consequence. No consequence - no restraint. That's why God gave capital punishment - to deter killing. He gave hell to deter sin and rebellion. This has a very strong effect on those that believe in hell or eternal punishment. Many religions have very strong - good behaviour due to their teaching of torment.

4. History tells us that a place of torment is a universal concept. All peoples have tried to please the gods to escape future punishment. They have all had some concept of good place/bad place. The burial crypts of the world give evidence of a belief in an afterlife. The ancient civilizations placed food and water in containers so the person could have them in the next life. Indeed, some of them buried the wife and servants for the man to enjoy in the next life. Most peoples have served gods of one sort or another out of fear of displeasing the god involved.

5. Luke 16:21 and context show there is existence after death.

6. All of Scripture declares a place of punishment.

THE TERMS:

In the New Testament there are three Greek words translated Hell.

1. "Gehen'na" (gheh'en nah) Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 394,395) "...a deep, narrow glen to the south of

Jerusalem, where the Jews offered their children to Moloch (II Kings 23:10; [Verses 13,14 show it was a burning place for corpses (Josiah did this. Also II Chr. 33:6] Jer. 7:31; 19:2-6). In later times it served as a receptacle of all sorts of putrefying matter, and all that defiled the holy city, and so became the representative image of the place of everlasting punishment, especially on account of its ever-burning fires; and to this fact the words of Christ refer when he says 'the fire is not quenched.'"

In Christ's day this dump burned day and night. This is probably the final resting place and probably is equal to the lake of fire in Revelation.

2. "hades" This word is indicative of the intermediate state for the Old Testament dead, and since Christ the dwelling place of the unrighteous dead.

Things to be learned from this term. a. Lost of Old Testament are in misery from death. b. Lost of New Testament are in misery from death. c. Saved of Old Testament were there until the resurrection of Christ, but now are gone. (Luke 16:19-31 shows the two sides of hades. Acts 2:27 shows David was to be there for a time. David was looking forward to Christ's resurrection when he spoke of hades. Verse 31 shows he was taken out at Christ's resurrection.)

Revelation 20:13 shows hades giving up the lost souls at the end. Rev. 20:14 mentions that hades is cast into the lake of fire. This term is also translated grave. I Cor. 15:55, "Oh grave, where is thy victory."

The joy of the study is that Hades cannot hold the redeemed, for it could not hold Christ.

3. "Tar taro'o" This word is only used once. II Pet. 2:4. Angels cast into hell to await judgment. This may be the name for the great gulf that is mentioned in the Luke 16 passage. Most feel that II Peter is speaking of this location.

THE LOCATION:

I once heard a young Methodist theologian mention that hell was, "Southern California." I don't think that this would be a provable fact, and YES, he was joking.

I would like to just list some references and some information that we can draw from them. Num. 16:30,33 indicates that it is below the surface of the earth in the Old Testament times. Luke 16:23 indicates that it was still below in the New Testament period of time.

As to the lake of fire which will be the eternal dwelling place of the lost, we are not told in scripture just where it is. Some feel that Isa 66:22-24 speaks of the redeemed being able to view the lost in the eternal state. Rev 14:9-11; Rev 22:15 also indicate this as a possibility. If this be true, then there is a possibility that it is just outside the New Jerusalem as the original hell of Christ's time was. That city dump of the New Testament day.

BASIS OF OCCUPANCY:

Just who will occupy this place of torment, and why. The Scripture teaches that all mankind will be judged according to his or her works. Within this concept is one special consideration and that is the decision for or against Christ. The decision to accept Christ places the person in eternal joy, while a decision to reject Christ places the person in eternal torment. After this decision is made there is still a principle of being judged according to the works of the person.

Indeed, the Great White Throne shows there will be levels of torment in that they are judged according to their works. The redeemed receive a varying reward, thus it would also be logical that the lost would also receive a varying degree of torment.

For the saved, works will determine the amount and type of rewards. The lost will be tormented according to their works. Lost is lost, yet there will be levels of being tormented it seems. (Rom. 2:5,6, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds:"; Matt. 11:20-24 mentions that it will be more tolerable for some cities than others in the judgment/Matt 10:15 is a similar idea; Luke 12:47,48 I don't like to base things on parables, yet this one seems to indicate our point; Rev. 20:12,13, vs 13, "...and they were judged every man according to their works.")

Even some of the isms of our day teach this concept of works being a part of judgment. Zoroastrianism for example teaches that the person must pass a bridge of judgment. If his good works outweigh his bad the bridge is wide and easy to cross. However if his bad works outweigh his good the bridge becomes narrow as a blade as he reaches the middle and he slides into hell. Hell is a temporary place for these souls, but while there they are tortured beyond belief. This torture is according to their lives and how they lived. I ran across an illustration of the type of torture. A man that had committed adultery was placed in a boiling pot, but because he had killed many dirty creatures with his foot, the foot was left out of the pot so it would not suffer. (From Persian Mythology; John R. Hinnells; Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited; London; 1973) P 66)

There won't be any complaint about final punishment it seems. Luke 16:29-31 tells us that the rich man did not complain about anything. His only desire was to keep his brothers from the same fate.

DURATION:

We have already seen that some believe that this is a forever situation while others see it as a temporary situation. Forever or annihilation is the question. The word for eternal seems to be eternal in nature at all times. "That the 'second death' ('Lake of Fire') or gehenna is not annihilation is shown clearly by Rev. 19:20 and 20:10. After 1000 years in the Like of Fire the Beast and False Prophet still exist there undestroyed." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 394,395) Rev.19:20 states that the Beast and False Prophet into

Lake of Fire; 20:3 sets time before Millennium; 20:10 shows that the Devil is cast in 1000 years later and the Beast and False Prophet are still there.)

There are a couple of other indications that would show that the condition of the lost is not annihilation. The angels in hell do not seem to be annihilated either. (II Pet. 2:4) We have seen that Rev. 20:13 and others show punishment is according to works. Why judge according to works if all are to be consumed?

The fallen angels, including Satan will be in the lake of fire, and they are ever living spirit beings. When man dies, they become a spirit being, thus by deduction man also would be an ever living being as well.

Eternal hell is the easiest interpretation you can find. Any other interpretation is forced and causes doctrinal problems. Since the same term is used of God and hell, to have one mean the stopping of existence and another usage to show continuing existence is illogical.

LIVING CONDITIONS:

I will just list some conditions with references and some comments.

DARKNESS: Psalm 49:19 "never see light"; I Sam. 2:7-9 they will be silent in darkness (same word) as in Gen. 1:4 God divided light from darkness.

If you go into a seemingly dark room you will find after awhile that you will be able to see something. But deep darkness is not so. While in the Navy I needed a part to repair the radar. We were with a number of other ships during a war games situation, so the radar was needed right away. During such operations the ships run under what is called "darken ship" condition. This means that all outside hatches are closed and no light is allowed out on deck. The parts area was not accessible to me from the radar room by going inside the ship, so I was forced to go out on deck. Remember - no light - none - and it was very cloudy on top of everything which meant no star or moon light. Dark is the term! Imagine trying to walk outside on the deck unable to see anything - groping with your hands - hoping nothing is in you way - the ship pitching and rolling slightly - just enough to make it hard to keep you orientation. When you finally see light there is such an overwhelming relief.

Imagine - eternity - ever in darkness - in fear of what's around you. How many of you were afraid of the dark when you were small. I used to get just as scared as Ichabod Craine did in the Legend of Sleepy Hollow. Ichabod was riding on a dark lonely road. Fear was already in his mind. "Suddenly he heard a groan - his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle; it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him." He sees an unknown rider in the shadows. I won't continue with the story because of its length, but I think that you get the idea.

I trust that you have some concept of what the lost will go through in everlasting darkness. Matt. 8:12 mentions outer darkness as well.

BINDING: Those that say they'll be shaking hands with friends may be wrong. From Matt. 22:13 we see they will be unable to use their hands and feet. If this is true then the muscular discomfort will be tremendous. We went to a service in a home. The service was in the basement. The service ended in a time of prayer. We kneeled for prayer. The room was crowded and there was little room to kneel. I only had room to get down on one knee. Before it was over my legs were giving me fits. I was very near tears because of the pain in my knees.

The armed forces have developed ways of placing people in a completely immobile state. They are floated in a body of water for prolonged periods of time. This is with no sight and sound - it is very disorientating.

What could you do in a motionless state? You could think about things - dream - worry - etc., but sooner or later the inactivity would begin to wear heavy on a person mentally.

SEPARATION: Have you ever stared at the stars and just let your mind wonder - how far away they are, how lonely they seem. The lost will be separated from one another.

Imagine never using eyes, hands, feet. Total separation from everything but torment and thoughts. The voice will only be used for cries of torment. There will be no one near enough to talk to, or hear you. Jude 13 mentions wandering stars which indicates a separation. At any rate it is a certainty that it is a separation from God and all that is good.

MEMORY: Luke 16 pictures the rich man as remembering his brothers that have not died. (NO HOPE, Isa 38:18; Prov. 11 7, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth."

FIRE: There will be fire. The type of fire has been questioned over the years. Since there is darkness, there cannot be light from fire, which leads some to believe that it will be a very hot and pure fire. (Jude 7 "...eternal fire...."; Matt 5:22; Mk 9:44.)

QUESTIONABLE COMPANIONS: Rev 21:8; Rev 22:15.

LUST AND DESIRE: Rev 22:11.

PAIN AND TORMENT: Luke 16:23 "...being in torments...."; Luke 16:24 "...I am tormented in this flame."

CONCLUSIONS:

Maybe now when we talk about the lost you will have a more concerned attitude. Christianity

needs a healthy dose of the Hell fire and brimstone preaching of yester year to stir their hearts. Men, women, boys and girls are going to hell everyday. Our responsibility is to tell them of the saving power of Christ.

The Lost! Think about their state. God has prepared for Christians a mighty, glorious abode. A city of mansions. A city for His own people. I have no doubt that hell will be just as horrible for the sinner as heaven is glorious for the saint.

As I've said, "Hell is only a four letter word." But remember its home for the lost for eternity and that makes it a mighty important word. The next time you ask someone where they're going and they reply, "To hell if I don't change my ways.", will you still feel like laughing?

Hell must, by proper interpretation of Scripture be a place, a place of torment, a place of eternal torment run on a system of levels so that the damned can be judged according to their works.

The only escape route from this horrible destiny is through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. So what, some would say. Let me illustrate. In the Navy we had to go through fire fighting training. They had a large oil pond they would set afire. We had to move in with an umbrella spray unit that protected us from the heat. As we were fairly near they shut the water off (which was protecting us from the heat) for just an instant. The heat was tremendous - our faces were in immediate pain though we weren't burned. They did this to show us how dangerous fire could be when it was that large. If you've experienced great heat you'll have some idea of what the lost are enduring now and what the living lost face.

As a child I used to think that pain was mind over matter. I used to love to swing higher and higher, but to go high you had to work at it. I used to wear blisters on my hands. I always tried to put the pain out of my mind, but never succeeded. This is only a trifle when compared to the pain and flame of hell. Can you imagine having to suffer that pain forever?

As you cannot imagine how glorious heaven is going to be you cannot imagine how horrible hell is going to be. If the demons were in fear of Hell and torment it must be bad.

Another point to ponder. Scripture does not teach that God gives you a second chance. Some teach today that God will hold up judgment long enough to give everyone a second chance to accept Christ. This is false hope and false teaching. As breath leaves your body your eternity is sealed - your destiny is set. Getting to your final dwelling place is only a very brief formality.

Hell - a four letter cuss word now, but the most significant word of all to the lost. Consider Hell as you witness. It might put a little fire into your witnessing.

I would suggest reading some of the old time sermons from Moody, Spurgeon etc. to get a feel of some of the preaching on hell. Many of the great revivals were based in part on the clear preaching of hell. Don't be afraid to preach on hell today. I have ventured onto this limb a

number of times and the response has been very positive. Indeed, some have been saved, even in the 80's and 90's with such preaching.

Christ spoke often of hell and the conditions there, so we as His followers ought to preach of the same.

07800

THEOLOGY - CAN'T FAIL QUIZ

This is a test I have given to classes on eschatology before the study begins. It is a study that will show you what you know or don't know, as the case may be. Feel free to leave blanks or guess to your hearts desire. As you progress through the study you will be able to check your answers.

List the following items on the time line provided below.

Tribulation
Church Age
Kingdom
Eternity
Lake of Fire
Resurrection of the dead Church age
Translation of the living church age
Resurrection of the Jews
Resurrection of the lost
Great White Throne
Judgment seat of Christ
Satan's captivity

Define the following terms:

1. The Rapture:

2. Partial rapture:

3. Tribulation:

4. The Great Tribulation:

5. Midtribulationism:

6. Posttribulationism:

7. Millennium:

8. Amillennialism:

9. Premillennialism:

10. Postmillennialism:

11. Kingdom Theology:

12. Covenant Theology:

13. The Great White Throne:

14. The Judgment Seat of Christ:

15. Heaven:

16. Hell:

17. Allegorical interpretation:

18. Literal interpretation:

07850

WHERE DO THEY STAND?

This is a listing of books, authors, and positions. I trust that these are placed in the proper theological positions. I have listed the men and their books as I or some other author has viewed them. I trust that if there are errors in judgment in any of these listings that the men involved would contact me so that any mistakes can be corrected in future copies. The original list that I worked from is found on pages 123-126 of Prophecy In The Ring by Robert P. Lightner, however I have added to this list over time.

AMILLENNIALISM:

Adams, Jay. "THE TIME IS AT HAND"
Allis, O.T. "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH"
Cox, William E. "AMILLENNIALISM TODAY"
Hamilton, Floyd E. "THE BASIS OF MILLENNIAL FAITH"

POSTMILLENNIALISM:

Boettner, Loraine. "THE MILLENNIUM"
Kik, J. M. "MATTHEW TWENTY-FOUR REVELATION TWENTY"
Warfield,
Orr, James
Snowden, James H.

PREMILLENNIALISM:

Fineberg, C. L. "PREMILLENNIALISM OR AMILLENNIALISM?"
McClain, Alva J. "THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM"
Pentecost, J. Dwight "THINGS TO COME"
Ryrie, Charles C. "THE BASIS OF PREMILLENNIAL FAITH"
Walvoord, John F. "THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM"

COVENANT PREMILLENNIALISM:

Ladd "CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

MIDREIBULATIONISM:

Harrison, Norman B. "THE END"

PARTIAL RAPTURISM:

Brubaker, Ray. "THE PURPOSE OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION"
Lang, G. H. "THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST"

POSTTRIBULATIONISM:

Gundry, Robert H. "THE CHURCH AND THE TRIBULATION"
Ladd, George E. "THAT BLESSED HOPE"
Payne, J. Barton. "THE IMMINENT APPEARING OF CHRIST"
Reese, Alexander. "THE APPROACHING ADVENT OF CHRIST"

PRETRIBULATIONISM:

English, E. Schuyler. "RE-THINKING THE RAPTURE"
Walvoord, John F. "THE RAPTURE QUESTION"
Wood, Leon J. "IS THE RAPTURE NEXT"

ANTI-DISPENSATIONALISM:

Bass, Clarence B. "BACKGROUNDS TO DISPENSATIONALISM"

Cox, William E. "AN EXAMINATION OF DISPENSATIONALISM"
Kraus, C. Norma. "DISPENSATIONALISM IN AMERICA"

DISPENSATIONALISM:

Barndollar, W. W. "THE VALIDITY OF DISPENSATIONALISM"
Chafer, Lewis Sperry "DISPENSATIONS"
Ryrie, Charles C. "DISPENSATIONALISM TODAY"
Darby
Kelley, William
Gaebelein
Torrey, R.A.
Scofield, C.I.
Ironside, Harry

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION:

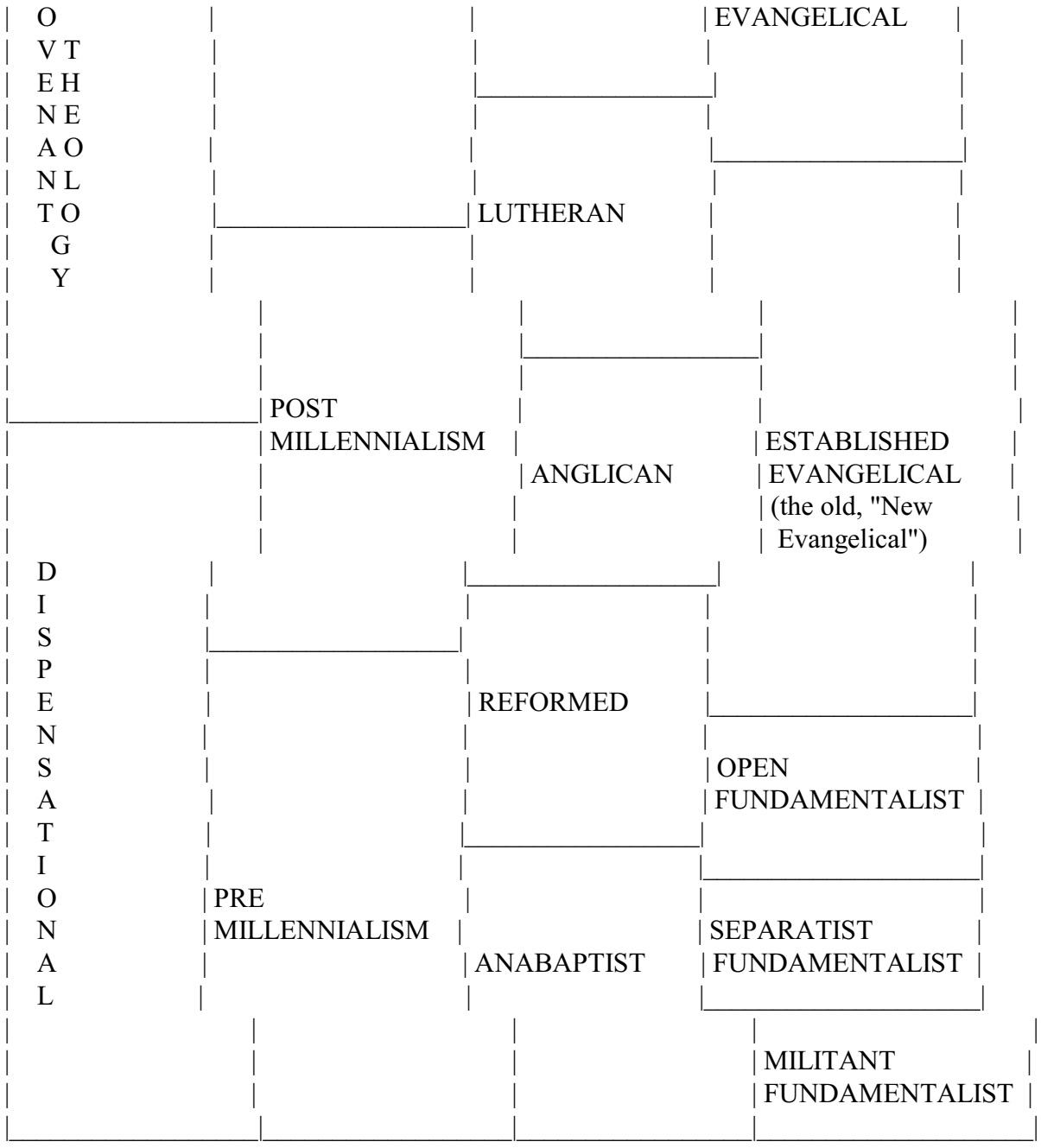
Ramm, Bernard. "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"
Tan, Paul Lee. "THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY"

GENERAL BOOKS:

Clouse, R. G. "THE MEANING OF THE MILLENNIUM: FOUR VIEWS"

THEOLOGICAL POSITIONS

SYSTEMS OF INTERPRETATION	MILLENNIAL VIEW	TRADITIONS	EVANGELICAL GROUPINGS
	AMILLENNIALISM	CATHOLIC	
C			YOUNG



07900

SOME THOUGHTS ON HOW TO PROPERLY INTERPRET THE GOSPELS

The importance of how you interpret a text was brought home to me many years ago in a

graduate class where the professor would assign a text for study and then bring us together for a discussion. He was an expert at forming the class into the different positions that came from the study, and then pitting those groups against one another to show how poorly we had studied. He once assigned the text of Job 19:25-26 and asked us to determine what the text was about. The discussion went on for three class sessions before he taught the proper interpretation. There were three different views that seemed very good, yet all three groups failed to determine the context of the passage. Once the context was set before us we realized the meaning of the passage.

So it is in the gospels when you determine to interpret. The context, the audience and the speaker all go together to determine what age the information is meant for. There are some texts that are definitely for those living under the law, there are texts that are definitely for those that were going to live in the kingdom that Christ was offering, and there are texts that are for the coming church age. The question is, just which
are which.

We submit the following as a guide to begin your interpretation of the gospels with.

1. Pay close attention to the context: For example Luke 10:1-3 is not for the church, but Matthew 28:16-20 is. Look at the context to determine.

2. Pay close attention to the recipient: If Christ was speaking to Jews, then the information is for Jews. If he was talking to Old Testament saints then He was not talking to you, however there may be some application to you since you are a saint. Just one outrageous example would be the account of the rich man and Lazarus. Lazarus wound up in bliss while the rich man ended in torment. Now, would we apply the rich man's situation to ourselves - believers and the position of Lazarus to the lost of our day? NO!

3. Determine whether the principle is stated elsewhere in the New Testament: For example some might suggest because of Matt 10:9,10 we should have no material possessions. "...provide neither gold, nor silver, nor copper in your purses, nor a bag for your journey neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff...." This is not a principle for our day. It is not mentioned as a lifestyle anywhere in scripture. Indeed, Christ contrasts this Himself to another lifestyle for those in a different situation in Luke 22:35-36.

Don't claim promises blindly. Look at the context, recipient and whether it is taught in the epistles before applying it to yourself. The epistles are for church use and we have no question about them, so they can assist us in determining other texts.

If the truth fits the general tenor of the epistles then it probably is usable for today. Christ spoke of meekness in the sermon on the mount which is definitely kingdom information.

The fruit of the Spirit seems to give that principle validity in our day so that meekness should be desired by the church age believer. The problem is that the meek shall inherit the earth (Matt

5:5). Do the epistles mention that the church will inherit the earth? No, and indeed we will not inherit the earth. This is not a promise for us though we can draw the principle of meekness from it.

4. Determine what dispensation is in view: Christ made quite a promise in Matthew 6:33. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all of these things shall be added unto you." See, he will give me everything I want. That is the usual misinterpretation. First the context speaks of those needs of living that we have and not desires. Second, the promise is to the one that seeks His kingdom. The kingdom in Christ's mind was the Jewish kingdom that He was offering - the Millennial kingdom. So, if you are seeking the millennium, He will see to your needs.

This text is for those looking for the kingdom and no one else. This is not a promise for me today. However, there is an application for me in this day. As I seek His righteousness and His future, I know that He will supply all that I need. This is a general principle throughout scripture. God always takes care of His people.

5. Realize that God's revelation is progressive: The gospel record is information for that day and time, while the epistles were meant for a later day and time. The information given to Moses was not meant to be carried forward to the church age. An example if this is the sacrificial system. It is no longer needed because Christ completed the sacrifice for sin on the cross. The Old Testament may relate to our day. The writer of Hebrews uses many of the people of that age in Chapter Eleven to produce the great text on living by faith. This shows that the information is not specifically for us, yet we can find application to our lives in those specifics.

The idea of examples of men is also related by Paul in Phil 3:17 and II Thess 3:9. Christ when he cleansed the temple was not telling us to cleanse the churches, we disagree with, though we can apply His action by being indignant at wrong activities.

There may be a truth for only one dispensation, or the truth may be a universal truth. John 3:3 mentions, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is a limited truth in that it was given in the context of the kingdom that is to come. A person cannot enter the kingdom unless he is born again. This proves that all at the beginning of the kingdom will be believers. There is also a universal truth in that if you personally want to be a part of the kingdom you must be born again.

Remember that all Scripture is beneficial. II Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction, thus we need to search the gospels for information that can help us know our God and live rightly before Him. The danger is in applying before studying.
Let us draw some conclusions then.

1. If it's not for your dispensation, if it's not for your nationality (gentile), if it's not for your

circumstance, THEN it's not for you!

2. If the same principle is restated elsewhere in the New Testament epistles then it's for you.

3. If it's a valid principle universally in scripture then it's for you.

4. If it's a spiritual quality of personality, life, or holiness then it's for you.

5. Primarily the synoptic gospels were written by men still looking for the kingdom to be set up shortly thus the specific information is meant for the kingdom. One should not weigh heavily on the gospels nor the book of Acts for church age promises.

It is hoped that this will be helpful in your use of the Gospel accounts of the life of our Lord and Savior in your own life.

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THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM

DEFINITIONS:

The Church: The church is a living organism composed of all believers of the church age. The believers are the body, and Christ is the Head of that body. (In this study we will be looking at the universal church and not the local church.)

Eph 1:22-23; I Cor. 12:13

The Kingdom: The earthly reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth for one thousand years. It includes the following:

A king, A land, A people.

Luke 1:31-33; Gen. 15:18; Zech. 14:9; Matt 25:31-34

The church and kingdom compared:

THE CHURCH	THE KINGDOM
A mystery to the Old Testament people.	The kingdom is the emphasis of the Old Testament.

Eph 3:1-9 Isa 9:7
Col 1:26-27 Psa 145:11-13
Dan 7:14
Obadiah 21

The church has a heavenly emphasis. The kingdom emphasis is the earth.

Phil 3:20 Gen 12:1
Deut 28:7,13

The church was planned before creation. The kingdom promised to Israel.

Eph 1:4 Matt 25:34

The church has heavenly characteristics. The kingdom has earthly characteristics.

Gal 3:26ff Matt 8:11
Col 3:9-11 Zech 14:16-21
Zech 8:22-23

The church involves spiritual blessings. The kingdom involves material blessings.

Eph 1:3 Gen 12:1-3
Gen 24:34-35
Deut 8:7-9

The church is built up by the saints. The kingdom will be set up.

Eph 2:19-22 Dan 2:44

Christ is the head of the Church. Christ is the king of Israel and will reign on the earth.

Eph 1:22-23 Isa 9:6-7
Col 1:18 Luke 1:31-33
Rev 19:11-16
Zech 14:9

The church began at Pentecost and will be raptured before the tribulation.

The kingdom will begin at the coming of Christ.

Acts 2:1-4
I Thess 4:16-17
Eph 3:20-21

Luke 19:11-27
Dan 7:9-14
Rev 11:15
I Cor 15:20-28

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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN/KINGDOM OF GOD REFERENCES

The listing of references that speak of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. Read each reference and see if you can find out if there is a difference between these two kingdoms and if so what that difference is. Also try to determine what the kingdoms are.

KINGDOM OF GOD

Matthew 6:33
12:28
19:24
21:31
21:43

Mark 1:14
4:11
4:26
4:30
9:1
9:47
10:14
10:23-25
12:34
14:25
15:43

Luke 4:43
6:20
7:28

8:1
8:10
9:2
9:11
9:27
9:60
9:62
10:9
10:11
11:20
12:31
13:18
13:20
13:28-29
14:15
16:16
17:20
18:16-17
18:24-25
19:11
21:31
22:16
22:18
23:51

John 3:3
3:5

Acts 1:3
8:12
14:22
19:8
20:25
28:23
28:31

Romans 14:17

I Corinthians 4:20
6:9-10
15:50

Galatians 5:21

Colossians 4:11

II Thessalonians 1:5

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Matthew 3:2
4:17
5:3
5:10
5:19-20
7:21
8:11
10:7
11:11-12
13:11
13:24
13:31
13:33
13:44
13:47
13:52
16:19
18:1
18:3-4
18:23
19:14
19:23
20:1
22:2
23:13
25:1
25:14

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