

MR. D'S NOTES ON THEOLOGY VOLUME I



Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.

MR. D'S NOTES ON THEOLOGY

VOLUME ONE

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.

This work is broken into two volumes, Volume one covers BIBLIOLOGY, GOD, CHRIST, THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ANGELOLOGY. Volume II covers ANTROPOLOGY, HAMARTIOLOGY, SOTERIOLOGY, THE CHURCH AND END TIMES.

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

**Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.
Salem, OR**

A few items of introduction:

In writing this book, I was interested in making information available for helping others in their work of the Great Commission. The work was first placed on the internet free of charge. Since, many have asked to have it in print. I have decided to do this for those that might benefit. 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.

For now, any personal profits from the book will be forwarded to a fundamental independent mission organization for the furtherance of the Gospel.

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!

Here is 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 8-30-2010

The number at the upper left corner of some pages is an identifier to help navigate the document. The index and table of contents are keyed to this number in the online editon. If you use the "find" feature you can go directly to the top of that part of the document. You can also use "find" to locate a particular topic or term. There is also a computer generated index at the end of each volume that covers that volume.

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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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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 are among those doctrines. 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.) In short, theology is the rational expression of God or 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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 Biblical theology is 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 such as 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 a systematic study is required. 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 they 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 you need to 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 spurring 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 of 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." Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

BIBLIOLOGY

00200

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 the Bible 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.

00250

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 permission 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.

00300

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 do not know what part of the information is revealed and which part of the revelation is man's writing. 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." Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis

Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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.

**VERBAL
:
PLENARY.....BREADTH OF THE WORD
:
DEPTH OF THE WORD**

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 person's "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 telling us 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 feels 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 neither 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. Thiessen 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 permission 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 permission 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 rabbis 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 Thiessen 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 indicates 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. Neither Christ, 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 catalogue 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 disciplined 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 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 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.))

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. A stiff dose of admonition is contained in the previous item for pastors, teachers and writers. 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 Pictorial 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." Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications,

Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have

kindly given permission to use this quote.)) 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)) 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. THAT IS 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.))

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.

Over simplification? 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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 Dictionary 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 answer 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 would hold to the Bible being inerrant, but fallible. There might be mistakes within the Bible relating to history or science, but not when speaking to faith and Christian living.

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: The limited inerrancy folks would hold that the Bible is not attempting to be an authority on science, history etc. The items of science, history, etc. which 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. Further this position

teaches everything which the Word states about that purpose 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by

Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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 is 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. It is 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: The Bible has no error, the Bible is trustworthy, and 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 manuscript. The person involved in this study uses all sources of information available to him to make his determination. He attempts 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 Pergamus. 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 copying 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 encountered, 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: 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:

Here is 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 TO 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 wants 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, a lack of degrees behind the name does not guarantee a good message. The lack of degrees behind the name does 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 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote. p 133)

THE BIBLE AND ITS TRANSMISSION TO MAN

GOD'S THOUGHTS (revelation)

given

HUMAN AUTHOR (inspiration)

recorded

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS (canonicity)

collected

BOOKS (textual criticism)

produced

MODERN GREEK AND HEBREW BIBLES (translation)

produced

MODERN ENGLISH BIBLES (illumination and interpretation)

used in

OUR THOUGHTS (application)

producing

CHANGED LIVES (communication)

sharing with

OTHERS

Now, how do we apply all of 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 (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.) 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 precedence 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

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. Is that 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, a driver's, or a vehicle.

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, eternity, 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" Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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.

What 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 matters 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 its 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 its 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 Law-giver 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." Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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. Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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 our 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 vs. 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.

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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 worshiper's 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. In this system there is only one god.

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....." (Used by permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

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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." Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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. Augsburg, 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. Augsburg 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 John 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; Romans 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. $1/(25 \text{ zeros})$ is "...the fraction of a square centimeter that a nucleon occupies in space.' That is one tenceptillionth 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 he mentions that nucleons 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 and 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 dying 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. We realize prayer changes me. However prayer does not change 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 Him, 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 work.

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 worshipping 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 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 PLEASURES! 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: Pity is the feeling or knowledge of ones pain in another person.

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: Wrath is the outworking of extreme rage or anger

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? Compassion is the taking on of another's problems to the point of wanting to help and assist.

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! He is 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: Hate is to reaallllly dislike something that you cannot stand. 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: Jealousy in relation to God relates to his watchfulness over His rights/possessions.

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? Grief is the sorrow or distress caused by loss or problems.

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: Sympathy is that feeling of remorse over the suffering of another. 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 assume 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. Luke 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. (Example: 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 anthropomorphisms. 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. A church is a group with a common mind in a common direction with a 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, 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 was 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 than 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. It seems 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-EXISTENT

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? This is 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 are suggestive of the great age from the beginning.

Eternal life or damnation of man is another usage of the term. It is 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 eternity 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 eternity 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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!

01400

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 eternity 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 permission 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 as they make up the rules. 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 shift 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." (Also see Jonah 1:1-3.)

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.

01450

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). He knows us 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 knowledge. **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 was, is or will be.

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 revealing 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 anthropomorphisms, as having physical features. He does not have the ears that the Psalmist mentions, 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 wrecked 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 do not have complete peace about something, do not 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

The term omnipotent comes from two Latin words, "omnis" 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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. We have 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. Remember, 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....." (Used 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." (Theissen, 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.

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 for 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....." (Used by permission: (From: Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) It is being totally free to choose without pressure.

Independent is, ".....not dependent:..... (1): not subject to control by others:.....Not requiring or relying on something else:....." (Used 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, neither 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 phenomenology 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 - SCARRRY!

Tozer introduces his chapter on incomprehensibility with the thought that we cannot answer the question. He suggests that he would not be able to answer the question in his book other than to suggest that God is something like we have never known - like now one or anything we have ever known. (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 revered. 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.

And 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/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.

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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 virtue 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 knowledge of the object. A gun barrel can be true or straight. We can also know about a gun barrel and know of its 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.

We should strive for the holiness and the truth of God in our personal and church life.

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. There is physical love - that love which the world portrays as true love - that of the flesh. There is impulse love. There is Soap Opera love. And the love based on feeling, impulse, and desire.

This love is not the will you 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. There is natural love. This is 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. There is the aesthetical love. This is a love 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 from watching a sunset, or looking at a beautiful painting.

4. There is ethical love. This is the unswerving or unwavering determination to do good things for others. 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 John 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." John 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 John 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 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, "Yer 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 why do we worry about 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. He suggested that God was not a bunch of parts combined, but that He is a unit, a single entity. (Tozer, A.W.; "THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY"; Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1961, p 94)

His attributes are not separable, but He is a single entity.

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." Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

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 therefore, 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 one person was asked this question the person suggested they were an Indian tribe. This is true however we need to give some serious thought to another group of decrees. We need to think of THE 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 whatsoever 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 are included in that one decree.

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 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.

Chafer

Supra	Infra	Sub
Elect	Create	Create
Create	Fall	Fall
Fall	Salvation	Elect
Salvation	Elect	Salvation
Apply salvation	Apply salv.	Apply Salv.

Arminian: Similar to Infra except the election is based on foreknowledge.

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Theissen:

Supra-lapsarian	Infra-lapsarian	Sub-lapsarian
Save some reprobate the rest	Create	Create
Create	Permit fall	Permit fall
Permit fall	Election	Election
Provide salvation for the elect	Provide salvation for the elect	Provide salvation for all

(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 Publishing 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 named 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 Nerdy, 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. Please 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)

Chafer 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." (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.)

Ryrie opts for the idea of Strong one.

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."

Chafer 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. . . ." (Chafer)

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 transcendent 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.

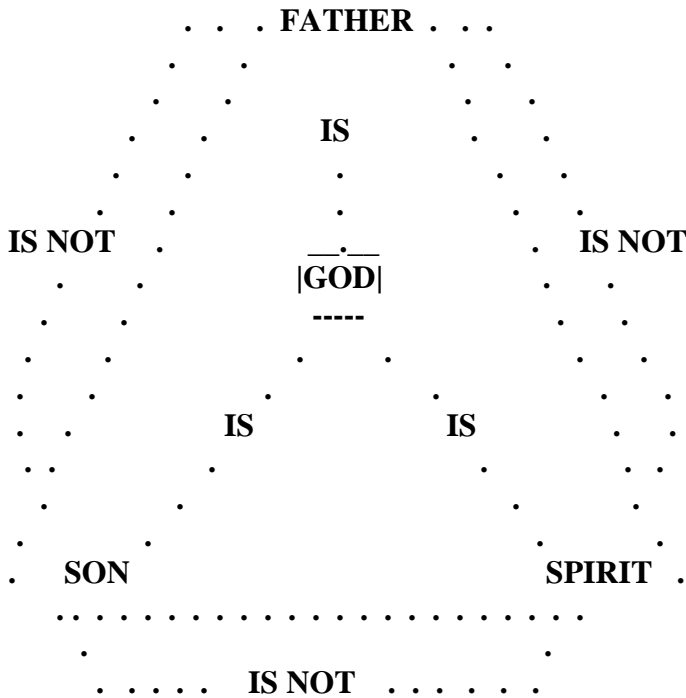
By way of conclusion let me quote from the Psalms.

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)
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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 mentions in verse 29 "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 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 8:29,42

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 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 and 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 lowliness 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?

In Prov. 1:29 it 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 5 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. Please 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.

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 triumphs 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. We find the book of Genesis (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. Confuciousism, Islam etc. Without Christ Christianity cannot exist.

There seems to be in our land some which 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 relegates 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 eternity?" 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. Eternity is not pre-existence; however a denial of pre-existence almost always leads to the denial of eternity.

The following verses show both pre-existence and eternity.

- 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. 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 exalted and that He once was humiliated, but that He now is fully and eternally exalted 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 some 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."
(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 1 we see all of the glory and pre-existence 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 - Savior. It is a very simple name 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 where it mentions 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.

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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 tells us 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 Old Testament. 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, from 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.

III. 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 also)

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 to disobey.

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, Christ 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. He had enough 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.

III. 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

02150

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 fatherhood from God and 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 my 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 too 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.

2. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 243. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.

3. William Culbertson; THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED, source unknown

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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 Eutychnus 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

HUMAN	DIVINE
GREW IN WISDOM	ALL KNOWLEDGE
LIMITED POWER	ALL POWER

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 reconciliatory 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

b. Walter A. Elwell, Ed., "EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY", Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984

c. Charles C. Ryrie, "BASIC THEOLOGY," Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 250. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.

d. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B. 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.

Here is another question, were 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 (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.)

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 (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.)

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

Is this really true "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, that Christ's sovereign will was to do the will of the Father. 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 the entire 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

2. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 250. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.

3. Dr. David Miller, Theology notes, Western Baptist College, Salem, OR

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- 13. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 306**
- 14. 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 107**
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- 17. Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 251. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.**
- 18. Taken from: "JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD"; Walvoord, John F.; Copyright 1969, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 120**
- 19. Henry C. Thiessen, "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY," Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 305-306**
- 20. Augustus H. Strong, SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1907, p 694**
- 21. Chafer, vol. V p 49**

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 set 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 as well.

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 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. This is 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 mis-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, just 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.

12. Berkhof

13. Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.

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

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IMPECCABILITY

Impeccability is to be without any error or imperfection.

It relates to the impossibility of making an error or containing a fault, and having no flaws. 1

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 class all but the impeccable side of the controversy as heretical.

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, it 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 - impeccable. 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. His having a body while on earth but not prior to his

humanity for one, and having full glory while on earth for two – He had no glory while here.

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 neither 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 its 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 is 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. (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. 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

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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

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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 peccability 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 truly 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!

02400

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 if the preceding is true 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 incarnational title of Christ. Though His sonship was anticipated in the Old Testament (Prov. 30:40), 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 eternity. 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. This would be especially true 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 decrees 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)

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.) There will be 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 PROPHESED

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! This would leave us with 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? It would be 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.

III. 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 was about His father's business in Lu 2:49. 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, to give birth in the day of the Bible as a virgin, 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 in 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." This 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." This is 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 "Inasmuch 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 or 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." It would be similar to the 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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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 worshipping 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 FULFILLMENT	OT PREDICTION	NT
Town of birth Jn 7:42	Mic. 5:2	Matt 2:1-6;
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 28;13:34-35	Ps 16:8-10	Acts 2:22-
Coming again to judge FULFILLED	Ps 50:3-5	YET TO BE
	Ezek. 21:27	
	Zech. 14:1-7	
	Lu. 1:31-33	
	Philip. 2:10-11	

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."

III. 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 pre-exist Abraham: "Before Abraham was, I am." Jn 8:58

D. He claimed to be 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 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!

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 prophet's 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 and 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 dying 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 we are 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 Father 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 spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

2. There was an exaltation. 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 exalted 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 commended 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 foretold 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

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 me 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 fellowshiping 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 of time, or very close to it.

2. Will you have, or participate in Good Friday Services when you get into the ministry. A Friday Triumphant 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 the resurrection not happened the church would never have started.

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 too 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."

III. 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 makes mention of 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 (Stanley I. Stuber and Thomas Curtis Clark, "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH," New York: Association Press, 1949, pp 588-589)

"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?"

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 me 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 decline 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.

III. 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, and 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, and 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, but 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 fellowshiping 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 advice 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!

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.

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, and 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. That was 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 breathe 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)

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 do not 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 believer's 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 Carolina 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 reproof 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 irresistible 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 reprov'd, Lu. 3:19; should be reprov'd, 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 reprov'd, 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 on 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 regeneration 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 is 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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.

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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 somehow 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 Spirit's 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.

Chafer mentions, "The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the same as the anointing of the Holy Spirit." (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.)

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

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 Corinthian believers 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.) 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 that Torrey and Moody were not all that clear in this area.

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-dispensationalists 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 SPIRIT

FILLING OF THE

1. RELATES TO POSITION WALK

1. RELATES TO

2. EXTERNAL (POSITION)

2. INTERNAL

3. FOR EVERY BELIEVER WITH THE BELIEVER

3. OPTIONAL

4. NEVER COMMANDED

4. COMMANDED

5. OCCURS AT SALVATION BELIEVERS WILL

5. MAY OCCUR AT

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 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." (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary, Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.)

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 words 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
PEACE		TURMOIL
LONG-SUFFERING		TEMPER
GENTLENESS		RUFFNESS
GOODNESS		BADNESS
FAITH		DOUBT
MEEKNESS		OUTWARDNESS
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 roll 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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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.

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 where 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 attack 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 Spirit 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 to 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 led 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 the Word'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.

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 directed 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 eternity 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 made; 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 lengthier 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 mentions that the deity of Christ was affirmed at the Council of Nicaea, that the deity of the Spirit was affirmed at Constantinople. These early problems were settled by the church early on. (Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, pp 386-87. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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 led 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 means to appose or move against something.

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 "antipto". 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 believer's 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 speak or act with contempt toward another or to disparage another.

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: "HEBREW'S 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: Blaspheming is the idea of being sacreligious toward God or treating holy things as unholy.

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 of the Spirit 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.

Grieve: To grieve someone is to cause sorrow or feelings of loss in another. 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 believer's life is grief to the Spirit.**

Grieving the Spirit then is sin. Any sin in the believer's 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: To lie is to tell untruth or falsehood. 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. AAAAAWWWWSSSOOME!! 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: Quench is the idea of to constrict or slow the flow or work of something or someone.

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.

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 camel's 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 inhabitants 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.

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, and 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 to 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 world's 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 Cherubim 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. Merrill 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 too 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 angel's 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 that Job 38:7 shows that they were present when the earth was created, but that the Word does not state when they were created. (Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 124. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by

Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

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 cherubim. 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 worshipping.

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.)

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 Satan's 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" Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament 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 is 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: Cherub is normally viewed as a cute winged child or in the Bible a spiritual creature created by God.

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

A seraphim is a spiritual creature in the service of its creator God.

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 author's 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 indwelling 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" where 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 person's death become part of the viewer's 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 taxpayer's 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 doctor 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

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:

Financially secure
Affluent
Income rising
Tax sheltered
Home paid for

11. Christians have condemned the costly cathedrals of the Roman church yet we are building bigger, and better, and snazzier 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 is 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.)

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