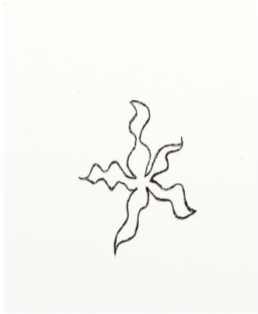


MR. D'S NOTES ON THEOLOGY VOLUME II



Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.

MR. D'S NOTES ON THEOLOGY

VOLUME TWO

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. 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.

ANTHROPOLOGY

INTRO TO ANTHROPOLOGY	03900
WE ARE A SOCIAL PEOPLE	03950
ORIGIN OF MAN	04000
MATERIAL MAN	04050
IMMATERIAL MAN	04100
MAN IN INNOCENCE	04150
MAN'S FALL	04200
HUMANISM	04250, 04300
GARDEN OF EDEN	04350

HAMARTIOLOGY

INTRODUCTION TO HAMARTIOLOGY	04400
PERSONAL SIN	04450
NATURE OF SIN AND FORGIVENESS	04500
SIN NATURE	04550
IMPUTED SIN/MAN UNDER SIN	04600
CHRISTIAN SIN	04650
PUNISHMENT	04700

TRIUMPH OVER SIN 04750

SOTERIOLOGY

INTRO TO SOTERIOLOGY 04800
CONVICTION 04850
REPENTANCE 04900
REGENERATION 04950
PROPITIATION 05000
REDEMPTION 05050
RECONCILIATION 05100
SANCTIFICATION 05150
JUSTIFICATION 05200
SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER 05250
FAITH 05300
FORGIVENESS 05350
THE CONFUSING TRIO 05400
ATONEMENT 05450
ARMINIUS/CALVIN 05500
STANDING/STATE 05550
CONCLUSION 05600
GLOSSARY 05650

ECCLESIOLOGY

INTRO TO THE CHURCH 05700
CHURCH DEFINED 05700, 05750
WHAT THE CHURCH IS NOT 05750
WHAT THE CHURCH IS 05800
WHEN THE CHURCH BEGAN 05800
PICTURES OF THE CHURCH 05800
REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP 05800
UNIVERSAL CHURCH 05800
LOCAL CHURCH 05800
PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH 05800
GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH 05850
TYPES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT 05850
CONSIDER SCRIPTURE AND LOGIC 05850, 05900
SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT 05900

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH	05900
QUALIFICATIONS/CHURCH LEADERS	05950, 06000
QUALITIES OF CHURCH LEADERS	06050
THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH	06100
LORD'S TABLE	06150
BAPTISM	06200
THE PHYSIQUE OF THE CHURCH	06250
THE GIFTS OF THE CHURCH	06300
THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH	06350
CONCLUSION	06400
CONSTITUTION TO CONSIDER	06450
STUDY LIST FOR THE TERM ELDERS	06500
PRINCIPLES FOR LOW COST LIVING	06550
INFORMATION ON THE BAPTISTS	06600
INFORMATION ON BAPTISMS	06650
A STUDY LIST FOR "ONE ANOTHER"	06700
LISTINGS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS	06750
THE GIFT OF PASTOR/TEACHER	06800
THE BODY VS. SOCIETY	06850
LORD'S TABLE/WHO AND WHERE	06900
DIVORCE/REMARriage	06950, 06970

ESCHATOLOGY

PREFACE	07000
OVERVIEW OF ESCHATOLOGY	07050
INTRODUCTION	07100
ISRAEL/CHURCH	07150
INTERPRETATION	07200
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN/GOD	07300
THE SECOND COMING	07350
THE RAPTURE	07400
THE TRIBULATION	07450
THE MILLENNIUM	07500
THE MILLENNIAL POSITIONS	07550
ULTRADISPENSATIONALISM	07600
KINGDOM THEOLOGY	07650
HEAVEN	07700
HELL	07750
CAN'T FAIL QUIZ	07800

LISTING OF MEN/POSITION	07850
INTERPRETATION OF THE GOSPELS	07900
CHURCH AND KINGDOM COMPARED	07950
VERSES FOR KINGDOM HEAVEN/GOD	08000

BOOKLIST	08050
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03900
ANTHROPOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

There is scientific evidence that the human soul has weight. In 1907 Dr. Duncan MacDougall placed dying patients on a very sensitive scale just before they died. At the point of death there was an immediate weight loss of from 3/8 to 1 1/2 ounces. He did this experiment on six people. Of the six bodies there were four that showed this weight loss. He also tried the experiment on fifteen dogs, and not one of them changed weight at the point of death.

So there. We do have souls and they vary in weight. I wonder if that indicates that a weight problem in this life is transferred into the next life. Ha!

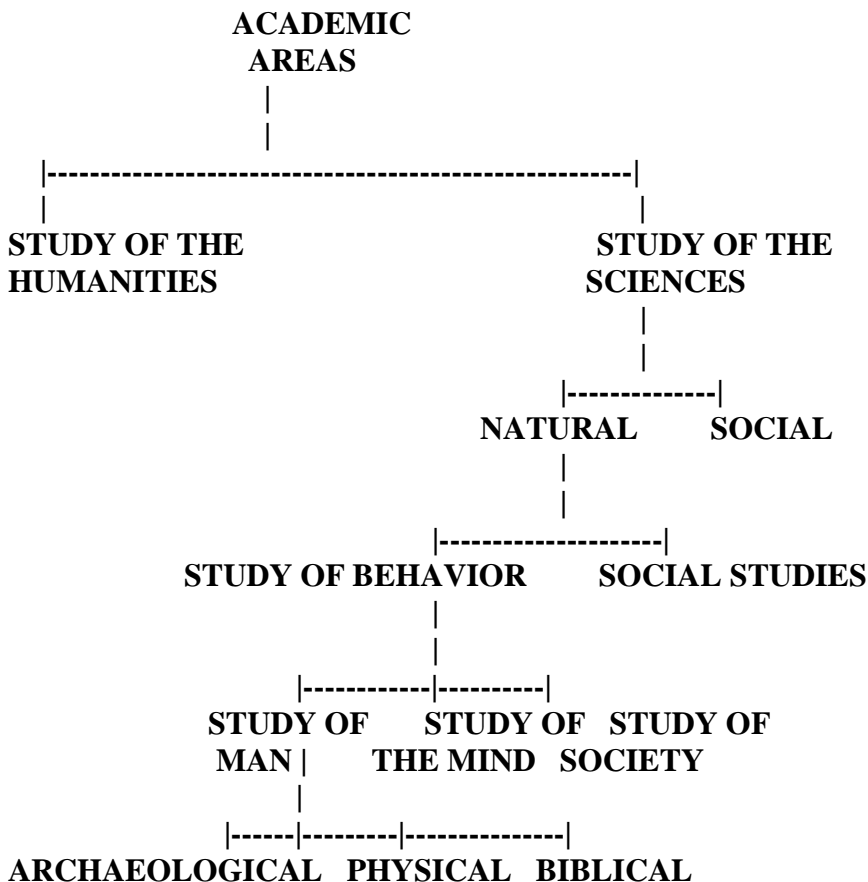
We can't use such a short experiment to definitely prove that the human being has a soul, however if you believe that the Bible is God's Word to man, you can know that there is a soul within man. Indeed, many of the religions of the world view man's makeup as containing a soul and/or spirit.

As we enter into a study of anthropology, we are going to be studying man. This section is somewhat unique, in that it is the only subject of theology which laps over into the secular world of study.

Anthropology is a secular subject as well. Unsaved people are interested in the study of anthropology as well as the Christian. The secular view of man will be different to some extent because their basis will be the theory of evolution, while the Christian's basis for study is the Bible.

Secular anthropology will view man as descending from a long evolutionary cycle, while Christian anthropology's view of man comes from the creator of that man, God.

Within the secular scheme of study there are many divisions of study. I would like to show a chart which shows some of these divisions and their relation to the overall system of study.



Most of you have heard of the Alex Haley book and movie, called "ROOTS." We are all interested in our roots. We desire to know about our fathers, our grandfathers, our great grandfathers etc.

We are about to really study our roots. We are going to look into the origin of man. As I approach the doctrine of man I'm left to wonder if I have anything to say. I don't even know about myself much less about mankind. Now, the doctrine of "SIN" - that is another story. I have some knowledge of it and can speak with a little authority.

In short ANTHROPOLOGY is the study of man, or the science of man. We will get into a more detailed definition in a few moments. There are two sources or approaches to the study of man.

We can study man from the approach of human philosophy as most of the world approaches the subject, or we can look at what the Word of God tells us about man, and draw conclusions from that source.

From our Christian perspective it is most logical to look at both, and hold to what the Lord has given to us in the Word.

There is value in looking at the secular philosophical approach to anthropology. Let us take a brief look at these benefits.

1. They have some things that would help us understand the lost world. Of course we don't want to accept evolution as a belief, but we can certainly learn of the basic thought of this system so that we can talk intelligently to an evolutionist about his spiritual needs. His spiritual need does not change just because he is an evolutionist, but when we talk to him of God, there are some hurdles we must overcome.

2. There are, I'm sure, some facts that they have within their area of study that might help us understand how the world system operates. This again translates into a help when talking to the lost. It also helps us understand why the world system is the way it is. If we understand their system we won't need to become disgusted with the lost when they act the way they do.

We have already noted the main difference between the Philosophical and the Biblical approach. We will contrast these two in a few minutes, but for now let it suffice to say that:

The philosophical approach is from man and man's thinking which is not as clear as the Lord had desired it to be. Man's thinking is

clouded by sin and the fall. This approach deals with only the emotional and intellectual part of man and does not usually deal with the immaterial part of man. God has no part in man's origin, career, or destiny as they understand anthropology. To them there is no God.

The Biblical approach is based on the Word of God and is the thinking of Almighty God. This gives the approach all of the validity it needs for the Christian. This approach deals with all areas of man, both material and immaterial. It covers moral, spiritual and eternal. What is said in these areas is, by nature, truth because it is revelation from God.

There are a couple of terms that we need to think about at this point. **EXTRA-BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY** is the study of man based on man's experience, history and intellect. **INTRA-BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY** is the study of man based on what God has revealed about man in His Word.

Extra-biblical anthropology gives to us such teachings as Evolution and humanism. Both are based on man's ideas and concepts about what we are and what we can do. By the very nature of the teaching it leads to the materialism of our day. If we are only man, and can only enjoy this life, then we must assuredly enjoy it to the hilt. If I am only in this life, then I will enjoy all that I can gather together to the hilt, and not worry about others. **I AM CENTRAL TO MY THINKING!** Recognize any of this in the world today?

If this is true, and we know that materialism has a strong hold on the church, then we might wonder just how effected the church is with extra-biblical anthropology. Indeed, one of the last sections of this study is on humanism and its inroads into the Christian community. (Topic number d04250-d04300.)

It should be recognized that the Bible does not approach man as a textbook. You do not find a I and II Man in the table of contents of the Bible. The Bible does not lay out a systematic set of information. We need to go into the Word and glean what it says about man as we go. There is no systematic anthropology found in the scripture.

The Bible has much to say about man, and it has much to say to lost man if he will listen. His listening, however is usually the problem.

If a lost man will recognize the fact that the Scripture has some authority over them, and will follow it's precepts he may enjoy a good life here on earth, and be a moral upright being. His eternal destiny will not be affected however. He will ultimately spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

While we are thinking about the authority of the Scriptures we might make brief mention that the Scriptures are authoritative in all that they say. In what it says about science, it is correct. In what it says about man, it is correct. In what it says about medicine it is correct. The point however is that it is not a science textbook, nor is it a pre-med text book. The point is this. When the Bible speaks on a subject it is correct and we should have complete trust in it.

We should realize that the Bible speaks on some areas relating to man that the extra-biblical system does not address. Such things as: The true origin of the universe; The true origin of man; Man's original state; Man's fall from that state; The new birth; The real cause of death; The bodily resurrection.

We need to notice that the Word of God does not change and that it is presenting the same view of man that it did when it was first written.

It should also be noted that the extra-biblical system is constantly changing it's view as to the origin of man. There are many views of the creation of the universe that have been presented through the ages. None have been proven correct and many of them are barely plausible.

This constant flux is because of the fact that the people that come up with these schemes have nothing except other men's ideas upon which to base their thinking. They have no real basis upon which to build, while the intra-biblicist has the Word of God to base his thinking on.

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY - the study of man's origin, fall and course, based upon the Biblical record.

Let us see how Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines anthropology. "1:the science of human beings; esp: the study of human beings in relation to distribution, origin, classification, and

relationship of races, physical character, environmental and social relations, and culture 2: a part of Christian teaching that concerns the origin nature, and destiny of human beings....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) We are interested primarily in the number two definition. It is of interest that Webster recognizes that there is a very definite difference between the two types.

Anthropology, in short is the "science of man." We will look briefly into some of the other areas of anthropology, but for the most part will look at the origin, nature and fall of man.

DEFINITION:

Anthropology is the study of man, his origin, ways of living, belief systems and how they exist.

The term comes from the merging of two Greek terms: "anthros" meaning man and "logos" meaning study.

"The word "anthropologos" first appeared in the works of the Greek philosopher Aristotle and meant 'treating of man,'". (Funk, Wilfred Litt.D.; "WORD ORIGINS AND THEIR ROMANTIC STORIES"; New York: Bell Pub., MCML, p 234)

As we have seen the study is viewed in two ways:

- 1. Human philosophy.** This information is based on all of man's experience and thinking and reasoning. The result of this form is Evolution and Humanism.
- 2. Biblical perspective.** This is based squarely upon the Bible, and then includes information from extra-biblical that may substantiate and enhance intra-biblical anthropology. The result is a true view of man which is based on Biblical creationism.

CONTRASTS:

INTRA-BIBLICAL

EXTRA-BIBLICAL

1. By nature, centered on the of God Word of God.	Excludes the Word completely.
2. A philosophy created by God. man.	A philosophy created by
3. Creation by God.	Evolution.
4. God centered.	Man centered.
5. Deals with original state of information. man.	Offers no
6. Deals with man's fall.	Offers no information.
7. Deals with real cause of death. things.	Offers no information other than, it's the course of
8. Deals with the new birth.	Offers no hope.
9. Deals with proper morality. thing".	Offers "do your own
10. Deals with a future life.	Offers no afterlife.
11. Gives absolutes in morals. absolute)	Demands no absolutes in morals. (Which is an
12. Correct and unchanging in times and state which it was written.	Changes with the the writers.
13. Man has value before God. value he	Man has only what can find for himself.

14. Deals with the creation of man.
man.

Deals with the evolution of

Now, let us move to four improper theories of man's coming into existence:

1. Evolution: Most people today know what evolution is. It is the thought that man evolved from a long process of life getting better and better. The life would be some primordial gluck that decided to become alive. Life then evolved into something intelligent, then into fish, then into animal, then into man and we have been getting better every since. So why are some of us so bald if we are getting better, or is baldness the next best step forward for mankind?

2. Theistic evolution: Notice that they allow God into this one, ever so slightly. God created, and left it all to evolve with his guidance over the millions of years that it took. He allowed natural processes to bring life into existence and then evolve into man.

3. Progressive creationism: "Creationism" is included in this title to give an air of respectability to evolution. In this thought God created life, then allowed millions of years to pass between the stages of intervention by Himself. You know, those missing links that the evolution always talks about - God stepped in from time to time to give evolution the needed boost to the next level. This is why there is no link between monkey and man. Evolution got to the monkey, and God stepped in and somehow brought about man.

4. Abiogenesis or Spontaneous generation: This thought tells us that man just began to exist - no creator - no creation. Cambron mentions, "...there was no creator of man, but that man simply came into being without a cause and began to exist fulfilling the nursery rhyme, which reads: Where did you come form baby dear? Out of the nowhere, into here!" (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 155)

There is a fifth point if you are a TREKY. (A TREKY is one that enjoys the Star Trek television series.) In the Star Trek series there is what they call the Genesis Machine. NO, YOU SAY? WELL, PROBABLY NOT.

THE PROPER - BIBLICAL VIEW

Man was brought into existence by God. Gen. 1:27 shows the fact of creation, Gen. 2:7 shows the how of creation, and Matt 19:4 shows Christ giving validity to that account. Let me list a few other points concerning the creation of man:

- 1. He BECAME a living thing (Gen. 1:21). He wasn't living beforehand and then suddenly change form. It was a creation, not an evolution.**
- 2. Paul states that Eve was taken from Adams side. This was a sudden action as well as supernatural, thus probably Adam's own creation was probably sudden and supernatural. (as opposed to thousands of years) I Cor. 11:8.**
- 3. Paul states that there are different kinds of flesh. One for animal and one for man (I Cor. 15:39). Man did not come from the fish.**
- 4. God states that man was created, then the woman was created. The theist would have to have all males up to the time of Adam, then have woman. This does not seem logical to have man only in the evolutionary process until a point in time when woman is introduced.**

As we move along in our study of man, we might consider whether we can have a complete Psychology of man (psychology is the science that deals with the mind and the behavior that it causes in man) that is derived from the Bible. Anyone that has read the Bible would have to say no. The Bible is complete, and correct in what it says concerning psychology, however it is not, nor was it meant to be a psychological text book.

God did not set the Scriptures down to address man's overall psychology, but to address man's spiritual needs. The next question is this, "Can a psychologist form a practice using principles found in the Word of God?" To a point this is possible. He can use principles from the Bible if the person is a Christian. If the person is lost then the person may, or may not follow the remedy, nor will he have the Holy Spirit to assist him if, indeed he follows the remedy.

There have been men that have practiced in the following manner. They first of all find out if the person is saved. If they are Christians they proceed from a Biblical standpoint to minister to their problems (problems that are usually related to sin). If the person is not saved they are given the Gospel, and the opportunity to accept Christ. If the response is no, then the treatment is basically the usual secular psychology, with the Word used as much as possible.

Others have noted many "Biblical" principles wrapped up in the "REALITY THERAPY" of Dr. Glasser. His principles worked well in many patients, even though he was not (to my knowledge) a believer. Biblical principles can work in an unsaved person if they allow them to be applied. Indeed, the fact that some unsaved people live great moral lives, is proof that Biblical principles work, whether the lost or believers follow them.

Today one of the attacks upon the Word is leveled at the fact that not all of it is inspired. Many today now believe that the Word is inspired only in those areas where it is conveying spiritual truth. Where It touches on science, psychology, and what have you, it may contain errors. This is how believers can hold to the quasi evolutionary systems that they believe in. In the area of science (creation) the Bible has errors, so they insert their own philosophy.

How do we answer the charges that the Bible contains errors in the area of science, etc.? We need to understand that the Bible is not written as a science, psychology, or history book. It is written to reveal the answers to man's spiritual problems, and to give them a moral standard to live by. It is, however, in areas where it speaks on these subjects, without error and is true.

For example you can read secular history books and find many examples where the secular world has "found errors in the Bible" because there was no proof of the Word's statement. As the years go by archaeologists have proven over and over that the Bible is the correct version, rather than the secular history.

We, as believers, accept these things by faith, so why not share our faith in Christ and His word with the people around us. Heb. 11:3 states: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of

things which do appear." If we accept it by faith then we should be up front and tell them that! We should also remind them that they are accepting what they hold on faith as well.

Much of science is still accepted by faith. An example of this is the flow of electrons in a wire to produce an effect such as light or sound. They do not know if it is really electrons in the wire, nor do they know if what ever is flowing, flows from negative too positive, or positive too negative. They have formed the theory that it is the flow of electrons from positive to negative, and they can demonstrate the results yet they cannot prove their theory. Probably, it is true but, they must accept it by faith. Even then they debate about the direction of current flow.

The whole matter of evolution is likewise acceptable only on the basis of faith. There is little proof for the system, and anyone that holds to its teaching must have faith in the teaching, or they could not hold to it.

Man could not have evolved from mud, because he is a personable, rational, moral and religious being. How can anyone believe that man which is personal, rational, moral and religious came from a primordial blob?

If you mentioned to someone that you believed the Genesis account of creation and they said they didn't; that it was only a fable of the Old Testament, how could you answer that person?

Take them to Matt. 19:4,5 and read the account of Christ's answer to the Pharisees, "He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" This puts them at odds with not only the Genesis account of creation, but also at odds with the Son Of God, Jesus Christ, who gave his view. Christ held that the creation account was historical and reliable. At this point let him argue with Jesus Christ! I would like to list some references that view creation as fact: Ex. 20:11; I Chr. 1:1; Ps. 8:3-6; Mk. 10:6-7; Lu. 3:38; Ro. 5:12-21; I Cor. 11:9; 15:22; 15:45; II Cor. 11:3; I Tim. 2:13-14; Jude 14.

Conclusions:

How do we make this practical? A study of man and his creation. How will you present this to a group and help them live better Christian lives with it?

1. The Extra-Biblical theories which have been set forth are truly revolutionary and breathtaking. It is wonderful that man can know so much about himself with absolutely no scientific evidence.

Intra-Biblical anthropology is a simple statement of fact by the creator of the universe about how He created. Surely He would be the one that knows how He did it.

There are some new theories which attempt to merge the two views, however man always ends up in the drivers seat of these new thoughts.

2. Man is a created being made by a very powerful God. (The ramifications of this are immense.)

3. We are created beings. Not only are we created beings, but we are responsibility to the creator. When you create a cake, it is there for you to do with as you desire. God created us, and we are here for HIS purposes, not our own.

4. We are created in His image. We have a responsibility to know what He is, so that we can become more like Him.

TRUTH FOR LIFE:

God took the time to create man and in essence ME so I must assume I have value before Him, else, why would He have bothered. If I have value before Almighty God then I have value to myself - I am worth something! I have no value aside from the creator - thus my creator should be very important to me! If I have value, that value comes from my creator, thus what is my response? I should: Submit to his Word; Serve Him; Share Him; And speak with Him.

I have often wondered if David Brainerd had realized some of these truths, if he would have had a different outlook on life. I would like to

quote a short portion of his diary on the day of his commissioning as a missionary. It shows a man that had very little concept of value before God. True, his negative thoughts were generated by his honest hate of sin within himself, yet I must wonder if he felt that he had any value before His maker. "Spent much time in prayer and supplication: was examined in reference to my Christian experience, my acquaintance with divinity, and some other studies and my qualifications for the important work of evangelizing the heathen, and was made sensible of my great ignorance and unfitness for public service. I had the most abasing thoughts of myself; I felt that I was the worst wretch that ever lived: it pained my very heart, that anybody should show me any respect. Alas! me thought how badly they are deceived in me! how miserably would they be disappointed if they knew my inside! O my heart! And in the depressed condition I was forced to go and preach to a considerable assembly, before some grave and learned ministers; but felt such a pressure from a sense of my vileness, ignorance, and unfitness to appear in public, that I was almost overcome with it; my soul was grieved for the congregation, that they should sit there to hear such a dead dog as I preach, I thought myself infinitely indebted to the people, and longed that God would reward them with the rewards of his grace. I spent much of the evening alone." (Edwards, Jonathan; "THE LIFE AND DIARY OF DAVID BRAINERD"; P 25-26

He had so much of this worthless feeling, yet today most Christian's don't have any of that feeling.

God's Workmanship by G. Campbell Morgan

"We are God's workmanship. That is where the song of hope and comfort begins. I would be frightened of the first, because when I say I am his I am not talking for effect; I am talking out of my life, deeply. Even today I say I belong to him, and I am almost ashamed because I do not feel there is anything worth his possessing in me. But wait a minute -- we are his workmanship" That means he is working on us. There is the suggestion in it of artistic beauty. We are his workmanship, not yet perfected, but in process. The figure of the potter helps me. The wheel is moving swiftly with the aid of the potter's foot on the treadle, and he gives speed or slowness as he wills to the revolving wheel. What is on the wheel? Clay. There is no beauty in it, but it is the stuff the potter wants. And humanity is just

the stuff God needs and that is why he created man for an infinite purpose we have not yet begun to see. Now watch the wheel revolving! The clay is taking form and fashion as the wheel turns. Then he takes it off and puts it into the fire. Then it is taken out and he lays on the colors, puts it in the fire again, and when the potter is done the vessel is for beauty and for use." (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 472-473)

May we realize we are clay in God's hands! May we realize any value we have is in His creative and shaping hands? As He molds us - we gain value!

03950

WE ARE A SOCIAL PEOPLE

In this section sociology will be examined, then we will look at sociology as it relates to the believer, the pastor, and the missionary.

SOCIOLOGY EXAMINED

In college sociology, our textbook was "A SOCIOLOGY OF THE ABSURD" or something very near that. The purpose of the author was to present a model of sociology that fit the evidence that he was able to observe. I do not know if he ever became famous for his work because I do not know what his name was. His thought went along the line that all of society is made up of different little games people play.

To illustrate his thought I will use the situation I was in as a teacher on the faculty of a Bible Institute. I was a part of the faculty, the students were a part of the student body, the men were part of the men's dorm, the women were part of the women's dorm and the married students were part of the married student's group.

Now to illustrate the games that this author believed in, we would explain the situation thusly: I as part of the faculty am expected to come every morning, and wax eloquent about the subject at hand. I am to act pious and important. I am to have all the answers to all of the questions presented. I am above you "students" and as such should be treated with respect. As long as I play the game and obey the rules, I can remain a part of the game. If I break the rules then I must be removed from the faculty student game and enter the janitor game.

The student on the other hand was expected to act as students act. The student is to be loud, unintelligent, and in general, disgusting. As a married student, you were expected to have all the answers, and you were expected to be the model students. As a married student you were expected to have other married students over and "have fun!" You were to talk about all the problems of the school and your immediate, easy remedy for those problems. You then turn your

discussion to the faculty members, their problems and how you would solve their problems. You would have them join the ditch digger game, right?

Within the dorms there are certain rules to the games as well. The boys act like nuts and talk about girls. The girls act very proper and talk about boys.

As this author develops his thoughts he would state that we are all playing the game we have chosen at this point in life, and we are expected to obey the rules of that particular game.

To further illustrate, I as a faculty member was not allowed anger, I was not allowed self indulgence, I was not allowed swearing, I was not allowed fun activities, yet if I were to move out of this game into the game of janitor, I would be expected to have a different set of items as part of my game. I would not dress in a suit for work, I would not be overly friendly with the other people at work, I would clean up the messes of other people, and in general act like a janitor acts.

He believed that we choose a game and lock ourselves into it. The further application of his theory would deal with how the different games interact. Example: How does the faculty/student game interact with the Wyoming ranch worker game? How do I as a right and proper "faculty member" relate to a ranch hand when we are in two different games?

I do not believe what the man said in particular however it is a good way of looking at interpersonal relationships and beginning to understand how society works, how communities work etc.

Sociology, as any field of study is by its very nature limited to one extent, or another. To look at our own system of study, Theology, we know the limits are the study of God, and things relating to God. We break it down into the ten different areas and go to work in that study. Within theology we have the section we are working on now, Anthropology, or the study of man. Within anthropology we will deal with a number of subjects. Sociology is at best, at the outer limits of the study of anthropology, however anthropology and sociology are loosely related.

Within "theology" today we now have many other areas being brought into the picture. Some are not really theology at all. We have books that discuss the theology of missions, and the theology of Christian Education. These are not really theology and should be renamed. We do have the different systems of theology which are valid studies (Valid, in that people study these subjects in relation to God. Some of them are, however false teaching). Liberation theology, Dominion theology, Biblical theology, Reconstruction theology, Systematic theology etc.

(Alex Inkeles, "WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY? AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DISCIPLINE AND PROFESSION," Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964, is a good introduction to the subject if you have a desire to do further study.)

Sociology: "1:the science of society, social institutions, and social relationships; specif: the systematic study of the development, structure, interaction, and collective behavior of organized groups of human beings 2: the scientific analysis of a social institution as a functioning whole and as it relates to the rest of society....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Notice that there are two concepts here that will be important to our study of sociology. a. The study of society in general and how it develops, organizes and interacts. b. The study of a society in specific and how it relates to the whole social order.

Let me illustrate the first concept: I will take just a small portion of our own history to do this. The USA has always been called the melting pot of the world. We have, from the beginning, brought in anyone that wanted to come, and we melted everyone together into one great society.

As the emigrants came to this country they found work and places to live. The fact that these peoples from many lands congregated into small pockets not only in our cities, but in our land is of interest. In New York city there are black sections, Irish sections, Chinese sections, Latin sections, white sections, etc. Within our country are communities that were started by a particular ethnic group.

We lived in a small town in Nebraska for a while that was founded by Swedes and their business community was so tightly controlled that outsiders could not come in and start a business. One man tried to start a television repair business. Work was very slow for him, yet other shops were running two and three months behind on their service calls. The newcomer made a deal with one of the established businesses to make their service calls for them and then carry the shop jobs to their shop. The men were excited about the possibility and called some of their customers. The customers would not allow the newcomer to touch their sets. He closed up his business within a few months.

This phenomena of division within the collective is not hard to understand, and indeed it is probably normal. We like to be with people like us, don't we.

Indeed, as believers we tend to do this. Moody Monthly mentioned several years ago that they had a pole that showed that within two years of salvation over 90% of new believers had no non-christian friends. We gather together within our own little circles, because we enjoy one another and have things in common.

Now the second point of the definition. The study of a society in specific and how it relates to the whole social order. This might well relate to the idea that the CHURCH is a society within the collective social order within the USA. We could also say that the American society is a part of the collective world social order.

We divide the world into first world, second world, third world and I think we have other newer divisions as well. All of these are terms and concepts attempting to explain, study and understand the social order in which we live as a world community.

One might wonder what the difference is between Anthropology and sociology. In the first place anthropology deals with man as he came to the earth, whether from creation or evolution. We as believers deal with man as we see him revealed in the Word of God, while the lost often deal with man as he is supposedly revealed in the fossils.

Anthropology usually considers the ancient man, the primitive, while sociology deals with more recent man. Anthropology deals with the makeup of man and how he existed in the primitive state, while sociology deals with how he exists in more recent time. Anthropology deals with the fossils, and archaeological evidence while sociology deals with the history books and visible evidence.

SOCIOLOGY AND THE BELIEVER

Carl Henry calls believers in this age to a balanced view of our own country. We are trying to understand what is going on in our nation with its spiritual decline, yet we really don't know what is going on. The thought of "sociology" in a Bible Institute would horrify many people, yet how can we understand our nation, our world before God, until we understand what is going on in our nation and our world.

Henry mentions the fact that the American people are committed to a twentieth century idol - materialism - while we are boasting that there are forty million evangelicals in the country. The two facts are both true, yet a balance between the two really tells the story of America. (Carl F. H. Henry, "THE CHRISTIAN MINDSET IN A SECULAR SOCIETY," Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1984, p 9-10)

We don't understand our own nation and that lack of understanding comes from a basic lack of knowledge of what is going on in our nation. We need to understand that we may well be part of the problem.

The believer must understand that he or she is an integrated part of the world society, the free world society, the American society, the regional society (east coast, mid-west, west coast), the state society, the county society, the city society, the neighborhood society, the church society, and the family society. If we do not understand these relationships, then we understand not the ministry that God has set before us.

Within all of these different societies, we have responsibilities as part of those societies. If we are part of these societies, and if we are a part of the problem within these societies, then we are also a part of the remedy needed by these societies! Indeed, isn't that what we are all here for, to learn what God has to say to us so that we may in turn

teach those societies!! IF WE ARE NOT ABOUT THIS CHRISTIAN, THEN WE ARE NOT ABOUT OUR FATHERS BUSINESS!

Before we move on, I want to warn you that what I am going to be talking about, may well sound like Secular Humanism, but I assure you that it is not. Secular Humanism has some good points to which we as Christians react negatively because we reject all of their teachings rather than realize that they might have something to say to us.

We tend to reject all that anyone says even if we disagree only with a part of their thought. How many of you support Greenpeace the environmental group? Very few, but they are trying to do something that all of society should be involved in. We reject their message quite often because they act illegally at times, and most of them look like leftovers from the 60's hippie generation.

Let's take a look at all this: Let's look at this section through the eyes of the great commission. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt 28:19-20

In light of the Lord's command we need to view society and all of its subdivisions.

World society: We are responsible to assist nations that are in need of help. If we neglect that, we neglect the teaching of the Lord in the concept of compassion and love for our neighbor. We as an individual can do little, yet we can do what we can, and that is the responsibility.

Free world society: We have a responsibility to see to it that the freedoms that we enjoy continue for ourselves, but also for everyone to which we can extend those freedoms. We should also be a part of seeing to it that others do not lose those freedoms.

If the different countries do not remain free, there normally is no Gospel witness. The early church was able to spread so easily to the known world due to the fact that there was freedom of movement and

communication of the believers. They could go anywhere they wanted with their message.

American society: We are responsible to the federal government for obedience, support and participation. We as believers have not been active enough in government in past years. We have assumed that separation of church and state meant no participation in government by believers. That is wrong. Believers are to be a part of their government in more than voting and paying taxes.

We are not to be, as some of the reconstructionists are attempting to do, set up the millennial kingdom here in the USA. We are to be light and salt in whatever walk of life we enter into. If you become a government official, then be a Christian official and be light and salt in your position.

Regional society: There may not be much to do in this section other than participate in any way that you can. While living in the Northwest in the 70's the economic crunch hit the USA but it translated into fewer homes being built, which translated into less lumber being purchased which translated into disaster for Oregon which had an economy that was based almost totally on lumber. There was little I could do as a believer other than to be supportive of those that were hurting due to the layoffs etc. The church needed to be sensitive to the needs physical of those that were around them.

State society: Again we deal with the government and the part that the believer ought to be playing in it.

County society: You might have county government as well as the helping of people in need. You need to be sensitive to the lost people of that area, an area that you personally could easily evangelize yourself.

City society: There may be city government, PTA etc. that you can get involved in. You certainly have the evangelistic responsibility. You may have business or employee relationships that need to be understood.

Neighborhood society: You should be involved in peoples lives that are this near to you. Helping them, witnessing to them, being friends to them and all these are answered in being friends!

Church society: Realize that there is church government and you are responsible before God for how you respond to it. You have your gift/gifts that you should be using within the local church. You should receive the encouragement and strength that you need from this community. You also should be sharing in these areas, as well as the financial area to edify the body of believers, of which you are a part.

So often when I talk to people that have left a church, their reasons are that they are getting nothing from the church. The real question is what have they been doing for the church. If they are totally involved in the church, and working with their gifts their own needs quite often are met via their involvement. Lack of involvement can often result in lack of the church ministering to the individual.

Family society: We know that there is a government of types in the family. That structure is important for the proper functioning of the family. There is the caring for, the support of, the encouragement of, and all those things that are a part of the family society.

If you look at the Bible for ideas in society you will find that It presents the family as the basic unit from which all of the other societies develop. Abraham was the foundation for the whole of the Jewish nation and actually was to be the foundation of the whole of society. If the Jews had done their job properly, and if the Christians were doing their job correctly, then the world would be much more toward the society that God envisioned, a society of Godly people. Yes, that is idealistic to say that the world should be Godly, but that was what God had in mind when He gave Adam and Eve the command to go out and be fruitful.

It is man's self-centeredness that has brought the world to where it is today. We all are doing our own thing, rather than the Lord's thing, and many people are dieing in their lost state because of our failure!

III. SOCIOLOGY AND THE PASTOR

Just how can the concept of sociology help the pastor? Mr. Henry in his first chapter has two sentences, which to me, sum up a whole bunch of the problem with our nation, our church, and our families. "Man's lack of commitment to God means his inevitable spiritual enslavement to the world...." (P 10) "The Fact that human liberty is divorced increasingly from supernatural accountability may well become our national undoing." (P 11)

PLEASE WRITE THOSE DOWN! THEY ARE IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND OUR NATION AND OUR CHURCH AND OUR FAMILIES! If you miss this you will not understand what is going on in your church! We as believers are not committed to God. We as believers are enslaved to the world. We as believers are free to do as we please - we have our rights! We as believers reject the thought that we owe anything to God.

Understand these items and you understand why pastors are moving every 18 months to find better paying churches. I recently picked up a financial statement in a church of about 125 and their pastor was receiving a total of over \$31,000 a year. This was in Wyoming. Their pastor is new. The last one only lasted about 16 months.

Understand these items and you understand why missionaries are taking longer to raise their support than to gain their education. Understand these items and you understand why fundamental churches are dead today.

If the pastor does not understand the progression of society then he won't understand the goings on of his church. Example: Cliques. If the rich people begin to gather unto themselves and the middle class and the poor do the same, then there will be natural divisions that will occur in the church. This is not necessarily bad, but it can be very bad.

How do you overcome these growing divisions Pastor? Teaching the principle of equality within the believers. Holding area Bible studies instead of Sunday evening or Wed. evening services, and be sure there is a good mixture of rich, middle, and poor in each group.

As society changes, so changes the church today. We follow along with the changes of society very nicely. This is not a correct view to

hold, but it is an observable fact that you need to realize. The truth of the Word, however holds forth a different concept. The Bible seems to show, AS THE CHURCH CHANGES, SO CHANGES THE SOCIETY! As we get our act together, we will affect the society.

That is about the exact opposite of what we see today in most fundamental churches. If a new fad or custom hits the USA, the church will soon have incorporated it into their activities.

The charismatic movement got into the "chorus" craze and the fundamentalists and evangelicals are now right in the middle of it. The world tells our women that they must be beautiful and so the church has spawned aerobics that use the music we condemn in the sanctuary. The church has brought in the color tests to develop your "true" beauty. etc.

There is another aspect to understanding society that we need to look at briefly in the context of a pastor/pastor's wife. You may not know it, but within our own country there are many subsocieties and cultures. You may move to a different part of the country to pastor a church. You may wake up the first morning in your new town to find that you don't know anything about the people that have called you to minister to them.

Don't blunder into a new church and think that you know everything about what the people need. You may not. You may run headlong into problems that you have never imagined. One example that might help you understand this. My wife and I went to North Carolina to visit her sister and husband. We noticed tobacco growing everywhere. Almost every property had little patches. We went to church on Sunday morning and found that the Christian society in which we were, saw nothing wrong with tobacco. Most of the people in the church grew it and from the smell of the church most of them used it as well. Tobacco smoke smell was throughout the church building and as people were leaving after the services they were also lighting up.

Now, if you take a Southern Baptist Church to pastor, you may well have many transplanted southerners in your church, even if it is in Oregon. Faith and I attended a Southern Baptist Church in Hawaii and the southerners were the majority. Between Sunday School and

church the outside of the church had so much smoke rolling up from the sides that you would think that the building was on fire. You will have to be careful how you deal with the problem of smoking. I am not saying don't deal with the problem, but I am saying be very careful how you attempt to deal with it. You do not want to offend, you do not want to drive away, and you do not want to look for a new church!

III. SOCIOLOGY AND THE MISSIONARY

I guess the classic story of the missionary that had just arrived in his new country of ministry, and his first visit with church people will suffice to illustrate the importance of understanding the society that you are going to.

A missionary had arrived, and one of the veteran workers was taking the man around to meet the people of the church. As the new arrival would enter a home he would want to talk to the people so he would say something complimentary about their home. He would pick out some item and mention, "Oh that is beautiful." or "That is very nice." When he did this, the people would give him the item. Finally after several incidents of this sort the new worker became confused. He asked the veteran missionary why the people were giving him gifts, but not giving the older worker gifts. The older man explained that the unknowing arrival had been asking for the gifts. In the society they were in, if someone complimented you on something it is your duty to give that item to them. UNDERSTAND THE SOCIETY THAT YOU MINISTER TO!

We could invest an entire book on this topic, and how we could improve the church and our personal witness, but we do not have a semester. I trust that this will suffice to interest you in getting to know the society that you are getting involved in.

One final illustration to prove to you that the society that you live in may differ greatly from the one that you want to interact with.

It is quite obvious that males and females are different in social and mental ways. Surveys have been done that prove this. Emory S. Bogardus, "SOCIOLOGY," New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954, pp 74-74 did a survey of 869 10th, 11th, 12th graders in 1950's. The

students were asked to rate items of desirability in their friend of the opposite sex.

The girls desired the boy to be a good conversationalist, but the boys did not care about that point. The girls did not rate looks in their top ten, but the boys rated it number three. Differences exist!

We need to understand that all people are different, both sexes are different, and that the sexes are different in different parts of the world.

To properly minister in your future years you must UNDERSTAND THOSE THAT YOU WOULD MINISTER TO!

04000

ORIGIN OF MAN

If you like titles, you might try the following for this section, ORIGIN OF THE ORIGINALS.

The secular anthropologist has a dim view of man. They view him as only an integrated part of the natural order. He has form, and must obey the same laws of nature as the other animal life. He is like a laboratory where chemicals are processed. He takes in materials for his own use and processes them as do the other animals.

It would seem that our mothers missed the boat when they named us. My name should be S-D Laboratories. If man is nothing but one of the animals and nothing more than a part of the natural order then man is a product of nature, rather than God. We know better because of the knowledge we gain from the Word.

The two major systems of thought today, as to the origin of man are Evolution and Biblical creationism. The evolutionary side is based on speculation, conjecture and assumption and lots of the latter. Biblical creationism is based upon the Revelation of God to man. It is truth in all that it communicates and can be accepted as such!

The evolutionist offers many proofs, but no PROOF as such. They have presented many things over the years and Christianity has been kind enough to shoot all of them down. Indeed, evolution had been laid to rest in the religious circles as a false teaching, until a few years ago when Carl Sagan decided to make a bundle of money on the resurrected evolutionary theories of the past. He is a very good communicator and has been able to gain the capital to produce some very fine television shows to push his new, yet old ideas.

Within the evolutionary proponents we have two basic camps. The out and out evolutionist that holds to the Darwinian thinking and the Biblical people that want to allow for the evolutionist in Biblical circles (These are the Theistic evolutionists).

The proponents of evolution usually set forth the following items as basic to their theory.

I will just quote these. I found these comments in Hodge's Systematic Theology page 240. (Gross, Edward N., editor; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"/Abridged Edition; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988.)

- 1. "First, like begets like; this is the law of heredity, according to which the offspring is like the parent through out the vegetable and animal world."**
- 2. "Second, while in all that is essential the offspring is like the parent, it always differs more or less from its progenitor; this is the law of variation. The variations are sometimes deteriorations, sometimes indifferent, sometimes improvements, that is, such as enable the plant or animal more advantageously to exercise its functions." (I was taller than my father, yet just as bald.)**
- 3. "Third, as plants and animals increase in a geometrical ratio, they tend to outrun enormously the means of support, and this of necessity gives rise to a continued and universal struggle for life."**
- 4. "Fourth, we have the Law of Natural Selection. In this struggle the fittest survive; that is, those individuals which have an accidental variation of structure which renders them superior to their fellows in the struggle for existence survive and transmit that peculiarity to their offspring. This is 'natural selection'; i.e., nature, without intelligence or purpose, selects the individuals best adapted to continue and to improve the race. It is by the operation of these few principles that in the course of countless ages all the diversified forms of vegetables and animals have been produced."**

The theistic evolutionist holds to evolution, but sees God as the prime starter of all these processes. There are variations on this thinking as well.

God, in Genesis one and two, is very clear in what He is trying to communicate to man. He mentions very specifically just how he went about the creation of the universe, as well as man. If we do not accept Genesis one and two as truth, then that record must be held as

untruth, or lies. Can you imagine telling God that He is a liar? That is what the evolutionist and Theistic evolutionists are doing. Think about that one for awhile!

Not only does the Scripture tells us very dramatically in Genesis of the creation, but the Bible also goes on to mention the creation many times more in other portions of the Word. This is very emphatic that the Lord created.

Not only do the doubters call the Lord a liar, but they also are casting insults toward Him. The next time you talk to an evolutionist you might ask him if he really wants to be part of a system that makes God out a liar.

If we leave God out of the creation then we have a lack of many things. We do not have any direction for the universe and ourselves, other than what man might dream up. We have no reason to be moral people. We are products of the goo of past ages so why should we be moral.

Indeed, this is why the movies and the television shows are going totally down hill. They have no standards. The standards have basically been lifted, and all is go.

The illegitimate birth rate is soaring and why? No standards in our society. It is strictly okay to have a baby and raise it as a single parent, so many are doing just that.

Divorce rates are terribly high. Why? No standards of marriage. Marriage is a try it, and if you like it keep it, situation in our society today.

Abortion is rampant in our country. Why? There is no standard for life. The law says that these children do not exist as life thus they have no value.

If there is no standard then every person is his own standard. I recently saw an interview of a man that had killed another man in the process of a robbery. He was convicted and put away for life. His reaction was one of total indignation. He had done nothing wrong. He had shot a gun, but the dumb person that died was at fault. He

ran in front of the gun. His philosophy was that he had done no wrong, and that he had no responsibility.

That is the end result of evolution and humanism. On the other hand the Bible and creation demands much higher of man. Since we are told that we are created in His image then it is also somewhat indicated that we should act in His image as well. You might jot down I Pet 1:16; Matt 5:48 for future reference as well.

We are to be conformed to the image of Christ! We can only do that as we conform to the dictates of the Scriptures. This is where our morals will come from.

Chafer states that if we leave the Bible and God out of the origin of man that we can look to tadpoles for moral standards. If God and the Bible are left out then man is left to dream up his own theologies, and that he does. That is why we have so many cults and isms around today.

Many have realized that the Genesis one and two accounts of the creation are different, yet very similar. This is explainable as follows. Some feel that chapter one is an introduction, and that chapter two fills in the gaps of one. This is the method of some Hebrew writings. They are like the modern day speaker that tells em what he's going to say, then he tells em what he wants to say, and then he tells em what he has just said in the hope that they heard what he said.

Some suggest that one is mankind in general and that two is speaking specifically of Adam. Chafer suggests the term Cosmical in relation to it being mankind and the term physiological in relation to Adam specifically.

No matter how this similarity is explained, the final result must be that both relate to the creation of the heavens and the earth by the supreme Being, God.

Gen. 1:27 seems to speak quite specifically about the subject of creation. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Since God mentions it three times in one verse it might be indicated that God

believes that He is the creator. God did it, He said it, we believe it because faith allows it (Heb 11:3).

Within man's abilities of observation, there are things which tend to confuse us. The evolutionist on the one hand says that we descend from the monkey. As we observe the monkey, we can see that we are similar. On the other hand God tells us that He created the animals, and then another order, man. We may see similarity to ourselves in the monkey, yet we know from the Word that there is a major difference. We can respond to the Creator and the monkey can only respond to his surrounding and needs.

We, as man, have many similarities with the animal world. If you have ever been to the zoo and watched the monkeys you can certainly see some remarkable similarities. We went to the Colorado Springs Zoo years ago and I was especially taken by one large monkey that was sitting on a shelf in the top of his cage all slouched down like I do to watch TV. He wasn't watching TV, but he was sure observing the foolish creatures that were passing by him. His actions, and facial expressions made me feel like he was about to get up and come over to me for a long conversation.

Man may have many similarities however we have one very prominent and distinct dissimilarity. MAN HAS A SPIRITUAL NATURE AND THERE IS NO ANIMAL THAT HAS THIS! WE ARE FORMED IN THE DIVINE IMAGE!

Genesis does not allow for an evolution for Adam. He was created complete and mature. The fact that Adam was created mature is indicated by the following: 1. No pacifier, formula or diapers are mentioned. 2. He was told to tend the garden. This would require mature motor skills to operate in such a manner. 3. He spoke with God, thus he had speech skills. By the way how do you suppose he felt the moment that he became conscious? Did God create him with memories? Did Adam have a knowledge of God built in? Did he come with completed memory banks concerning gardening and family life?

God created Adam as an adult, and as a complete being in all respects. There were no recalls on the defective model!

One question that has come to many minds is, "When did God create?" There are many theories and ideas. Mr. Usher has a system of dating that appears in some Bibles, but most feel that he is probably quite a way off.

We don't really know when creation took place. There is a feeling that is fairly general today that creation would have been four to 6,000 years before Christ.

Usher used the genealogies of the Old Testament to figure out his dating system. Part of the problem of using the genealogies in the Old Testament is that there may be several generations between names of which we are not aware. There is indication, according to those that study genealogies that the term begat in the Old Testament may well refer to decent of families rather than a direct offspring.

Even in the time of the prophets there is some guess work involved in assembling a chronology and set of dates. Some of the kings dates are given in different ways and authorities differ some on dates even in that period.

There is no real way of dating the creation. Indeed, I see little value in knowing, for the evolutionist would not believe it even if we could prove that it was Feb. 29th 5500 B.C.

When it comes to creation there are some that believe there was a long period of time between creation and the time of the Patriarchs, because of the vast number of cultures and civilizations that we have in history. This is not necessarily so. If we remember at the Tower of Babel, things were a bit disturbed. The nations would have come from the language problem which God created. The cultures also would have come from the people scattering and beginning again.

It is easy to see that man of all cultures and civilizations are descended from one source, and that source Noah, or ultimately Adam. In fact in the late 80's scientists decided that all of mankind was descended from a woman they called EVE! This common ancestry of man is called the unity of man.

Pardington has a section on the unity of man that I would like to adapt for you (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE

STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE''; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 140-141). He views the unity of the race from four aspects:

From History: History seems to indicate that there was a common ancestry for all races, centered in Central Asia.

From Language: There is evidence that all major languages come from one original language. The lesser languages could certainly flow from that one original language as well.

From Psychology: There is a commonness to all races in the mind games that we play. We all have a concept of right and wrong, though it varies from race to race. The mental capacities are similar to all races, at the same level of maturation. Many of the myths of the races indicate a common origin as well.

From Physiology: Man, no matter the race has a similar physiology. The heart rate is similar, any race can mate with any other, and the average temperature is similar. All races are susceptible to all diseases.

The Bible tells us what happened and we can by faith accept it. Man on the other hand, in his lost state, does not want to accept anything that the Bible has to say, so usually allows himself to create new and better theories that are based on very little evidence, truth or knowledge.

I trust that if you have any doubts in the area of the creation, that you will simply accept, by faith, the Scriptural account. I have always said, that it would take more faith to hold to evolution, that it does to accept creationism.

04050

MATERIAL MAN

I would like to look at some introductory information before we move into the makeup of material man. Before we look at man, we need to consider his creation.

There are many theories of the creation, indeed most civilizations seem to have their own view of the creation. They vary from a struggle between earth and water producing creation, to the struggle of good and evil producing creation. One account even involves a cow. One of the oriental theories of creation involved a being diving into the waters and bringing forth a blob of mud and producing things. A look at an encyclopedia will produce some of these accounts.

Creation according to the Scripture was an act of God. It is a simple statement of what He did. God did not attempt to prove His involvement in creation, He just stated the facts as they are. I will list a few texts that relate to the creation. (Gen. 1:1ff; Matt. 19:4; Rom. 5:12-19; I Cor. 15:45-49; I Tim. 2:13.)

The when of creation is another question. Many believe that there is need of millions of years between now and the original creation.

The philologist [one who studies literature or language] believes that it takes ages to develop languages into the forms that we have and would call for more time. They reject the thought however, that Adam communicated with God immediately in the garden. They also reject the Genesis account of the languages stemming from the tower of Babel. (Gen. 11)

Polygenism holds that each distinct species of man came about from separate creations. I suspicion that the Arian nation movement would believe in this. Some of them believe that they were a creation of God that was separate from all other races, and that they were the superior "God blessed" nation.

Pre-adamitism holds that man existed before Adam. Adam was the head of only a specific group of peoples. This allows for the giants of David's time and of Moses time.

Bishop Ussher set down and worked through the Old Testament genealogies and arrived at a dating system for the Old Testament. His system appeared in the margin of many Bibles in the past. His dating system is not widely held today. Chafer deals quite well with the information concerning Bishop Ussher's dating. (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.)

Many feel that there should be several thousand years added to the date of Bishop Ussher. The extra one to three thousand years set forth by some today allows for some of the scientific facts and is not detrimental to the Biblical records.

It doesn't really matter how old the earth is as long as it's only a few thousand years. The problem arises when it is asked that the creative act be set millions of years in the past.

There are some scientists which demand millions of years for the formation of parts of the earth however they forget that Adam was created a mature man - with age. Is it not also likely that God would create a mature earth? That is, an earth that appears to have age. This would include the fossils etc.

The theory of evolution was laid to rest many years ago by Biblical scholars. Mr. Carl Sagan decided to make some dollars and dug up all the old ideas and brushed them off, made them presentable, and now we are covering the same territory. Many good books on the subject are available.

Why didn't God specify the year in which He created Adam? He gives great detail in other areas of history - Ezra and Nehemiah kept good records - the genealogies of the patriarchs and prior men of God. Why not "In the beginning, in the year of Adam 6031 BC, in the 7th month, and the 2nd day, God created."? Well, maybe we should

make that the 1st month and 1st day. Why didn't God let us in on the date? We don't really know.

If both Evolution and Creationism have to be accepted by faith then why not accept by faith, the Word of a God that promises to do wonderful things for you, rather than to accept by faith the word of a theory that is going to make you the knee jerk response of nature?

How do we use this in everyday life? Almighty God was DIRECTLY involved in making mankind. If God was interested enough to create man then He must have a very high level of interest in mankind.

God's interest is illustrated by Allan Knight Chalmers. "There is a striking word picture in Middleton Murry's 'Jesus Man of Genius'. It pictures the lonely God at the end of a long corridor behind a great curtain waiting for man to come near enough so that God could speak to him. In beautiful prose the author makes you feel the awful tension of man's footsteps sounding hollowly on the bare floor of the echoing corridor as man dares a little further toward the deepening gloom of the corridor's end. Time and again God's aching heart longed for man to pass the curtain that the Word might be spoken, but always there was fear before the end and the sound of retreating footsteps until Jesus came. He, daring to pass the veil, let the lonely heart of God find rest." (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 318)

A God so vitally interested in mankind that He created, that He sent His only Son - THAT IS A GOD THAT IS WORTH COMMUNICATING WITH!!!

I have to wonder if the Lord isn't still in this straight of waiting and waiting for his children to come to talk? He removed the fear, for we can go boldly before Him, yet many so seldom do. Heb. 4:16, "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace. . . ." Prayer is so rich - free - yet we fail to do it. It is free, it causes no rash, it has no calories, it won't tarnish or rust, it causes no stains, and yet we won't meet with God.

One final line of thinking. In Gen. 2:8 it mentions "man whom he had formed." God formed man. No one would argue that the birds are

considerably less impressive than man, as life forms go. (Matt 6:26 agrees that man is more important. God tells us the birds are fed by Him. Matt. 10:31 states we are "of more value than many sparrows." Verse 28 tells us not to fear those that do ill to us. God knows when a sparrow falls, 10:29.) If God is interested in the birds, then He must have a much greater interest in man. God must care for man greatly - He cares more for us than sparrows, yet feeds and keeps track of the birds. We have a great value before Him.

We have heard of self-worth, of self-image etc. Our only value is not in what we see in us, or what others see in us, but in the value that we have before God. Many today are in trouble because they look to others for value, when they ought to be looking to their creator.

At the same time God the Son was helping in the creation of man He knew, He one day would have to go through the agony of the cross for Adam and his seed. That is love, to create the cause of your future agony! God the Father knew of the cost to Himself in giving His son for a race of sinners.

One must know that the purposes of God in creating man were of supreme importance - else why submit to the cost involved? Then to top it off He has to seek and save the lost, because man turned against Him. Even after He has saved them, He must then use the tools of conviction, chastisement etc. to keep the believer on an even walk with Him. Why does He do it? LOVE!

MATERIAL MAN EXAMINED

Man's body houses his soul and spirit while alive. When his body dies and is planted in the ground it becomes the seed for his glorified - eternal body. No, I can't explain it, but we need to consider some of the possible questions related to man's material make up.

Gen. 2:7 tells us, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Man was created from the dust of the earth; there was something missing. God completed the work by breathing in the breath of life.

When God breathed in the breath of life was the life for an endless existence? From all indications there was some idea in God's mind of Adam continuing on indefinitely. This is not the same as the eternal life that is provided now.

The life Adam had would have continued on with, had he not sinned, would have resulted in his not having to go through death. We are not told the details of what his existence would have been like had he not sinned. We since the fall, must go through death to come to eternal life (unless the Lord comes first).

Our existence seems to show that God had a purpose in creating man. That purpose is seen in the fact that we are unique from the animals in a number of ways. Speech, soul and spirit. We must however, by His creative act depend upon His creation for continued life. We must consume of the fruit of the dust of the earth to live. ("In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:19)

I read a story some time ago about a parent that had explained this passage to a little child. A few days later the child hollered at the parent and said, "Hey Mom. There is a pile of dust under my bed. I'm not sure if they are coming or going."

WE WILL RETURN TO THE EARTH FROM WHICH WE CAME. You can accumulate all the cash and homes and toys that you want, but you are still going to return to dust.

Chafer mentions that there is a unity between the body and soul - that there is no sense of distinction between the two. Can we agree with that? True the soul is linked to the body, in that the soul is basically contained in the brain, a physical part of the body. I know what he is saying and I'm not sure that I disagree, however I believe that there may be a small sense of a division between the soul and body as people age.

I have read of old people that tell that they are 20 year olds trapped in a worn out body that won't function any more. I have the same sensation at times. I look in the mirror some mornings and can't believe that old man in the mirror is I. I'm still about 20 years old

and going fine on the inside, yet the outside is slowing down. I find that my eyes will not see as well as I remember them working. I find that my fingers are not as good at working with small pieces as they used to. My mind knows how the fingers should function, but the fingers will not function as my mind instructs. I feel that as we age, there may be a sense of division between the soul and body. Indeed, for the believer there seems to be an anticipation of a final division so that the soul can function as it desires without the limitations of the body. Eternity will be great.

Man's body and soul are separable by death, yet we must rejoice in the fact that they will be reunited one day with some minor changes. The new body will be a much improved model that won't wear out! II Cor. 4:16 may sum up what I've been trying to say. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The outward is perishing while the inward is continuing!

Adam's material body seems to have been subject to death on the long term basis, otherwise there would have been no need for the tree of life. The tree of life will be in the eternal state as well, which brings some to think that the glorified body will be similar to Adams pre-fall body. (Rev. 22:2 mentions the tree of life in the eternal state.) We will look at this a little later in this section.

By the nature of our bodies they are constantly rejuvenating. They add new cells as the old are lost. There is some indication that this process of rejuvenation is slowed and hindered by the ageing process.

THE FACT WE MUST FACE IS THAT DEATH IS ALWAYS THE WINNER IN THE CONFLICT in this fallen state of man. The glory is that every person's body will be raised one day. Both the lost and the saved have eternal existence from the point of conception. (Jn 5:26-29; Acts 24:15.)

We are told a little about the believers glorified body but we are not told of the lost persons eternal condition. We know that they will be in torment and much of that sort of thing, but not much of the physical make up of things. It may be that the lost person's eternal body will be similar in nature to the glorified body of the believer. We do not know.

The old body as we have mentioned is a seed for the new body. As the grain of seed goes into the soil to rot and spring forth in new life, so our body is planted and rots to spring forth one day unto new form.

A question that often arises in this context is this, "Is it wrong for a believer to be cremated?" There are some that believe that it is, and that the Old Testament shows this to be true. They base this on the idea that destruction and judgment in the Old Testament are often by fire.

The problem with this is the fact that believers have died in house fires. Believers have been dismembered with limbs left in foreign countries etc. Sailors are buried at sea and their bodies are completely assimilated by the ocean. If cremation is wrong then there are many that are in trouble with their Lord because of circumstances beyond their control. (Those being burned to death in house fires, etc.)

God can bring forth ALL bodies no matter where they are, no matter how badly they have decayed, or no matter how they were buried.

MATERIAL MAN AND REDEMPTION

The body soul and spirit are all involved in the wonderful redemption that God has provided for us! I Cor. 15:42 and following mentions the following contrast in relation to our bodies.

sown in corruption	raised in incorruption
sown in dishonor	raised in glory
sown in weakness	raised in power
sown a natural body	raised a spiritual body

Sown as Paul uses it has to do with burial, yet is better than the term bury for bury has a finality to it that sown does not have. Sown has the idea carried with it of new life coming forth, while buried seems to have the idea of finality.

Another term that the New Testament mentions in relation to death is sleep. This again shows an idea of something that is non permanent. The sleeping, awaken. When believers die they are not permanently

out of business! We will again have existence, indeed we never cease to exist, only change plains of existence.

The rapture is the changing point for the believer. If he is dead the Lord will resurrect his body and unite body, soul and spirit. If the believer is alive then they will be changed. The how of that change is unknown to us. Whether there is just an instant change of the body or whether the person dies and is instantly changed is not clear. I personally would opt for just an instant change, and not passing through death.

Chafer seems to hold to this view as well, as he mentions that the living at the rapture will have immortality. He is very specific that only those living at the rapture will have this quality.

There are a couple of terms for us to consider in relation to man and sin.

MEDIATE SIN is the idea that we receive the sin nature from Adam through generation, or at birth. This speaks of the sin nature that we have when we are conceived. It is that natural bent toward sin and wrong.

IMMEDIATE when used in relation to sin is that we all were placed under the curse of death when Adam sinned. We were in his loins. Heb 7:9-10 may help you with this idea. We were under the curse of death, but we will die at a later time.

INTERMEDIATE BODY: Chafer presents a doctrine that might be fun for you to toy around with. He mentions that God will provide us after death with an intermediate body. This body will serve us until our soul and spirit are united with our bodies.

I am not sure that the text he uses to prove this really proves this, but it might make for a good study for you some evening when you don't have anything to do. I have some things that I would want answered before accepting this teaching. He suggests II Cor. 5:1-8.

Some thoughts that relate:

1. If, when we die God gives us a temporary body to dwell in in the heavenlies, why wouldn't God just resurrect the old one instead of creating a temporary one. There needs to be an act of God either way, so why create a temporary one now and then resurrect one later and dispose of the temporary? This does not seem to be the action of a logical God.

2. There is no reason for us to need a temporary body in particular. Chafer mentions that we will be uncomfortable as disembodied spirits and will desire a body. I cannot speak to the comfort or discomfort of a disembodied spirit, as yet, but since we are spirit beings in the afterlife, the need for a body - material - seems illogical. (I will mention that the spirits that Christ cast out of the demonic possessed man, sought embodiment in the swine, thus possibly indicating that spirits seek embodiment.)

3. What will happen to all those intermediate bodies that are no longer needed?

4. In relation to his proof text: It would be easier to interpret the passage along the lines that we are in this life, naked in comparison to our future heavenly body. Or this may mean that we will never be naked once the heavenly is put on, as Lenski mentions. This groaning would be concerning our strong desire for our heavenly body. To say that we are groaning over the possibility of being naked, or to say that there is an intermediate body, is to read much into the text!

Lenski views the nakedness as mentioned previously, and sees the body as the earthly and the glorified body as the heavenly. He mentions "heavenly life" in reference to the building from God. (Lenski, R.C.H.; "THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS"; Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, pp 1000ff)

5. If there is an intermediate body, when Paul is speaking of the physical body being the seed for the heavenly, was he speaking of the heavenly intermediate, or the heavenly glorified? The intermediate body idea seems to be a cumbersome doctrine to hold.

6. God is a spirit and needs no body. Why would we "have" to have a body?

Chafer states that man is "Related in two directions - to substance and to spirit existence." He mentions this in the context of creation. God formed the body of material items, then breathed in the spiritual part of man. Indeed, we are a combination being. (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.)

Q. What practical thought can we give to this thought that we are literally both physical and spiritual beings, at this point in our existence?

1. We might consider whether a person can be drawn to one side to the exclusion of the other side. Yes, would have to be the answer. Someone that has allowed alcohol to become a habit is in essence giving himself over to following after the substance side of himself. There will be little if any thought to the spiritual. It normally is that time when the alcoholic gives his mind to the spiritual needs, which he will finally do something about the physical.

2. On the other hand, can a person give themselves over to the spiritual to the exclusion of the substance? Yes. It is not uncommon for ministers and missionaries to give themselves over to the spiritual life and endeavor, so as to refuse themselves relaxation and a time of healing of body and mind.

We might add at this point, that both saved and lost are thusly related to both physical and spiritual. The lost are not as concerned with the spiritual, yet it often comes up in their lives.

By way of practical application you might consider how you approach different situations of life in your ministry. At particular times the believer, as well as the nonbeliever, is totally occupied in one realm or the other. This is not wrong necessarily as we will see, however dwelling in one area too long can be detrimental.

Consider the person in the hospital with a kidney stone. Terrible pain - in a hospital you are reduced to the substance side of existence. Literally, if you have pain and are in the hospital, about all you are

concerned with is the physical aspects of getting out of the place. The emphasis is totally upon physical.

As you approach a person in the hospital how do you want to minister to him. What approach might you want to use to be of benefit to him?

Spiritual things may or may not be of interest at the moment. Be tuned in on what the person is talking about. They will probably let you know if they want to get into spiritual things. Bring them up if you can, but do not push.

A short psalm or thought, and a word of prayer before you leave may be all the spiritual they can stand. Others may want to really fellowship. Be alert to their needs at the present. (If it is a non-believer feel free to push as much as you can, especially if they are in bad shape. It might be your last chance to share Christ with them.)

When we lived in Salem, Oregon, my wife had a friend whose husband had been sick for a long time. He had had surgery and was not expected to live. He asked for me to come for a visit. When I got there, he asked me to pray for him. He was in much pain, but wanted spiritual. I might add that he did not want me hanging around either. After the prayer, he said something to the effect, "Thanks for coming." It was evident from his situation and condition that he did not want to talk about the weather. Others I know of that are in pain aren't all that interested in the spiritual.

How about super saint - the person that spends 26 hours every day doing the Lords work and never takes a break. Again - go softly for you treadeth on thin ice. Any suggestion of slacking off may be taken as "unspiritual." Possibly a good way would be to try and involve the person in some non-spiritual activities, and encourage further involvement. Again - do not get pushy unless you think the problem is serious to health or family.

If you are his leader then consider taking part of his work load away. He may have to work like a horse to keep up with what you have allowed him to take on. A pastor must be careful not to overwork those that are willing to work.

A Biblical thought that suggests that we should not be totally engrossed in spiritual things could be found in the Sabbath of the Old Testament. The person was to work the week and rest on the Sabbath. God set aside a day for resting because He knew it was necessary for man! Just how that relates to the pastor that teaches or preaches three services on Sunday, I am not sure. This is probably why so many pastors take Mondays off.

We have many books out on the subject of "Burnout" and it is a very real problem among Christian leaders. Many have devoted themselves to things of the Lord for so long with no rest, that they usually find that one day the need for rest is overwhelming to the point of them not being able to function properly!

I must warn also that this is not licence to be lazy either!

Chafer tells us "With its incomparable, sublime simplicity, the Word of God declares that God formed man's body from the dust of the ground." (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.)

He lists the elements as follows:

calcium	carbon	chlorine	fluorine
hydrogen	iodine	iron	magnesium
manganese	nitrogen	oxygen	phosphorus
potassium	silicon	sodium	sulphur

If you consider this listing alone, not to think of the intricacies of the eye, ear or nervous system, you must wonder how something so complex and complicated can be so simply stated! Yet with the dust of the earth God CREATED ADAM!

Chafer mentions concerning the body of Adam and Eve: "It became a dying, death-doomed body. The fact that, as it was originally created, it possessed vital organs and was self-sustained as the body is now sustained, indicates that, apart from such protection and support as God may have provided, the original or unfallen body was capable of death. Death was not then inevitable, though it was possible. God

imposed the sentence of death...." (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.)

Q. I believe this to be true but can we put a Biblical basis to it for Dr. Chafer? Gen. 2:16,17 "And the Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." All trees except one was available.

After the fall God was concerned that Adam and Eve would eat of the tree of life. Read Gen. 3:22-24. It seems that the tree of life had something to do with continuing life.

Theissen mentions, "Man, it is implied, was created mortal, but had the privilege of attaining immortality by means of the tree of life." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 257)

Rev. 22:2 in telling of the New Jerusalem states: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bore twelve kinds of fruits...." Rev 22:14 adds some insight for us as well: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life...." There is a close relationship between the child of God and that tree of life.

I feel that we can be assured that Dr. Chafers statement is backed by the texts in Genesis while the Revelation texts indicate that the tree of life may well have to do with the continuing of life in eternity in some way. (There is no need for the believer to have right to it unless it is a part of eternal things.)

Let us consider for a moment our coming glorified body. What qualities will that body have? Since the only information we have concerning a resurrected body is the body of Christ after His resurrection, we need to view what is recorded concerning this. (Phil 3:20,21 tell us that our comparison is correct.) I will just list some topics with references for your continued study.

- 1. Touchable: Matt. 28:9; Luke 24:39ff; Jo. 20:17.**
- 2. Seeable: Matt. 28:10**
- 3. Mobile: He left the grave and went places.**
- 4. Hearable: Matt. 28:9,10**
- 5. Changeable: Mk. 16:12; Luke 24:13ff**
- 6. Disappearable: Luke 24:31**
- 7. Feedable: Luke 24:42,43**
- 8. Transportable: Jo. 20:19**
- 9. Recognizable: They knew who it was. Also Jo. 20:27ff.**

How do we make this doctrine useful for everyday life?

1. As we age, we begin to see the body going down hill. We see the hair loss - the weakening eyes - the lack of ambition - the longer periods of time in bed - etc. God is planning a body that is not plagued by such frailties! We will have an incorruptible body one day to replace this mass of chemicals that is failing us.

2. To the older person this can be a blessing. To the younger it can be a call to patience with the older folks - they are slow in movement - a pain in the neck - but one day so is all of mankind, including the young person.

3. There is hope for the physically handicapped as well. He created me as He wanted me to be, so I should be satisfied with me. Within this context, I might add to the Christian disabled, there is no reason for you to get involved with the self-pity and my rights thinking of the disabled organizations of our day. The disabled and handicapped need to be helped as much as we can, yet their self pity seems to be a bit much.

My father was paralyzed from the waist down from the age of 21 and never once went looking for his rights, nor pity. He functioned as best he could. He did most everything that he wanted to do. He did not wait for people to make ramps, widen doors etc. He just went on with his life, had two children, raised them and enjoyed the life God had given him to the fullest. No, he did not go skiing, but I would guess he would have if he had wanted to.

4. Our body is made by Him for His use, not our own. We should be caring for our bodies.

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IMMATERIAL MAN

The body, soul and spirit of man are generated at the moment of conception. The body being man's environmental, or world consciousness, is the container of the soul which is man's self consciousness (intellect, emotion, and reason), and the spirit, being man's God consciousness.

**BODY - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS
SOUL - SELF CONSCIOUSNESS
SPIRIT - GOD CONSCIOUSNESS**

The Bible tells us that man was made in God's image. In what way are we made in God's image? Are we physically similar to God? No. Is our soul similar to God? Quite possibly. He has intellect, emotion and reason as we do. Is our spirit similar to God? I assume that all spirit beings are similar in some ways.

On the other hand "in the image of God" has some distinct limitations that are apparent. Our spirit being, will not fill the entire universe, nor is our intellect as God's, nor are our emotions as deep as His. We are in His image, yet limited by our finiteness. In our fallen state we are not holy, righteous nor can we have a good understanding of God. God however through redemption allows a certain amount of these things to the believer. (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10)

As a side note to holiness we might consider a question that Chafer raises. Can a person have a habit of holiness before he knows the principle of holiness? Not really. The habit is a consequence of the principle. For example would any of you begin studying for several hours a day if you didn't know why you were doing it or what study was. Probably not.

We should not condemn people for not living holy lives until we know for sure they have the principle in their mind. Indeed, is this not where the lost are today. They do not have the principle of God's holiness so they are not apt to enter into the habit, or life of holiness.

We should understand also that redemption is not a process of God trying to salvage something that Adam's sin destroyed. Redemption is a process of restoration. He is desirous of bringing us to a state that would be the same as Adam's pre-fall condition. This of course is dependant on the righteousness of Christ.

The unsaved man still has the image of his creator. Chafer suggests Gen. 5:1-3 as proof of this. "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth." Adam was in the image of God and Seth was in the image of Adam.

Gen. 9:6 also suggests this thought. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." James 3:9 also is a foundation for this thought. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God."

God's view of the sacredness of life is also carried in these verses. We are created in God's image and this image is not lost. Lost man is in His creator's image.

There are some differences, however now that the fall has come to pass. Our moral likeness is somewhat soiled and lowered, and the lost man's mind is somewhat clouded by sin.

We are encouraged to follow the example of Christ in the New Testament and this will tend to bring us toward the image that God desires for us in this life.

There are three basic theories as to where the immaterial part of man came from.

1. PRE-EXISTENCE: This thought would come from Hinduism in the past, and Theosophy in our own time. I believe that Origin also held to this thought. (Chafer has a good section on this, page 174.) The doctrine of reincarnation is the basis of this thought. Reincarnation tells us that the immaterial part of man is recyclable.

As we die, we are freed to reenter into another body to continue on in this life.

The immaterial part of man has pre-existence in this view. It can enter the body of the child at any time in it's development according to some reincarnationists.

My question is this. Why would anyone that lived this life through once want to go around for a second time? The previous life usually relates to your next life. If you are a really bad person in a life then you usually come back as a bug or some very lowly person. This is why the people of India can walk by a beggar without feeling sorrow or pity. The beggar was probably a murderer in another life. To be caught in a cycle of existence like this would be very depressing to me.

Some older theologians surmised with this theory that in a previous life all of us sinned and that is where the sin nature came from.

The objections to this view are: a. The philosophy totally ignores the Word of God and all that it says on the subject. b. The philosophy totally ignores original sin. c. It ignores the need of proof for validity. They do not have proof.

2. CREATION THEORY: This theory would come from the Eastern Orthodox church of ages past, and I suspect even today. The theory tells us that the parents create the body of the child and that God creates the soul and spirit directly and immediately for each birth. Their thinking is as follows: a. The body is from earth, but the soul is from God, thus the soul can't come from the parent. b. The soul is not material so how could physical parents produce it. c. If Christ is like man and He is, then if the soul and spirit came from the parents, Christ would have a sin nature.

The people holding to this view mention that there are verses that speak of God creating the soul. There are also verses that state He creates bodies, however neither is literal. In the sense that He created all of mankind in Adam and Eve would be true, and He did create souls and bodies in this way.

A couple of things to think about concerning the Creation theory. If man is fallen at birth, and if God creates the soul and spirit, then, God

is creating souls and spirits in the fallen state and they are destined for Hell. This is not a concept that is consistent with the Word. This would place God in the position of creating beings for destruction. Also, it must be then assumed that they did not fall in Adam. This contradicts the clear teaching of the Word.

3. TRADUCIAN THEORY: Most of the western church holds to this concept. The body soul and spirit are generated by the parents at each individual conception.

In the creation of Adam and Eve there was all that was needed for all of mankind present and potential, for production of body, soul, and spirit.

There is one main objection to this thought and that is this: If this is true then Christ would have had a sinful nature. That is a big problem, however there are some answers for this. Some answer this by saying that the sin comes through the male, thus no problem. Others state that the soul of Christ was sanctified by the fact of the conception by the Holy Spirit. Others state that the nature He took from Mary was sanctified before the union with Himself. The Roman Catholics go a step further and say Mary was perfect, and that she gave Him the pure nature. This, however, only puts the problem of a perfect being at the feet of Mary's parents. Mary's soul would have to be perfect to produce a perfect child.

It seems easiest to assume that the fallen nature is transmitted via the father. This was the reason for the virgin birth. With no earthly father involved, there was no possibility of transmission of a sin nature.

If you desire to hold to the traducian theory, it is important to make the distinction of the sin nature coming from the father.

Let's consider Christ's perfect nature for a moment: a. If the traducian theory is correct, in that the entire being is created by the parents, plural, then He would have received the fallen nature. The key is the fact that Christ was a product of God and woman, not man and woman, thus there was no sin nature.

The fact that the sin nature comes from the male is indicated in the Word. Adam chose to sin - he turned against an express command of God while Eve was deceived. We all sinned in "Adam" not in "Adam and Eve". (I Cor. 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;") Thus it must be concluded that the sin nature is transferred to the child via the man side of the union. Why else is there a need for the virgin birth of Christ. No other answer really fits the facts that we have available from Scripture. In Gen. 3:7 both Adam and Eve's eyes opened at the same time to nakedness. This indicates Adam's sin was the clincher, not Eves.

How can you trace the I Cor. 15:22 concept of "we all fell in Adam", if the soul and spirit are created at the point of birth? You can't. Luke 1:41 shows John the Baptist responding to Mary's presence while he was in the womb. "the babe leaped in her womb;" Excuse me if I feel it a bit ridiculous for a mass of flesh and bone responding to something supernatural. Logic would demand that there was some spirit consciousness present that was responding!

Heb 7:9,10 mention the fact that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek because he was in the loins of his father. It takes more than flesh and bones to do this. A body does not pay tithes. A complete being does.

A result of the creation concept is abortion. That mass is not a person until it is outside the mother's body. Logically inferior, thus we can get rid of it with no moral problems. The traducian thought relegates a fetus, of any age, to being a spiritual and physical being fully present and growing, or if you will, in the aging process.

God's creating was finished on the sixth day and it was good. There is no indication that he continues to create each time a baby is brought into the world.

One author suggested that Mary was a surrogate mother. The entire being of Christ was created by God and raised in Mary. To state that the entire being of Christ was placed within Mary for incubation, is to deny the Lord's humanity.

Conclusions concerning our being created in God's image:

1. "Thus, also, G.F. Oehler declares man bears the divine image in view of the facts that (a) human nature is distinguished from that of the beast, for there was no mate for man among lower forms of creation, and man may kill the beast but not the being which is made in the image of God. (b) Man is set over nature as a free personality, since he is designed for communion with God, and is appointed to exercise divine authority in the affairs of earth. . . ." (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.)

2. The following verses indicate some of the areas of similarity between God and the creatures of His image. Matt 5:48; Luke 6:36; I Pet. 1:15,16.

3. Heb. 1:1-3 shows Christ to be the express image of God. Rom. 8:29 shows that we are to be conformed to the image of Christ. Mentally and spiritually we are under reformation, so to speak, to become as Adam was before the fall in these areas.

4. God took the time and effort to create man in His own image. Based on this truth, we are not to kill, nor slander another man. How about the thousands of unborn fetuses that are being destroyed every year by abortion. How about the man that pulls out in front of you from the stop sign? "You dummy" isn't quite the terminology to use, is it.

Every man is cared for, by our creator -- we ought to have a care and love for those people as well. They are created in OUR GOD'S IMAGE even if he rejects our God!

Another question: Is salvation a restoration to the pre-fall condition? Not exactly. We as Christians are not as Adam and Eve were before the fall. Proof: If I ask you all to take your clothes off in a crowd could you do it without knowing that you were naked? No. We are in the post-fallen state. We are partially restored, but we are being conformed to the image of Christ not the image of pre-fall Adam (Rom. 8:29). We have a fallen body as well, for it is dieing (Phil 3:21).

Most theology books raise the question, Are soul, spirit, heart, flesh and mind separate things? They are similar yet separate.

Illustration: My soul can know that something is wrong, my heart may tell me not to do it, but my flesh may go for it anyway. They are separate in their activities.

We have a couple more terms to consider: DICHOTOMIST AND TRICHOTOMIST.

DICHOTOMISTS think that there are two parts to man. There is the material part which is the body, and the immaterial which is the soul and spirit.

TRICHOTOMISTS feel that there are three parts to man. The body, soul and spirit.

Do you see a semantic problem at this point? The dichotomist is speaking material/immaterial while the trichotomist is speaking body/soul/spirit. They are comparing potatoes with Corvettes. The immaterial part is of course the soul and spirit. Naturally when speaking material/immaterial there are two. When you speak of body, soul and spirit there are three.

Most trichotomists would see that the immaterial part was made up of soul and spirit, yet within the one immaterial there are two parts. The dichotomists also deal with the soul and spirit as two items.

There are three texts which the trichotomist presents.

I Cor. 15:44, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

I Thess. 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our lord Jesus Christ."

Heb. 4:12, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

I am not sure that I Cor. 15:44 relates to the study.

In Thessalonians it is a simple statement that Paul is trusting that all three would be preserved. Indeed, it probably is an emphasis to say, I trust, that you will be wholly preserved. It does state that there are three items!

The construction of the Hebrew's text shows that the two are separate items. The contrast of joints and marrow would indicate soul and spirit are two items. This still does not say that the two are not parts of the immaterial man. They are different, but both immaterial.

To sum up this confusion may we say that when talking about material/immaterial we are dichotomists. When we are talking about body/soul/spirit we are trichotomists.

I HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT! If you are a trichotomist then you believe that there are two parts of man - material and immaterial thus you are a dichotomist. If you are a dichotomist then you believe that there are three parts to man - body, soul and spirit, thus you are a trichotomist. HA!

ON THE SERIOUS SIDE!

There are two parts of man - material and immaterial. There are three main aspects to man - body, soul and spirit. The soul and spirit are in the immaterial part of man.

Let's think about the body, soul and spirit for a few moments. What is the body? It is chemicals. It is conscious to it's environment. It is a vehicle for our soul and spirit. It is in a process of decay. It is our contact with other believers.

What is the soul? It is our self consciousness. It is our memories. It is our ego. It is our emotions. It is our reasoning. It has been put this way:

**INTELLECT
SENSIBILITY
WILL**

**THE SOUL KNOWING
THE SOUL FEELING
THE SOUL CHOOSING**

**CONSCIENCE
MEMORY**

**THE SOUL JUDGING
THE SOUL REFLECTING**

We might illustrate this. A student knows via his intellect that it is wrong to bribe a teacher, especially with M&M's. He feels through his sensibility that he should not, but knows that he needs to, to get his grade up. He uses his will to choose to bribe the teacher and determine whether to get a package of plain, peanut or almond M&M's. He goes to the store and picks up a bag of M&M's and bribes the teacher. Naturally, immediately he feels bad because his conscience has said, "Hey you perverse person that was wrong." He sets all of this out of his mind for the day and goes on with his studies. The next day his memory brings what he has done to mind, and he feels bad again, so gives the teacher another bag of M&M's to make amends.

When speaking of the conscience we need to realize that the lost and the saved have a different type of conscience. I will list these for your further study.

THE LOST	Defiled	Titus 1:15
	Evil	Heb. 10:22
	Convicting	Jn 8:9
	Seared	I Tim 4:2
THE SAVED	Purged	Heb. 10:1,2
	Good	I Pet. 3:16
	Witnesses	Rom. 9:1
	Wounded	I Cor. 8:12

We might make mention here that the mind has two directions of flow. It can serve the Spirit or it can serve the flesh. It is the will that determines which.

To recap:

**THE SOUL
THE BODY
THE SPIRIT**

**SELF CONSCIOUSNESS
WORLD CONSCIOUSNESS
GOD CONSCIOUSNESS**

The body is the flesh and bone that moves and ultimately dies returning to the ground from which it came.

The soul is the part of man that thinks, remembers, feels and decides.

The spirit is the part of us that allows us to be conscious of God. Through it we can respond to our creator.

INTELLECT is the capacity to think. Eph. 1:17-18 states, "...the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;". The term for understanding is "kardia" or heart. Paul seems to think that understandings seat is in the heart which is usually accepted as the seat of the emotions as well.

The term heart is used 600 times in the Old Testament and 120 times in the New Testament. Anyone for a research paper?

SENSIBILITY is an ".....awareness of and responsiveness toward something....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.) In short, if we can see someone and respond to them we have the quality of sensibility.

WILL is defined by Chafer as follows: "Will is the soul's power to choose between motives and to direct its subsequent activity according to the motive thus chosen...." (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.)

We have mentioned flesh and should probably look at the term briefly.

- 1. It can relate to the material part of man. The meat and skin.**
- 2. It can relate to the human relationships and classifications. Both the meat and the immaterial part of man.**
- 3. It can relate to the immaterial part of man. Only the moral and ethical meaning involved.**

The body, as in the meat, is not ethically good or bad. The immaterial aspect of the flesh is bad. It opposes God and all right things of life. A related term is "carnal" which describes a believer that is living in, or is dominated by the flesh.

Victory can be had over the flesh. A couple of verses for your future reference on this are Rom. 8:2-4 and Gal. 5:16-17. We won't spend time on this right now.

APPLICATION:

The soul of man consists of the intellect, man's knowing; Sensibility, man's feeling; will, man's choosing; conscience, man's judging. These make up life for man.

1. The soul is quite intricate in its make up. God has given man all the facilities by which to respond to God in a positive manner.

Anyone choosing to reject Christ when he hears the Gospel certainly condemns himself.

Intellect is knowing of the Savior.

Sensibility is feeling the need of a Savior - feeling the heaviness of sin.

Will is making the choice to accept Him as Savior.

Conscience, if the person is saved, it becomes your guide to the Christian walk; if the person is lost, it becomes seared.

2. How does the knowledge gained in this study apply to James 1:14-15? "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Intellect: Soul knowing - temptation

Sensibility: Soul feeling - lust

Will: Soul making a choice - sin

Conscience: Soul judging

Note that the way to holiness is the same as to sin. The difference hinges on your decision of the will. It is just as easy to be holy as it is to sin.

3. Ps. 62:5-8 mentions, "My soul, wait thou only upon God;" The Psalmist seems to be addressing his soul. "Wait" ONLY upon God.

Your intellect - only thinking of God.

Your sensibility - feeling and sensing only God.

Your will - only deciding toward God.

Your conscience - always clear before God.

WOW! "My expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be Moved."

If your soul is centered on God you will not be moved!

The intellect and sensibility, however both need to be upon God, else Mr. Will may stray!

4. I am responsible for all my actions.

5. I am body soul and spirit, and need to control all of them.

6. The immaterial man comes from God and only He can satisfy the spiritual hunger within. We are very complex beings, and only the Word can help us understand ourselves.

I trust that this section will be the stepping stone to the readers further study in this area. It should be a beginning point in understanding yourself and your relationship to your Creator.

04150

MAN IN INNOCENCE

THE BEFORE, or the state of innocence.

INTRODUCTION: We have some friends that had two little boys. The oldest was out of diapers awhile and the younger was in training pants. The youngest had wet his pants and mom was doing her thing to try and train him. "Why did you wet your pants?" "No mom, he did it," referring to his older brother!" **WE ARE ALWAYS INNOCENT AREN'T WE FOLKS!**

THE STATE OF INNOCENCE-THE ENVIRONMENT:

Since we all know that the environment that we are raised in molds and shapes our thinking, and since we know that a poor environment tends to bring about wrong actions, decisions and attitudes in man, we can thus assume that the wrong actions of Adam were caused by the terrible conditions of the environment that God placed him in - namely, the garden of Eden. **NO!**

It is true that environment tends to bring about wrong behavior in lost man. In fact some judges operate on the principle that the environment can make a person into a criminal, thus the crime is not wrong. None of this relates to Adam, however for we know that the Garden was good and that the behavior of Adam was out of his own desire to go against what God had told him.

By the way, I recently saw the front page of a tabloid which declared that the Garden of Eden had been found. It was south of Denver, CO in case you want to see it. The paper also mentioned that they had found the remains of Adam and Eve. Amazing what man is doing these days! Sarcasm intended!

What do we know of Adam before the fall:

ADAM'S ENVIRONMENT: New heaven, new earth, and new wife. The garden was full of fruit trees. All trees were for their food except one. Result of eating from the one would result in knowing good and

evil. Nakedness didn't bother Adam and Eve. Had dominion over creatures. He was created in God's image. God blessed them (Gen. 1:28). Told to multiply and fill the earth (1:28). Told to subdue the earth (1:28). All of creation including man and woman were viewed as good in God's mind (1:3). Adam was to till and keep the garden (2:1). He had no sin. Evidently he had not been tempted. He had the possibility of continuing on in that state indefinitely. Obedience was the key. NOT A BAD ENVIRONMENT!

God set Adam in the perfect environment and things went sour. Adam chose to disobey, and was no longer innocent!

God was somewhat specific when He told Adam about the prohibitions. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." I suppose that God could have made it plainer, but I'm not sure how.

So why is man that way? If you tell them not to do something they have to do it just because it was forbidden. How come and why for? Even Christians do it. The state says 55 mph and many Christians have to do 60 mph.

God tells us lying is wrong, yet many Christians lie on a regular basis. They call it stretching the truth, or just not giving all the information but it is lying.

I think that mostly the answer is that man is self-centered to the end. We want to do what WE want to do! Along with self-centeredness there are many side effects that manifest themselves. I have to be right. I want to look good to others. I want to be a big name. I want - you fill in the blank. All stem from our total self-centeredness - God can cure this if we allow Him the possibility.

God told Adam what He wanted and expected, but Adam went his own direction. God makes His will plain to all believers for their lives, but I fear many are going their own directions instead.

When it comes to God's will in general - the things that the Word tells us concerning right and wrong - we as humans usually concentrate on the CAN'T DO'S INSTEAD OF THE CAN DO'S!

While teaching in a Bible Institute, it was very evident to me that the don'ts of the student handbook were the prime emphasis of dislike, conversation, and gripping. There were worlds of freedoms allowed the students, yet the don'ts were the supreme threat to their SELF!

It again, is the way of man. Even in economic things when we are short of cash, we dwell on what we can't do. I can't go to town to pick up that new pair of shoes that I NEED! You could dwell on the fact that there are many things that are fun around town that you can do.

There are negative aspects to the will of God as it is presented in the Word, yet on the whole His will is positive for His children.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADAM:

God told Adam to tend the garden. That indicates WORK and that should be plugged into your memory banks. God expected man to work EVEN WHEN MAN WAS IN THE STATE OF INNOCENCE! Work is not a dirty word unless you are a gardener! We are to work in this life.

Chafer mentions that moral qualities can be active and passive. Adams moral qualities were not active before the fall. He had not needed to use them until the temptation. The fall called his moral qualities into question and into the activity. Our own moral qualities are passive when we are not faced with temptations, but they become active quickly.

Adam was mature so that he was without excuse in what he did. God held him responsible for his activity. God transmitted His will to Adam verbally while He transmits it to us through the Word.

Both Adam and we have the same situation. God told us things not to do and things we could do. It is our own choice between the two that gets us into trouble.

Some hold that the story of the fall is only a myth, while others see a realty mixed with allegory. We of course hold that this is an actual account of an actual event in the life of a real, literal man named Adam.

We might make brief mention of allegorical interpretation at this point. We will look at it in more detail in Eschatology. It is a "Symbolic representation of the truth" according to the Dictionary of Religious terms. (Kaufman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company; 1967)

It is similar to a dump truck full of dirt. The truck would be the vehicle, or carrier of the real load, the dirt. The verses in the Bible are the vehicle, or story, or myth, that carry a deeper truth than the story presents. In short, you read a verse and throw it away when you find out what the real truth was.

The problem with this method of interpretation is that Allegorical interpretation can have as many "truths" as you have interpreters.

So, how do we know that this account of Adam and the fall are not just myths and fables?

a. The rest of scripture treats the occurrence as fact and true. Matt. 19:4-5; Ex. 20:11; I Chr. 1:1; Ps. 8:3-6; Mk. 10:6-7; Lu. 3:38; Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 11:9; 15:21-22; 15:45-47; I Tim. 2:13-14; Jude. 14.

b. The Genesis account reads as if it is an account of history. There is no indication that it is a collection of myths or stories.

c. The Jews held to the account as being literal. II Esdras 3:4-7; 7:48; Wisdom 2:24; 10:1; Ecclesiasticus 17:1.

d. Christ held it as literal and true. Matt. 19:4-5, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning, made them male and female; And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh?" Christ quoted Gen. 2:24 and this would show that he held that the creation account was a real occurrence.

e. It would cause some real problems with some of Paul's theology if there was no real literal Adam and Eve! See Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:21-22; I Cor. 15:45-47; I Tim. 2:9ff.

f. Archaeologists have recovered two seals that depict the temptation scene. They were discovered in the 1930's near Nineveh. Even history seems to bear out the Genesis account.

THE TEMPTATION OF ADAM AND EVE:

The temptation is not contradictory to what we know from the Scriptures that we have concerning Satan. It is well within his method of operation.

It was undoubtedly aimed at thwarting God's plan. All through Scripture it can be seen that the Devil is constantly striving to trip the Lord up. Naturally it is the Devil that keeps getting tripped up!

The thought of someone acting independently from God and God's desires is not new with Adam. The Devil had a good hand at it before Adam even considered it.

One is left to ponder the question of why did Adam decide to sin? Some suggestions might come to mind.

a. Covetousness. Not hardly. He had the run of the garden, that is unless he wanted to kick God the owner out, and build condos. No, there were no camaros, stereos, tvs, vcrs etc., so doubt that covetousness was involved.

b. Sexual immorality. Hardly. He had the only woman on earth!

c. Repudiation of God. Repudiation is to refuse to have dealings with someone, or the rejection of someone or something due to a belief that the person or truth is untrue. I don't think that Adam had in mind refusing God or rejecting Him, only disobeying Him.

A rejection of what God wanted him to do is the simplest explanation. The Devil tried to be like God we are told in Isa. 14:14, "...like the most high...". He talked Eve into the same concept. "...ye shall be as God..." Gen. 3:5

It kind of reminds me of a little kid that has done something wrong and knows that he will be caught. He naturally tries to entice someone else into the same trouble. Misery loves company!

There were three forms of death involved in the sin of Adam and his punishment.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. SPIRITUAL | IMMEDIATE |
| b. PHYSICAL
DIEING | BECAME MORTAL AND |
| c. ETERNAL
THEY DIED | AT ONCE SUBJECT TO IT WHEN |

We won't cover these in any detail, because they come up later on in our study.

We might notice that the subject of the fruit did not bother Adam and Eve until the Devil came around. Might we dare apply this to the subject of regulations? Usually rules don't bother people until they are tempted to break them. Oft times in my early college days I noticed that there were no problems until someone began to complain about something. Then others would begin to think about it and the commiseration usually lead to trouble.

Keep the devil away and don't listen, be it he in person, or be it he in the tongue of someone that is disgruntled.

The devil wanted to be more than he was, or to be more than God. In a very real sense this is the sin of covetousness. He wanted more than he had. As we view our lives may we be careful not to fall into this trap of desiring to be someone we aren't, or to be better than someone else.

God made you according to the specifications that He wanted, so that you could serve Him as only YOU can serve Him. You may run into someone that is a much better preacher than you are. You may run into someone that is a much better singer than you are. You may run into someone that has more hair than you do. You may run into someone that has _____ than you do.

REMEMBER THAT GOD MADE YOU THE WAY HE WANTED YOU! He does not want you to preach like the other person! He does not want you to sing like the other person! He does not want you to have more hair than you have!

Think of the glory that would be Satan's now had he left well enough alone!

APPLICATION:

God set Adam and Eve in the perfect environment, yet they sinned. Now, as you live life and you find yourself in different situations, don't assume that you will not sin. You will if your will finds the proper conditions in your being. Watch your situations. Keep them as safe as is possible. Don't allow yourself to enter into situations that give rise to improper thoughts and/or acts.

As we view God's don'ts we need to realize that His will is positive even though there are negatives with in it. His will is positive and we have no need to fear it.

It is Satan that tempts, but it is we who must choose to sin. He does not have the capacity to force us to sin. He can only set up the situation where we want to sin.

May we appreciate the Spirit's work within us to teach us and instruct us on the ways of god? He is that which every believer has, that allows them the freedom to say no to sin.

04200

MAN'S FALL

Man was placed in the garden to serve God and to fellowship with God. He was given the run of things, with only one exception. Do not eat of the fruit of the tree of life.

He decided that this was an option rather than a command, and ate of the forbidden fruit. There was a drastic change in his relationship with God and we call that change of relationship the fall of man.

Before we move on, I might mention that there is an appendix that you might find of interest. I have toyed with the question of where the Garden of Eden was for many years. I think I mentioned in a previous section that the tabloids feel that it is south of Denver, Colorado, but I believe that there may be some evidence that might strongly indicate that it was in the area of Jerusalem. I have included this study for your interest and thought.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SATAN AND MAN AFTER THE FALL

UNDER HIS BLINDING: II Cor. 4:3-4, "But if our gospel be hidden it is hidden to them that are lost, in whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Lost man has no power or understanding to come to God. God is a stranger to lost man. Satan has no desire for the lost person to learn of God nor for him to understand God.

UNDER HIS CONTROL AND LIFE STYLE: Eph. 2:1-2, "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins; In which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience;" The normal life style of the lost is patterned after Satan's ways and means. Lost man seldom desires to live morally, nor properly, though there are those exceptions that desire to come to God under the power of their own works.

UNDER HIS POWER: Col 1:13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;" The verse shows the power of darkness which is the lost man's plight, yet gives the hope of something far better!

UNDER HIS WICKEDNESS: I Jn 5:19, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." This should help us understand why the lost are the way they are. They are in wickedness, so they will **NATURALLY** lie to you about the quality of the product that they desire to sell you. They will **NATURALLY** try to beat you at the stop signs. Understand them, and they should anger you less.

The condition of lost or fallen man is often termed the Total Depravity of man. It is the thought that man is totally corrupt and that he can do nothing to reach God.

Theissen mentions of total depravity, "By depravity we mean man's want of original righteousness and of holy affections toward God, and also the corruption of his moral nature and his bias toward evil."

He continues, "...it does mean, that every sinner is totally destitute of that love to God which is the fundamental requirement of the law...; that he is supremely given to a preference of himself to God (II Tim. 3:4); that he has an aversion to God which on occasion becomes active enmity to Him (Rom. 8:7); that his every faculty is disordered and corrupted (Eph. 4:18); that he has no thought, feeling, or deed of which God can fully approve (Rom. 7:18)." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, pp, 267-268)

Now that is a real statement of a condition that is not desirable, yet is the state of all lost people. Is it any wonder that they try to cheat us? Indeed, it is a wonder that the world is as it is, and not much worse in the area of morals. I personally feel that the decline of the Church in this country is the direct cause of the increase in moral problems in the lost people. We, the Church have not been the restraint that we ought to be.

God placed before Adam and Eve a simple moral test. In this test was the potential for complete obedience, or complete depravity. This test

was composed of two parts. The command not to eat the fruit in Gen. 2:17, and the temptation by Satan in Gen. 3:1.

God placed this test before Adam and Eve so that they could have the choice between good and evil, and to give them moral experience (James 1:12; I Pet 1:6-7). God does not create beings that must follow Him blindly, but beings that have the moral choice to follow or reject. He gave this choice to the angelic host, and some followed while others rejected.

The Devil used several tactics in his temptation:

1. He planted a question (Gen. 3:1). He asked Eve if God said, "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"
2. He denied God's word (3:4). "Ye shall not surely die;" This might relate to the fact that he is called the father of lies in John 8:44.
3. He attributed evil motives to God (3:5). He indicated that God was covering up something, to keep them from being like God.
4. He promised personal benefit will come with their disobedience (3:5). They would be as God.

They bought the same lie and deception as the fallen angels. He placed himself as knowing as God knows, and proceeded to tell them that they could be like their Creator. What a falsehood. How can a created being be as the creator. How can a Ford car become the same as Henry Ford? Impossible.

He used different avenues to approach them in the temptation. He appealed to the aesthetic, or beauty of things. He also touched their intellect by promising things that were desirable.

There was nothing magical in the fruit, nor were there powers in the juices to give them the knowledge of good and evil. They knew of good and evil when they ate. It was the act of disobedience, rather than the fruit itself.

There were a number of consequences that came with the fall. Man was condemned by his own conscience. He hid in shame and guilt.

Not unlike a small child that knows that they have done wrong. Even some of the animal world reacts to the simple, disobedience/penalty/hide activity. Our little dog began leaving food on the carpet. We began forcing him to eat it. He became very stubborn about eating the SINGLE piece of food. After a few rounds of this confrontation, he would leave the piece on the carpet and go to the bathroom, where we put him for punishment. He knew he had done wrong - he knew we would punish him - so why not get the punishment over with. We as believers, when we sin often attempt to hide from God by failing to have devotions, or quit going to church, etc.

God set penalties for all that were concerned. The serpent was to crawl on the belly and eat dust (3:14,15). Satan was to fall by the seed of the woman (3:15). The woman was to have pain in travail, and she was to be subject to her husband (3:16). The man was to find that the environment would be against him (3:17-19). The man and woman together were to suffer from spiritual and physical death, while being expelled from the garden. Mankind to come also was to suffer, not that they did anything wrong, but that they sinned in Adam. All of mankind would have sinned had we all been in the garden. Mankind is guilty before God (Rom. 5:12,18), and he is totally depraved (Ps. 5:9; Rom. 5:19).

Sin resulted in three types of death. MY HOW SIN MULTIPLIES! There came upon man physical, spiritual and eternal death in one act of disobedience. Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul and spirit from God. Eternal death is the separation of the soul and spirit from God eternally. Indeed, it is more than just separation. It involves eternal torment as well!

This eternal separation and torment are also called the second death in Rev. 20:14; 21:8.

Some might wonder what the difference is between spiritual death and eternal death? The basic difference is the length of time. The spiritual death is in this life (a period of years), while eternal death is for all of eternity. The spiritual death becomes eternal death at the point of physical death. There is little difference between spiritual and eternal, for spiritual becomes eternal. The distinction is that

spiritual death may be overcome in this life via salvation, while eternal death is permanent and cannot be overcome in the next life. Spiritual death would portray the person's condition in this life while eternal death would picture his condition in the next life.

The difference is in Adam and Eve. They at the point of sin suffered three deaths. Physical in that they began to die, spiritual in that they became dead spiritually, and eternal, in that, at that point they were facing eternity without God.

What is physical death to the body? A slow process of disintegration that begins at conception. Everything is downhill from that point on. We tend to think of aging as beginning at the point of birth, but actually we are dying from the moment of conception. It is all part of the maturing, and aging process.

Part of the post-fall condition is the conflict between what God wants and what man wants. I Jn. 2:16 shows an overview of the life of man in his natural habitat so to speak.

Chafer relates the Genesis text to John's exposition on evil. This is a very good comparison. Take time to relate Gen. 2:15-17 to the three points of I Jn 2:16.

LUST OF THE FLESH would cover such things as physical appetites and desires that we allow to rule our lives. This is a real problem to the believer in this day. We are bombarded by sex and its by-products on a daily basis. A number of years ago the family and I were driving in the mountains west of Denver. We had been gone from the city for most of the day. We were just coming down out of the foothills and a huge billboard of a young woman in a skimpy bathing suit was right in front of us. It dawned on me that we had gone all day with nothing of this sort to deal with. I was shocked to realize how much of this sort of thing we saw every day.

How can we combat this sort of thing? Avoid sources of enticing pictures and thoughts. If you watch some of the television today you will be constantly exposed to it. Shut it off. Keep your mind on spiritual things and pursuits. Have other believers over for fellowship. Do I dare suggest you have lost people over for witnessing?

Believers have been hardened to the trash and sleese that has been given to us on the Television screen. I talk with believers that allow Satan to fill their minds with this slime on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis. How can you fill your mind with sex, immorality, lying, cheating and the like several hours a day and expect to overcome the effect in a couple of hours in church on Sunday? You are asking the impossible.

LUST OF THE EYE would cover all that we see that we covet and desire. This may lead to lust of the flesh in some areas. We are constantly confronted with this as well. If you go to the mall to walk around you can find all sorts of things that "I WANT!"

While shopping with my wife, I spotted a real neat portable stereo. I called her over by saying that I wanted her to see something I needed. As she inspected the stereo she commented, "You need!" I said, Yes, I NEED it to satisfy my coveteousness!"

PRIDE OF LIFE would relate to the thought of being proud of our way of life, or who we are, or what we are. I believe that Chafer refers this to an unholy love of pre-eminence. That sums it up well. We desire to be at the pentacle of focus, all eyes upon us, and what we are. This is not a good attitude to say the least.

We might see this in many ways in our lives. In being proud of whose church we go to, in being proud of our education. In being proud of what school we went to. In who designed our clothes (Halston, Calvin Klien etc.).

How do we as Christian leaders live our lives so that these things are not a hindrance to our lives and testimonies? Beware of our off time activities. Don't do anything that will endanger our testimony. Attempt to be satisfied with what God has given us. He promises to provide our needs - not our wants (Matt. 6:33). Control all of lifes situations so that you are never placed in a position where lust can take root in your life as action. Be aware that you may be lonely in this type of life.

We met a woman in Nebraska that was trying her best to live by faith and as she was doing it she was observing that no body in the church

was living the way she was. Indeed, the church tended to not associate with her because of her frugality in life style. Her living by faith extended into all areas of her life and she was very frustrated that no one else was living as the scripture commands us. **BE SURE YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE AS UNTO THE LORD AND DON'T SWEAT THE OTHER GUYS!**

The walk in these three areas, is typical of mankind's natural bent toward evil and away from God.

It is of interest that Humanism is perpetuating these thoughts in the philosophy that it teaches. Humanism tells us that man is all there is, and what man can do is all that can be done. We as man can make our own way - we can do as we feel we want to do. There is no authority except that which you are to yourself. If you desire a woman it is okay. If you desire to steal it is okay. You can do no wrong because you make the rules.

The ultimate to this thought is that each one has whatever rights he determines himself to have.

NATURALLY GOD HAS NO PLACE IN THIS SYSTEM OF THOUGHT WHICH BY THE WAY IS ACTUALLY A RELIGION IN ALL SENSES OF THE WORD.

James 1:14-15, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Let's chart that and consider it.

INTELLECT	the soul knowing	TEMPTATION
SENSIBILITY	the soul feeling	LUST
WILL	the soul choosing	SIN
CONSCIENCE	the soul judging	GUILT
MEMORY	the soul reflecting	SORROW

That could just as easily be a chart that looks like this:

INTELLECT	the soul knowing	TEMPTATION
SENSIBILITY	the soul feeling	LUST

WILL	the soul choosing	PROPER ACTION
CONSCIENCE	the soul judging	PEACE
MEMORY	the soul reflecting	JOY

This is the same process that all of mankind has gone through in their sin. Adam was tempted - he desired - he sinned. The way to holiness is the same for that to sin. The will is the determinate factor.

Adam and Eve become sinners by sinning, while we become sinners by conception, but we all go through the same process of look, desire, lust, and action.

Some feel that man, in his lost state can present some holiness, however the total depravity of man contradicts that thought. The lost man has no hope of finding help for himself and is totally reliant upon the Lord to intervene. He is not depraved because he thinks so, but because God says so. It is the estimation of God that total depravity is based on. I'm sure that our estimation of ourselves would not be that low!

We need to understand that spiritual death is universal in man. Ps. 51:5, "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (See also Rom. 3:9-18; Mk 7:15, 20-23)

All death will come to a final end during the end times. Rev. 21:4 mentions, "...there shall be no more death...". I Cor. 15:26 also mentions something about death being no more.

APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE:

1. The total depravity of man does not surprise us, but do we understand and live as if we do. Lost man is totally depraved. He can act no other way than he does, so we shouldn't get upset with him when he acts the way he does. Lost man is naturally going to be obnoxious and filthy by nature. This should move us to compassion not anger. This should move us to witness not reviling. This should move us to concern not contempt.

2. I Tim. 5:6 mentions of a widow, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth...." The widow in question is living in pleasures. We as believers are alive - SO HOW COME SOME CHRISTIANS CAN

LIVE AS IF THEY ARE DEAD? When we continue to sin our conscience becomes dull and we go further into sin. We don't know sin quite as well as we should. There is the possibility that many "Christians" are not really Christians.

I believe that many put on a spiritual front so that they can operate in the "church" realm, and not be seen as an outsider.

When in Bible college a preacher preached a plain old salvation message and received a very large shock. An invitation was given and over 1/2 of the student body came forward for salvation. One was a senior and the student body president. They had put on a facade as children, and had never exercised a personal faith in Christ.

3. Can you imagine for a moment what Adam and Eve went through when they sinned and realized what was up? When I was eight or ten, I was somewhat into shoplifting. Only little things that I wanted - **YOU KNOW THE LUST OF THE EYE!** - I picked up candy and little rings - one had a compass on top and a secret compartment underneath. One day I decided to lift a fat book. They were about two inches thick, and four by five in size. I hadn't contemplated the size of my pockets opening, nor its relative size to the book. As I struggled to get that fat thing into my tiny pocket the saleslady called my name. **I KNEW SOMETHING WAS UP! I HAD HAD IT!!!** She didn't turn me in, but I did not steal again. Yes, I put the book back **VERY** quickly.

When working in retail sales, my wife recounted to me the story of two teenage girls that had been caught shoplifting. They were being very flip about the whole thing. They were joking and laughing and having a fun time, until the police officer mentioned that she had called their parents to come and get them. The serious side of life reared its ugly head quickly.

4. The fall required God to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness. He killed animals for skins to cover them. He also provided the sacrifice needed when Abraham went to offer Isaac. It is neat that He sent Christ to be our sacrifice. He set the requirements, and then He sent the required sacrifice!

5. Adam's bent toward evil is evident in his posterity. Cain killed and there have been murderers, thieves, and immoral people ever since. The positive of this is that Adam through Seth also produced a posterity via following God's ways and means toward salvation.

6. We need to remember that we are no different than any other lost person except that the grace of God moved someone across our path to share the Gospel with us. We should be sensitive to the Lord's leading in witnessing. We may be the instruments through which God will lead others to Him.

7. One further step in looking at total depravity would be in the idea of pride. The New Testament is not really for the person being proud. Let's look at depravity and pride for a moment.

Pride is something that we are to have in our work. Pride is something that we have in relation to our children. RIGHT? Pride is an over high opinion of oneself and letting everyone know it.

The Old Testament mentions a little about pride. Let me share a few of those with you. Prov. 11:2 mentions that wisdom is the result of no pride. Prov. 13:10 tells us that pride brings contention. Prov. 16:18 tells us that pride goes before destruction. Prov. 29:23 mentions that pride will bring a man low.

The New Testament mentions pride only three times. Mk 7:21-23 - It is from within and is very evil. It is listed with murder. These are defiled men in the text. I Tim. 3:6 tells us that pride is not a trait of a mature Christian. I Jn 2:16 lists pride of life with the lust of the flesh and of the eye. Pride of life may come into our personal lives, or in our church lives.

Personal life: In who we are - heritage - family etc. In what we are - educated - job - position etc. In what we have. In what we know. In what we are not - I'm not poor etc. In what we have not.

Church life: In accomplishments of individuals. In accomplishments of the church. In positions in the church. In giving. In dress and appearance. In most trouble. In dictatorships. In non-involvement of members.

Total Depravity explains all this. MAN CAN'T LOVE GOD. MAN LOVES SELF MORE THAN GOD. MAN KEEPS AWAY FROM GOD. MAN IS CORRUPT. MAN CAN'T PLEASE GOD. In short, he is absolutely no good. We can do nothing good of ourselves. We are clay - dirt - and as such, no good to God. (Some references to consider, Isa. 64:6; Jer. 17:99; Rom. 3:23.)

If there is nothing good about man then he should not be proud. Pride is inconsistent with our nature logically, yet is a very intertwined part of our beings.

I think if you realize that pride is at the root of most of our problems with other people we might be able to begin to deal with our interpersonal relationships and win.

I would like to close with a quote.

AN ORGANIZATION OF SINNERS

"The church is not an organization of good people, it is an organization of sinners. It is the only organization in human society that takes sinners into its membership just because they are sinners. It is the only organization that keeps on saying week after week, year after year, age after age, 'We have done those things that we ought not to have done and left undone those things that we ought to have done.' No other organized body bears in its group consciousness the weight not only of its own members sins but the sins of the whole social order. This is the glory of the church, its uniqueness in human society, that it lives perpetually on the vitality and realism of its own repentance, its contrition, and its plea for God's help and forgiveness. Let us not claim moral virtue for church members or for the church. Let us rather glory in the fact that the church is a society of sinners, who claim no virtue, but humbly rest their broken and burdened lives upon the grace which God has eternally revealed in Christ Jesus." Charles Clayton Morrison. (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 170-171)

HUMANISM

I recently heard of a man that had held up a store. In the commission of the crime, he shot a man that died shortly after the incident. The robber was convicted of whatever the charges were in the death of the man, and was imprisoned. When the man was interviewed, he said he was innocent. He had done nothing wrong except rob the store. (The court had eye witnesses which lead to his conviction.)

Guess why the man felt he was innocent. He admitted he had shot the man - "But, I didn't make him die. That wasn't my fault. He stepped in front of my gun and died." (Ruff quote)

This man was able to reach his conclusion based on the claims of humanism. There is no wrong, if I don't think that it's wrong. I can do no wrong. I have no responsibility for what I do. I am my own ethics - whatever is right for me is right.

I would like to share some quotes from "Focus On Missions" a paper put out by the Fellowship of Missions, May 1984.

"Top Offenses in the public schools in 1940.

- 1. talking**
- 2. Chewing gum**
- 3. Making noise**
- 4. Running in the halls**
- 5. Getting out of turn in line**
- 6. Wearing improper clothing**
- 7. Not putting paper in wastebaskets**

Offenses in the public schools in 1982

- 1. Rape**
- 2. Robbery**
- 3. Assault**
- 4. Burglary**
- 5. Arson**
- 6. Bombings**

- 7. Murder**
- 8. Suicide**
- 9. Absenteeism"**

In recent news reports we know that students are carrying hand guns to their classes. Some schools have installed metal detectors to screen out the weapons before the students are allowed into school.

Some comments from humanists:

"Fundamental Bible-believing people do not have the right to indoctrinate their children in their faith. We are preparing them for the year 2000, when America will be a part of a one-world global society."

"I am convinced that the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public-school classroom by teachers that correctly perceive their role as proselyters of a new faith [speaking of humanism]."

"Dr. Paul Brandwon, who is a child psychologist, says, 'Any child who believes in God is mentally ill.' Dr. Pierce of Harvard University says, 'Every child in America who enters school at the age of five is mentally ill, because he comes to school with an allegiance to our elected officials, toward our founding fathers, toward our institutions, toward the preservation of this form of government that we have - patriotism, nationalism, and sovereignty. All that proves that children are sick because a truly well individual is one who has rejected all of those things, and is truly the international child of the future.'"

Might we now wonder just what George Bush's new world order was? I think that we may well know. A world society may come to pass, but the last time the world came together, they turned against God - TOWER OF BABEL.

"It's OK to lie. It's OK to steal. It's OK to have premarital sex. It's OK to cheat, or to kill if these things are part of your value system, and you have clarified these values for yourself. The important thing is not what values you choose, but that you have chosen them yourself"

freely and without coercion of parents, spouse, priest, friends, ministers or social pressure of any kind."

Need we wonder why the gangs in our cities feel that there is nothing wrong with what they are doing? No.

Let us consider humanism in this section. I would like to go through their manifestoes point by point and make comments. The quotes are all from their manifestoes.

HUMANIST MANIFESTO I: (1933)

As you read this document it is clear that they are replacing old outdated religion with the new "HUMANIST RELIGION".

As we go through these points keep our country and society in mind and see if you see signs of Humanism around us.

1. Humanism is Atheistic:

The universe is "self-existing and not created". I recently read that all of Wheaton's scientific faculty were theistic evolutionists.

2. Humanism is Evolutionary: Man "has emerged as the result of a continuous process" - a part of nature.

3. Humanism is Mortalistic: The "dualism of mind and body must be rejected." Only one unit exists. The mind and body is one item that is going to die. Serve it well.

4. Man's religious culture and civilization emerge from man's "interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage." This is true for the unsaved, but we have the Bible to shape our culture and civilization. Their system is all downward according to Romans one for the unsaved.

5. Realities may be found only by "means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs." Religion must be based on findings of the "scientific spirit and method." No. True religion must be based on the Bible. Natural laws can be found by the scientific method, but moral laws come from God.

6. "Theism, Deism, Modernism," and other thoughts are in the past. They are outdated. This is false advertising. Christianity would be included in their "other thoughts," and my Bible tells me it is eternal as is our God. Already we can see they reject God, the Bible, and thing's spiritual.

How can we deal with a humanist? Ask that the Holy Spirit to work in their heart. Philosophically - show them that there is the possibility of a supreme creator. Explain that the Word is God's message to man. Explain the Gospel, including hell.

7. Religion should grow from "actions, purpose, and experience which are humanly significant." No. Religion is set within the Scriptures.

They say that "Nothing human is alien to the religious."

Religion ". . .includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation - all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living." Is there a sense in which we've blown this? The Denver Art Museum, years ago, had a lot of religious art, but it was all depicting Roman Catholic theology. We probably should appreciate what is being done in some of our Christian schools in the area of the arts, rather than condemning them for their efforts.

"The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained." There may be a hint of truth in what they say, if I understand what they say. Christianity has substituted separation from the world for the separation from worldly practices. We have no art, we have no science, we have little philosophy. We have eliminated those things from our existence. Art is not bad, nor immoral as such. Indeed, we use art in our literature and books, so why have we separated ourselves from the idea of religious art.

The problem for the humanist is that they relegate all of these things as an end to bring man to the highest point that he can climb. God says that man can reach much higher plains than just this life.

8. The "development and fulfillment" of man's personality in this life is of prime importance. In a sense this is true for Christians if God is

doing the developing and fulfilling. Many of these points are good points, with God left out.

9. Where religious people gain fulfillment in worship and prayer the Humanist finds fulfillment in a "heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well being." In a sense this is what Christians gain from worship, prayer, and seeing to one another's well being.

It is of interest that the liberals and the Mormons are fully into this aspect of humanism. They concentrate on the physical needs of people. It might be added that one of the darts of criticism thrown toward Christians, is that they are not meeting the physical needs of people, and those throwing the darts are correct. We have for too long blinded ourselves to the physical in deference to the spiritual.

10. There will be no more "religious emotions and attitudes" associated with the supernatural. (because there is no supernatural.) They think as the Russians thought about religion. Declare it nonexistent and it won't exist.

11. "We assume that Humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking." Man will face any crises of life in "terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability." This is why people can feel so indifferent to death. It is part of the natural order, so must be taken in stride. No big deal.

This is why abortion is so popular, and it is why the killing of the elderly is coming to our society.

12. To increase joy in living the Humanist will "aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life." The Christian does the same except that he does it for the satisfaction of God.

13. All religious institutions must be reorganized as soon as possible to help in the fulfillment of life and the enhancement of "human life." Indeed, this is being done; the world council of churches is going down the humanistic trail.

We see in this point that the humanist is gearing all of life toward life, and not God. God is non-existent, thus must be programed out of our thinking.

14. "A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of Humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world." Sounds like the world economic system. "SWIFT" is an international banking organization of one thousand banks that make their transactions electronically. The control of the individual by electronic numbers is quickly coming to us.

Socialism and communism do not work, yet the American people want more and more social programs. We are speeding toward socialism, while the communist countries are fleeing from it. They have rejected humanism, because it does not work, while we desire it because we are in the middle of its promises, and have not yet reached its inadequacies.

15. Humanism will

"affirm life rather than DENY IT;" (SOMEWHAT STRANGE IN that they hold to abortion!)

"seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from it;"

"endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few."

From these goals the flow of Humanism will progress. Have you heard this in religious circles lately? Reverend Ike, and several others are preaching a get rich theology, where all you have to do is ask and you will be rich. God is a great big Santa Claus.

"The quest for the good life is still the central task for mankind." This probably in one sentence, sums up all that God is combating in the world system today. The good life. The good life as Madison Avenue portrays it. God tells us that we can have the good life by

walking with Him through trials and troubles, while the humanist tells us the good life requires no trials and troubles.

This manifesto was signed by John Dewey [father of the modern public school system philosophy], R. Lester Mondale [father of Walter Mondale the politician], and others.

In short: A communistic society that can eat drink and be merry for they only die.

Humanist Manifesto II:

They shoot themselves in the foot, so to speak, in the opening statements of this document.

"The future is however, filled with dangers. In learning to apply the scientific method to nature and human life, we have opened the door to ecological damage, overpopulation, dehumanizing institutions, totalitarian repression, and nuclear and biochemical disaster. Faced with apocalyptic prophesies and doomsday scenarios, many flee in despair from reason and embrace irrational cults and theologies of withdrawal and retreat." Everything isn't peaches and cream - somebody left some of the pits in!

Yet, they stated in their 1933 document, "Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method." Much of what they describe comes from some of the people that they have been educating for so many years with the thought of modern education produced by one of their proponents, John Dewey.

In the next paragraph they state, "We need to extend the uses of scientific method,"

Following along with point number fourteen of the Humanist Manifesto I they state, "The ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the potential for growth in each human personality - not for the favored few, but for all of humankind. Only a shared world and global measures will suffice."

It is stated that many religions etc. claim heritage in the Humanist camp yet they are not truly Humanist. However the H.M.II states

that "Humanism is an ethical process through which we all can move, above and beyond the divisive particulars, heroic personalities, dogmatic creeds, and ritual customs of past religions or their mere negation." They say that other isms cannot be humanist, yet all of us, no matter what ism we belong to can be humanist. (listed were: types of Humanism - "scientific, ethical, democratic, religious, and Marxist". Those claiming to be heirs of Humanism - "Free thought, Theism, Agnosticism, Skepticism, Deism, Rationalism, Ethical culture, and Liberal Religion...") I might add the "God is dead" issue comes from humanist thought.

In short we all can work toward the goals of Humanism in our own way, but that we will all get there one day through cooperation in areas of commonality. How can you work separately, commonly?

RELIGION:

1. NO GOD - MAN SAVES MANKIND

This point seems to restate much that was stated in H.M.I. "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves." This is also the thought of communism - only communism will save man. Again, I might make mention of the fact that communism did not save man. The Russian people would declare this openly.

2. "Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices." "There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture."

This contradicts the history of all civilizations that believed in some sort of afterlife.

They view religions as obstacles to human progress. Other ideologies including governmental systems such as capitalism and communism also hinder human progress. Throw out religion, government, and economics so we can spread the money around. Everything will be great. Once all is given equally there will be no more problems. Again, I mention communism and the total collapse of the system that

did not work. I am sure that the humanist would say that communism is not humanism, yet the points of each system are very similar.

ETHICS:

3. Moral values come from experience. "Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures. Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of Humanism. We strive for the good life here and now."

No moral standard, they say. No ethical standard, they say. And now we can know where our present world came from. No morals and no ethics have been the result in the United States in the 90's.

4. "The controlled use of scientific methods, which have transformed the natural and social sciences since the renaissance, must be extended further in the solution of human problems."

(Didn't we see somewhere that the scientific method caused trouble? "In learning to apply the scientific method to nature and human life, we have opened the door to ecological damage, overpopulation, dehumanizing institutions, totalitarian repression, and nuclear and biochemical disaster.")

"As science pushes back the boundary of the known, one's sense of wonder is continually renewed, and art, poetry, and music find their places, along with religion and ethics." They have stated that religion was passing away - are art and poetry and music to pass away also? What do art, poetry, and music have to do with science? Can we say that what is going on in current popular music is an improvement on the past?

THE INDIVIDUAL:

5. "We reject all religious ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize

personality. We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility."

"The possibilities of individual freedom of choice exist in human life and should be increased." Indeed, there is free choice and they practice it when they reject God.

Every single individual is free to do as they please. This can only be if we eliminate not only morals, and ethics, but all laws, governments, committees, schools and anything else that might limit the individual. Can you envision such a social structure. Indeed, is not the legislation of no limits or controls a limit or control?

6. "In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized."

"Moral education for children and adults is an important way of developing awareness and sexual maturity."

SOUND LIKE SEX EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS? By the way it is called "community action" in California. The use of anatomically correct models of sexual organs in the public schools is putting sexuality on the completely human - physical level, and is eliminating any possible meaning to sex in the emotional/love realm.

No wonder the teenage pregnancy rates are up. No wonder the age of sexual activity is down. It's just a biological function to be engaged in when we want to. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE HORRIFIED AT WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS!

DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY:

How can you have a democracy if you are redistributing wealth - causing all to live on the same income - and how is it governed? Surely they wouldn't want to tax people and cramp their personality.

7. "To enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of civil liberties in all societies. This includes freedom of speech and the press, political democracy, the legal right of opposition

to governmental policies fair judicial process, religious liberty, freedom of association, and artistic, scientific, and cultural freedom. It also includes a recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide."

The American humanist cries for much of what he already has in this country. Most of these items are guaranteed in our Constitution, yet we can't have the restraints of government. They seem illogical at times. You cannot guarantee the things they desire without governmental control.

The cry for democracy is also seen in that statement - a democracy is a governmental system. They do not want government, so how can they want democracy?

8. "We are committed to an open and democratic society. We must extend participatory democracy in its true sense to the economy, the school, the family, the workplace, and the voluntary associations." To have this completed they must eliminate all Christians, Muslims, Buddhists etc. Open, requires only humanists in society. Sounds like Hitler's Arian world! I have to wonder what will happen when they mix humanism with Arianism.

Have we not seen this today? Demanding democracy in the home, in the school, in the work place, etc. Unions have tried in the work place and seem to be failing. People feel the company has no right to run it the way they want to. If a strike is called the company is not allowed to hire replacements. "MY RIGHTS" The unions fail to understand that in a democracy, the company extends rights to the worker as the company sees fit, not as the employee sees fit. If they want democracy, they will have to find a way to function without the free enterprise aspect of it. They will need to have a democracy that controls all aspects of life, which sounds like communism, which is what humanism is.

9. "The separation of church and state and the separation of ideology and state are imperatives." Yet, the humanism ideology will become the state and that is okay. Again, their logic escapes me.

How can you have separation of church and state if they don't believe in the church, nor any religious institution?

How do you separate ideology from the state. The state is made up of people that certainly have some sort of ideology!

LOGIC PLEASE!

Some today demand separation of Church and state? They say that the constitution demands it. No, it doesn't. Indeed, the founders of our country instituted prayer in the governmental sessions, had Bibles printed with government funds, and founded the country on spiritual principles. We in later years have had a judicial system that has given us separation of church and state.

10. Economic systems should be evaluated by "whether or not they increase economic well-being for all individuals and groups, minimize poverty and hardship, increase the sum of human satisfaction, and enhance the quality of life." "We need to democratize the economy and judge it by its responsiveness to human needs testing results in terms of the common good."

Have you heard this on the news in recent years? We need to decrease military spending so that we can help the poor. We need to cut the space program and worry about the problems on earth. Yes, the media has attempted to move this into American thinking.

By the way if the riches of the world are distributed evenly as they desire, how can poverty and hardship exist?

11. They view a national minimum guaranteed annual income as necessary to help the poor, sick, etc.

"We believe in the right to universal education."

This study is continued in topic number d04300. There you find how humanism has filtered into the church and Christian family.

04300

HUMANISM CONTINUED

WORLD COMMUNITY:

12. One world government and law:

"We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government." Have we seen anyone doing this lately? Jessie Jackson has done it several times, going to different places as an individual. In the 90's there was an entertainment ban imposed on the resort "Sun City" in South Africa, to oppose Apartheid.

It is reported that some public schools are no teaching a global citizenship instead of American citizenship.

13. World peace: Through decreased military spending, negotiation, and compromise. "It is a planetary imperative to reduce the level of military expenditures and turn these savings to peaceful and people-oriented uses." The one world government requires us to abandon force for "negotiation and compromise".

This again, sounds very much like the Bush administration. It occurs to me that the humanist system is putting Bush down for doing what they want to do.

The main premise of this point is not at all wrong. To negotiate and compromise into world peace would be great. Indeed, we have seen it work at times. The problem is that God tells us that wars will always be with us. How can we intelligently know that war will come and decrease our defenses? The American public has been sold a dangerous attitude when it comes to military spending and peace. The only peace that will come is with the Lord in the Millennial kingdom.

14. Save the earth: Radical change in the environmental attitude of the world would be needed to conserve the earth.

They are correct in their attempt to save the earth. We are poisoning ourselves, and enjoying the benefits of the poison. We as believers should be interested in the environmental issues. We believe that we are stewards of what God has given us, yet we do little about the creation that He has given.

Totally committing your life to environmentalism is not needed, yet recycling a can or two wouldn't hurt.

15. Human rights through redistribution of wealth: "It is the moral obligation of the developed nations to - provide - through an international authority that safe guards human rights - massive technical, agricultural, medical, and economic assistance, including birth control techniques, to the developing portions of the globe. World poverty must cease. Hence extreme disproportions in health, income, and economic growth should be reduced on a worldwide basis."

In the area of health and physical suffering the world needs help, yet many of the societies that function far below our American poverty level, find that they are happy. The humanist desires that the world population have the same opportunity as the Americans, to have it all - all the things and toys that they want. Things and toys are not the producer of happiness. Indeed, Americans are finding that they do not bring happiness. Why should the world be forced into materialism just to make the humanist feel good.

16. Develop technology. "We would resist any moves to censor basic scientific research on moral, political, or social grounds." They would encourage the scientific community to try clones. Raise clones for transplanting organs. Genetic engineering? Go for it no matter the outcome. We have unleashed bacteria that eat oil, in the ocean. Do we really know what long term effects that will have?

I really wonder what effect their free scientific research will do to the environment that they want to clean up and keep pure.

17. Remove all international barriers to international travel, culture, and science. All of Europe is doing this. Indeed, the common market is doing much of what humanism wants. We are now seeing interest on the part of the ex-communist block in economic union. They are talking of an organization of their own, yet one must wonder if merger with The Common Market isn't in the future.

HUMANITY AS A WHOLE:

In closing. The world cannot wait for governments to come together on their own. "Destructive ideological differences among Communism, Capitalism, Socialism, Conservatism, Liberalism, and Radicalism should be overcome."

"Humanism thus interpreted is a moral force that has time on its side. We believe that humankind has the potential intelligence, good will, and cooperative skill to implement this commitment in the decades ahead."

How do you react to that statement? True, they have time, potential intelligence, good will and cooperation however the last coming together of man to one purpose ended in trouble. Read the account of Babel.

"These affirmations are not a final credo or dogma but an expression of a living and growing faith."

Some of the people signing H.M.II were:

Isaac Asimov, science fiction writer (wrote for Playboy)

Edd Doerr, Americans United for Separation of Church and State

Bette Chambers, President of American Humanist Association

Alan F. Guttmacher, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Paul Kurtz, Editor of "The Humanist"

Lester Mondale, former President, Fellowship of Religious Humanists and brother of Walter Mondale

B. F. Skinner, Harvard prof.

Norman Fleishman, Executive Vice Pres., Planned Parenthood World Population

Betty Friedan, founder, National Organization of Women

Now we need to use the above information to help ourselves, our churches and our country to realize how much humanism has already affected us.

Robert Schuller, one of the television church leaders: "the new reformation will return our focus to the sacred right of every person to self-esteem" (Robert Schuller, "SELF-ESTEEM: THE NEW REFORMATION"; p. 36-38) Sound familiar?

How does humanism affect us? Ourselves, our local churches, our universal church, our mission boards, our families, our society, our schools, our business, our labor, our government.

How does humanism affect us? Let us look and see.

Ourselves:

1. I am to be satisfied. My wife doesn't do enough for me. The church hasn't really ministered to me. (This is where most of our work on renewal has been, and the church is still ineffective in our global work.) My husband never pays attention to me. I want more pay!

2. "I want" THE I WANT ME TO BE COMFORTABLE SYNDROME.

Count up. How many stereos do you own? How many televisions do you own? How many cars do you own? How many clothes do you own? Now, how many of these items are really needed?

How many of your personal belongings could you put out at a garage sale and still allow you to live relatively comfortable? Yes, I think most of us have had a case or two of the I WANTS.

I'm not pointing the finger at anyone. Only trying to open all of us to the possibility that we as Christians are wide open to the "I want me to be comfortable syndrome".

When our three children were still at home, I counted up the number of stereos in our home. Now mind you there was a real good reason for purchasing every single one of them!

There was the one in the living room, there was the one at my desk, there was the one in the car, there was the one in Tim's room, there was the one in Stan's room, there was the one in Laurie's room, there was the two in the storage area awaiting the garage sale, and then there are the small portable earphone type stereos of which we had five. Boy are we fixed for sound! Everyone of them was a present, on sale, or needed! At the Derickson home over the years the "I want to be comfortable syndrome" has had its inroads from time to time.

How about at your home?

I overheard two older men at a garage sale that they were having. One of the men asked the other, "Remember how bad we needed these things when we bought them?".

Our local churches:

Self-oriented:

1. We dwell on self-esteem. Christ is to be pre-eminent in our lives not ourselves. it is not "what I want in life," it is "what he wants for my life" that counts.

2. We dwell on how I relate to the church. It is very seldom that I hear that someone is coming to church here because he wants to help build the church up for the Lord. It is usually something like "the church really ministers to me." or "the pastor really helps me understand the bible." These are not wrong, but they are not all that "church" is about.

3. We dwell on how the church ministers to me. If the church does not minister to the person the person usually will find one that will.

4. We dwell on having a pleasant building or plant to worship in. If we weren't so self centered wouldn't we expand our financial blessings, so that others could be included in the family of God rather than concentrate on buildings?

5. Because we are giving to self, we have less to give to God. Offerings are down, money is short, expanding missions giving is hard, and there is no money for projects and ministries that come along within the church.

One of the churches we attended, refused to increase a veteran missionary's support by \$50 a month to get him back to the field, yet a month later raised commitments in about five minutes, to give \$600-700 per month for a youth pastor for about fifteen kids.

6. We have poor attitudes toward divorce and remarriage. Divorce and remarriage is a direct result of "My Rights" and humanism.

7. Church discipline has no meaning: If each person is an authority unto themselves then there is no one that can tell him he is doing wrong.

I knew a church that had two couples involved in immorality. It was six months before one of the innocent husbands convinced his erring wife that she had done wrong. By the way the pastor initiated no church discipline, the erring parties were never rebuked, and the pastor shortly after, went on to head up a mission organization. Need we wonder why the church is impotent today?

If there is nothing wrong with what goes on with two consenting adults then affairs are the person's business, and no problem.

A Christian man in the Midwest, when confronted by his pastor about the alcohol from his home that had caused a serious accident via one of his children, stated, "You have no right telling me what to do in my home! Get out!"

8. Leaders and teachers are spending too much time in books and seminars by people that are bordering on humanism in their thinking. More time should be spent in the Word and practical study.

We hear so much teaching on the raising of families and marriage yet some of these people aren't able to keep their own marriages together.

The humanist tells us the child has rights - let him try what he wants so he can mold himself. This translates into a teen that has molded himself to do what he wants. This translates into a church member that is going to do as he pleases. This translates into a lack of missionaries and pastors. YES! WE DO HAVE PROBLEMS IN THE CHURCH THAT ARE CAUSED BY HUMANISM.

The Catholic Church, which is a form of humanism, has a tremendous shortage of priests. They say it is because of celibacy - I have rights - I want - I won't give up my right to sex for God. This is the attitude of many of the young and old alike in the Roman Church.

9. The stress on enjoying ourselves - good lighting, padded pews, great equipment, maybe a gym, etc.

I have heard this same story in two places when people were discussing the need of a church building. One was a church with a building and the other was a church that was considering their first building. The same reason for the need of a building was given - "It's so much trouble carrying hymnals in from the car and setting up for Sunday School, in our rented building. This was the main reason for keeping the building in one case and building one in the other case. The church without a building was only paying part of the utilities and were sharing a building with another church. They really had no need of a building except for the inconvenience. The building they were considering was to cost over a million dollars.

Really! A million dollars so they don't have to carry hymnals! HOW CAN WE CARRY THE CROSS OF CHRIST WHEN WE CAN'T EVEN CARRY HYMNALS? Do you realize a million dollars invested properly would create a fund that would fund five missionaries, or pastors and those that followed them fully, until the Lord comes?

10. Probably the biggest problem and I only place it here for convenience sake as it affects all of our areas - family, church, universal church, and society.

Sin! There is nothing that is wrong anymore it seems we have rationalized most sin away in one way or another. Most things are relegated to the gray areas these days. If you can do it with a clear conscience then it is okay for you. There are a few definites yet, but we see even divorce as becoming accepted in churches. One of the main line denominations reportedly has a divorce service in their Ministers Manual now.

Many Christians allow things in their home, via the television, that they would never have dreamed of allowing ten years ago in light of "well the kids need something to watch."

11. We dwell on the body (of Christ) at times to the exclusion of the lost.

Our universal church:

1. A bloated fleshly mass that is comfortable - so comfortable that we can't send ministers of the gospel out full time. I'm not speaking of missionaries only. I'm sure we would be shocked at the number of pastors in this country, right now, which are working outside their churches to support their ministries. Many other pastor's wives work to help their husband have time for their ministry.

At least the humanist is trying to change all of man. The church primarily is only trying to improve itself. We are letting the world go to hell while we continually build ourselves up and make ourselves comfortable.

2. Pastors that are turning down \$30,000 plus a fancy parsonage as not enough. I was recently told of a man that had been turning down churches offering \$40,000 pay packages, so that he would be able to accept one offering a \$50,000 pay package when it came along.

3. Churches of 125 members with two missionaries on their budget.

4. Million dollar building programs. One report mentioned that churches spent over one billion dollars on buildings in one year in this country.

Our mission boards:

I see in missionaries, something which bothers me greatly, and I believe it stems from humanistic thought in the church and possibly in the workers as well. I see a cold view toward support and supporters. When retirement age comes - you owe me - you shouldn't drop my support when I retire. The thought that this is Gods provision seems to be way in the background. It is a business to keep your support. This is in part the problem of the church in their spastic and oftentimes, sudden ending support. It is also in part due to the worker looking to the church for support rather than to the Lord.

You write supporters at least every other month, you go see them as often as you can, you send them small Christmas presents, you send prayer letters to report your progress, etc. These things are great so don't take me wrong, but some view this as "have to" to keep their support, and this is not right!

Some talk I hear concerning support sounds like a farmer talking about so many potatoes that he is going to take to market.

Some missionaries chose the church they go to while on furlough based on which church they think they might receive support from. Some attend two churches regularly in the hopes of gaining support from both. (One in the morning and one in the evening.)

I was told once by a pastor of a pioneer work that I was the only missionary that had ever contacted him. "We are too small to bother with," he told me.

It has been said that there is little money out there so you can be sure the flashiest person will get it. Is that anyway to finance missions?

Humanistic thought dictates how we approach the lost. In the past God was almost universally held to by the world. It just depended on how they viewed God, or in which god they believed. Today many

reject any and all concepts of god. These people must see that there is a God, and then we can introduce them to the God of the Bible.

The lack of commitment of Christians is making recruitment very difficult. We are going to retire many more workers in the next ten years than we recruit. The search for a fulfilled life is not to be found in the underpaid position of missionary. The fun life style certainly isn't in the South American jungle! Etc.

When it takes as long to raise support as it does to gain your education, recruits are going to go a different direction.

Our families:

Dr. Kienel the executive director of Christian Schools International in a short article shared some thoughts about the humanization of the Christian home. He mentioned "disrespect for authority"/"decline in discipline at home and at school"/"decline in academics"/"self centeredness"/"total academic freedoms"/"total sexual freedom." Any of that ring a bell with you?

Dare we ask how much television has affected ourselves and our families with this thinking? The screen is pumping their thinking into our families at nearly every show in some way or another -- even if only the commercials!!!

Our society:

Schools: It is obvious. We have covered this already.

Business: From Beneficial National Bank, Wilmington, Delaware. "Dear Mr. Derickson: Only those who 'have arrived' will receive this particular offer, Mr. Derickson. . .and rightly so. You see, at Beneficial, we've created the prestigious preferred credit program with successful professionals like you in mind. . .proven individuals who have already achieved a station in life far above many people, and most of your peers." WOW! What a dose of humanistic thought to get me to borrow from them.

Labor: We have already mentioned the problems of labor.

Government: Governor Richard Lamm of Colorado once said that terminally ill old people ought to just die and get out of the way. He likened the dieing as humus for the other plants to grow on. He felt that keeping terminally ill patients alive was ruining the countries economy.

How do we combat the effects of humanism?

On ourselves?

On our local churches?

On our universal church?

On our mission boards?

On our families?

On our society?

Ourselves:

- 1. Take time to know humanism and it's god - Satan. realize what it is, and commit yourself to avoiding it's teachings.**
- 2. Commit yourself to holding to the Word only, and not trying to apply humanistic thinking to it.**
- 3. Ask God to show you any areas where you need to change your life.**

Our local churches:

- 1. The board should be educated about the subject. They should consider motives, methods, and programs of the church to see what influences of humanism have crept in. All new programs should also be reviewed in light of this problem.**
- 2. Inform all people in the church of the problems of humanism - from adult to child. This should be done with a strong eye to the Biblical absolutes that humanism tries to destroy.**
- 3. Be sure that new staff members are knowledgeable of the problems as well.**

What areas should we consider and evaluate?

Music: Does it bring glory to God or the performer?

Education: Are we using proper materials and teaching proper concepts.

Worship: Is it centered on making us feel good, or is it centered on God?

Church government: Is our church government Scriptural or do we accept a lot of tradition?

Youth Program: Are we teaching the Bible, or some feel good about yourself material?

Discipline: Is it properly administered? To all people?

Our universal church:

1. As you meet other Christians challenge them with what you have learned - challenge them to do their part at their own church.

2. Leaders: See to it that the schools and seminaries are teaching a proper view of things in all subjects such as theology, philosophy and psychology. If they aren't, don't send them money or students.

Our leaders should be educating Christians through magazine articles, books, and teaching.

3. Is not the overemphasis on "Jesus" in our music and in some of our movements a "Humanizing" of Christ? Keeping Him on our level - Someone we can identify with as a man, and not be convicted because we don't see Him as God, and pure, and holy? Just a question.

Our mission boards:

1. This is similar to the items mentioned for the board of the local churches. Education of the people.

2. They might even want to change some of their procedures. Possibly their fund raising is a bit out of line. If so, they should change it.

Our families:

- 1. I am not a proponent of Christian schools usually, but this is one very good way of cutting the amount of humanism that your family is submitted to. Most of what your child learns of humanism comes from the public school system. The rest from the media.**
- 2. Be on the alert to what they see and read, and help them to understand the Scriptural precepts involved.**
- 3. Limiting television will help, to be sure.**

Our society:

We need to be helping govern. The public schools are going to keep pumping out humanistic centered people. We need to have our own spokespeople. Help govern. Help run public schools. Get behind politicians you can support, even work for them if you have time.

I won't go into the detail of a study I did once, but let it suffice to say if you compare humanism to Hitler's program and to the Roman Catholic Church, I'm sure that you will find many similarities.

What does it boil down to then?

Be knowledgeable, be sure you aren't a sermon for humanism, share the knowledge you have, be challenged to labor harder for the Lord, serve and give of yourself, and watch for signs of wrong thinking in your family. Correct it as soon as you can

Be assured, the one world government and economy won't come until God is ready for it. The humanist movement can't get ahead of God, yet it can affect our families and churches, as well as our own effectiveness.

Think about something for me for a moment. Is not all of sin tied to satisfying self? Is not all of humanism tied to satisfying self?

I REST MY CASE!

04350

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

I would like to trace some different topics backward through the Bible to see what we might see about the Garden of Eden and its possible location. We will deal with a number of topics and show their relationship to one another.

THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE: Take a few moments to read Ezek. 43:1-9. Wow! Let's turn to another text in Ezekiel and read a few verses. Ezek. 11:22-23.

The context of this passage shows the Lord has been completely disgusted with the children of Israel and is removing His special presence from His temple area. "Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city."

We see from these two texts that the Lord was in the temple in the time of the prophets, but that He left due to their sin. We also notice that He will one day return to the temple that will be built in the time of the Millennial Kingdom.

The old temple was on the site of a rock. Indeed, today the Arabs have a mosque on this very site. It is called the Dome of the Rock. Most expositors agree that this will be the site of the future Millennial temple. Indeed, Jews of our own day state that this is the location where they will build the temple of God one day, for it is the site of the old temples.

Well, we have looked at Jerusalem and the temple site in the future and in our present day, so let's take a look at this site in its past.

HEROD'S TEMPLE: In the time of Christ there was a large temple on this site which was built by Herod. This temple was destroyed by the Roman armies in 70 A.D. when they destroyed Jerusalem. The temple burned, and they found that the heat had melted gold and that

the gold had run down into the cracks between the rocks. The next logical solution to greed was to tear the temple apart rock by rock to get the gold.

The only part of this temple that is left in our own day is what is called the wailing wall. It is a small portion of the foundation of the old temple where orthodox Jews pray.

Let's consider the Mt. of Olives for a moment or two. Baker's Bible Atlas gives a good description of this mountain. "Paralleling the eastern elevation of Jerusalem, separated from it by the Kidron Valley, is the mile long ridge of limestone hills known as the Mount of Olives, or Olivet (elevation about 2,680 feet)." (Pheiffer, Charles F.; "BAKER'S BIBLE ATLAS"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961)

Let us look at some items of interest relating to this mountain:

a. Christ prayed there: Lu 31:37, "And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of olives."

b. Christ taught of the end times there: Matt. 24:3, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

By the way the context of this was a statement by the Lord that is of interest. They had just left the temple and Christ speaks to them.

"And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt 24:2

Sound familiar? That is what happened in AD 70.

c. The Triumphal entry began on the Mt. of Olives: Mk 11:1. Christ sent the disciples, from the Mt. of Olives, to get the donkey and then marched into Jerusalem from there.

d. He ascended from there: Acts 1:11-12 "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet...."

e. He will return in like manner and I would assume to the same place: Acts 1:11. Indeed, Zech. 14:4 states this as fact. "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." (Ezek. 43:1-7 speaks of the return to the city as well.)

f. The Glory of the Lord departed from the Mount of Olives: Ezek. 11:22ff

It seems that this temple area has some importance to God.

EZRA'S TEMPLE: Prior to Christ's time there was a smaller temple that had been constructed by some of the Jews that returned from captivity in Babylon.

This return was under Ezra and the temple is mentioned in Ezra 6:13-22. Verse 16 mentions, "And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy,"

Since this was a rebuilding of the temple, we must assume that it was on the site of the previous temple that had been destroyed when the people were taken into captivity. The purpose of this return and rebuilding was to restore Jerusalem, their city. This by the way was the site of the Herodian temple of Christ's time as well.

SOLOMONS TEMPLE: This temple was of great splendor. The site of this temple was on the site of David's sacrifice after the sin of numbering the people. II Sam 24:18 mentions, "And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

The account mentions that David purchased this floor and made the offerings. The temple site that Solomon chose is seen in II Chron. 3:1, "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite."

We see from this text that Solomon's temple was built on the site where David offered, however a third title is given to this particular place. Mount Moriah.

What significance is there to the term Mount Moriah?

If you have a cross reference in your Bible, it will send you to Gen. 22:2 where Abraham is told to offer Isaac. "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

Since the writer of Chronicles names the temple site as Mount Moriah, there must have been basis for thinking that it was where Abraham offered Isaac.

Notice the phrase the mountain "...which I will tell thee of." There was a special place that the Lord wanted Abraham to meet him with his offering. It is also of interest that the priest that came out to meet with Abraham after Abraham had saved Lot from the armies was from Salem. Melchizedek was the king and priest of Salem. Salem, by the way is Jerusalem.

Do you begin to feel that the temple site in Jerusalem and the city of Jerusalem are of some importance to the Lord our God? Might we take one step further backward and see what we can discover?

CAIN AND ABEL'S TEMPLE: Cain and Abel offered sacrifices according to Genesis four. Gen. 4:3-4, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:"

We don't want to get into the offerings and problems, but we do want to notice one thing from the verse. Both "brought". What does that indicate? They "brought: this term would indicate that they brought it to a specific place. Since God was showing Moses the history of man, it would seem that the Lord was trying to indicate that the sons of Adam brought their offerings to God.

The \$64,000 question is just where did they bring the offerings. Well, since the text does not tell us might we make a sanctified guess that it was to the same place that Adam and Eve probably took their sacrifices. Since there were only four people on earth I must assume that there was only the First Baptist church. They wouldn't have had time to split and start the Bible church yet.

The next question is the same as the last, Just where did they bring the offerings? I am sure in my own mind that the Lord told Adam and Eve where to bring the sacrifices. He doesn't just let us make up our own minds about such things.

Can you think of where Adam and Eve would take their sacrifices? Where is the last place that they saw the Lord? Turn to Gen. 3:22-24, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

What do you make of all that? Do you see anything in that text that rings a bell with other Old Testament items?

Cherubim - where do we know them to be? Over the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle.

The sword of flame - could that be similar to the pillar of fire and smoke that was over the tabernacle when the Jews were wandering in the wilderness.

There is some interest in the word "place". It can, and is translated dwell in other texts in the Old Testament. The verse would then read "so he drove out the man; and he dwelled at the east of Eden..."

It is likely in my mind that when Adam and Eve sacrificed, they did it at the entrance to the garden where the Cheribium were. If they taught their sons to sacrifice, then it is logical that they would bring their sacrifices to the same location.

God was quite possibly dwelling at the entrance to the Garden of Eden where he had placed His Cheribium! If you look at Isa. 6, and Ezek. 1, you will find that the Cheribium are a part of the throne scene of God.

So, what conclusions might we draw? The garden of Eden was in the area of Jerusalem and the gate quite possibly was at the site of Mt. Moriah, the site of Ornan's threshing floor, the site of Solomon's temple, the site of Ezra's temple, the site of Herod's temple, the site of the Dome of the Rock, and the site of the coming Millennial temple. Does that grab your interest just a little bit?

By the way the cheribim in the Holy of Holies were at the east end of the area, which faced east. The entrances to the temples were on the east and here we see that the cherubim were on the east of Eden.

A couple of texts that might be of interest to you now:

Ps. 48:1-2 "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."

Zion was another name for Jerusalem. Zechariah eight tells of the restoration of Jerusalem. It also shows the great love that God has for this city. Zech. 8:1-3 "Again the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain."

Ps. 87 mentions the importance of the city to God as well. "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah."

And one last reference, Isa 51:3, "For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found in it, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

One last thing that may add to the information that we have drawn together.

Turn to Gen. 2:8-14, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is Bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates."

One river that divides into four rivers. The Euphrates is named and is probably the one that we know of today which is to the northeast of Israel. The Hiddekel is thought to be by most the Tigris also of which we know.

The other two rivers are unknown to us. I would like to notice however, that one of these is related to Ethiopia which has always been viewed as being south of Egypt. The only river related to that area would be the Nile, or the Red Sea. Or might we wonder if the one is the Nile and the other is the Red Sea?

If we were allowed to wonder about that, might we know what the first river is then? The only possible is the Mediterranean Sea, and

guess what is at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea! A rift that is over 10,000 feet deep! In places it is 12,960 ft below sea level.

Since most agree that after the flood, there were some tremendous upheavals and down drafts. Might we assume that possibly the Mediterranean was one of the down drafts as was the Dead Sea. Indeed, if you look at maps that show the lay of the land the rift goes to the northeast corner of the sea and it is possible that the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan river and the dead sea were a part of one of the rivers.

Unger holds that the garden was in the Tigris Euphrates valley and that the other two rivers were canals between the Tigris and Euphrates. He does not speak to the question that he leaves - what the first river was.

Unger mentions, "Shifting river beds and accumulation of enormous deposits of river silt make the task of locating the site of the Pishon or the Gihon virtually impossible. But the other two rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, are well known." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. P 406)

Baker's Bible Atlas interestingly enough places the land of Havilah on the south east coast of the Red Sea!

If our thought is correct, it certainly fits with the Scripture. Pishon is related to Havilah which is the Red Sea and Gihon is related to Ethiopia which would be the Nile!

You might ask if there are any authorities that agree with my thinking? No, to this date I have found none. I will read a comment from Baker that backs up a belief in much of what I have said.

To quote Baker's Bible Atlas, "The temple Mount, the location of Araunah's Treshing-floor purchased by David and later used by Solomon as the site of the Temple, appears to have been north of the original Zion. It is traditionally associated with the place where Abraham offered Isaac -- Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:2; II Chron. 3:1), Although the land of Moriah in the patriarchal record appears to have been a remote spot, removed from human activity. The Moriah

of David's day is the central portion of the eastern hill, and the term Zion, initially used of the Jebusite fortress to the south, came to be applied to the Temple Mount as well (cf. Ps. 55:1; Jer. 31:6). Once the site of Solomon's Temple and the Temple built by the Jews who returned from Babylon, the Temple Mount is now the location of the Dome of the Rock, a beautiful octagonal structure built late in the seventh century to serve as a mosque." (Pheiffer, Charles F.; "BAKER'S BIBLE ATLAS"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961, p 150)

This is something that I have been thinking about and teaching as serious THEORY for some time. I have worked on it since in the 70's and have added to it as I have found references that might relate.

I trust that others might build upon this study as time goes forward. There is to me, a large amount of information that indicates that the entrance to the garden was at the site of the temples. Notice I used the term "indicates." We want to realize that the Bible does not state this clearly. This is only a logical conclusion based on the information available to us.

APPLICATION:

1. The pillar of smoke and flame was Christ Himself. He was over the tabernacle, and at the gate to the garden of Eden. Can we say that Christ was always the access to God the Father? I think that we can!

The last phrase of Gen. 3:24 is of interest to us in this context. "...sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." One commentary translates the verse as follows: "And He (God) dwelt at the east of the Garden of Eden between the Cherubim, as a Shikinah (a fire tongue or fire-sword) to keep open the way to the tree of life." (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Indeed, Christ is the only way that we can ever see the tree of life that will be in the eternal state according to Rev. 22:2, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

2. Christ is the Angel of the Lord, and the Angel of the Lord is the pillar of fire/smoke over the tabernacle. Ex. 13:21, "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."

There are a number of references to the pillar leading the Israelites. The pillar also came down so God could communicate with Moses at the door of the tabernacle.

As a side note to the idea of a pillar in relation to meeting with God, Jacob after the vision of the ladder and the angels, took the rock that he had used as a pillow and "...set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." (Gen. 28:18) Then in 28:22 mentions, "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." This was at Bethel. (Bethel was a little way north of Jerusalem.)

3. If this has been a profitable study and we see that it may well be true, then are there any questions of Scripture that are unanswerable if we have the time to seek all through Scripture for information that relates to the question?

I have very few questions raised about scripture that I cannot find an answer to, if I take time to do the proper study. A few are still bothering me, and I am boiling those on the back burner until the rest of the information that I suspect is there is brought to my mind.

I trust that the study is of value and interest to you. We should come away from it with a feeling that our God is very definitely interested in meeting with man. We, in the New Testament age have easy and free access to His throne. We should enjoy that privilege to the utmost.

HAMARIOLOGY

04400

INTRODUCTION TO HAMARTIOLOGY

Hamartiology is a theological term used for the doctrine of sin. It comes from a Greek word, hamartanein which relates to the archer that has sent an arrow on its way, but the arrow misses the target. In simple terms it is doing what is wrong or not doing what is right. Someone has suggested tragic flaw. I don't know how theological TRAGIC FLAW is, but it sums up the thought of sin quite well. Not only is sin a flaw, but it is a tragic flaw in that it detracts from what we were when God created Adam!

There are two approaches to the study of sin:

- 1. EXEGETICAL: This is the study of the Scripture and setting down a conclusion of what sin is.**
- 2. SPECULATIVE: This is the study of man, philosophy and experience and setting down a conclusion of what sin is based on the observations.**

Within the speculative area of study we have some systems of thought of which you should be aware.

HUMANISM: Nothing is sin unless it is wrong for you. No sin - if it's okay for me, I will do it, but if it's wrong for you, don't do it. The idea current in our society, "If it feels good, do it" is a result of this philosophy.

ASCETICISM: This teaching believes that everything enjoyable is sin. If it feels good then experience tells us it will become a habit, thus sin, and thus enjoyable things are sinful. This led to the self abuse and self denial of some of the Roman Catholic groups in the pre-reformation days.

It may tend to affect Fundamentalist thinking in some of the do and don't lists that are formed. By following a list we will avoid all sin. This is not wrong, for God Himself has lists - the ten commandments for one - but it is really hard to list all the sins that are listed in the

Bible. The problem comes when the list contains things which God does not prohibit. The fundamentalists of the 1950's were very harsh will people that did not conform to their thought of conservative dress. God does not spell out the requirements of dress in the Word, except in some instances. Within all that God says about dress, there is a wide latitude of what is okay.

Now a practical application of this thought for students would run along this line of thinking. I like tests, so I will habitually like to take tests thus tests are sin and I should avoid them. **WRONG!**

MAN IS BASICALLY GOOD: We by experience see that man is basically good and since we are created in God's image then man must be good. Thus, sin is not a problem except for those that are, say, murderers and fornicators. Some of the Holiness movement set forth this thought, in that they can be perfect in this life - without sin - because the everyday wrongs that they find themselves in are only errors, not sin. The sin of this life is murder, adultery etc.

Question. Do you see a link between any of the speculative systems and what we have seen in the Church in recent years labeled, "GRAY AREAS?"

Is there not a very clear teaching in the Word about many things and then other areas where it is personal choice. We need to be very careful what we call a gray area. Many gray areas that I have heard about, are gray only because the person speaking has not consulted the whole council of God.

Chafer mentions that when we minimize the doctrine of sin we impoverish redemption. This is quite true and can be seen in some of the ologies of the liberal camp. The Theology of Hope makes redemption and the gospel, the topic of mere "hoping" that something will come to pass to help man's state. The thought of sin is down played by many of the theologies of our day.

Many of the things that God clearly displays as wrong in the Word are held by liberal people to be only different life styles, as in the field of homosexuality, or women's rights, or in the field of abortion.

I believe that as your view of sin lowers so lowers your view of salvation, of Christ's work in salvation, and of God's love in sending Christ.

I like how one of my students once related to this thought. "If we lower our view low enough we will have no need of redemption. This translates to no need of God." One is left to wonder if this is what happened in Sweden. They entered the area of free love, etc. many years ago. They as a society allowed most anything that the individual wanted to do. Today they have no god. Many do not even know if god exists.

When we emphasis the virtue, or goodness of man, we basically put sin into the background, and call God's Word into question. We cannot hide the fact of sin - indeed, much of mankind displays the fact of sin on a daily, if not an hourly basis.

Some might suggest that sin is so awful and terrible that there is nothing anyone can do. WRONG! Christ did all that was needed and all we have to do is accept it.

God and all that He is, remains HOLY no matter what man might say. He is pure, and true holiness. Evil on the other hand is unholiness - pure and simple! Evil is centered in the god of this world, the Devil. All moral values derive themselves from God and His Word. Immoral values derive themselves from evil, unholiness, and Satan.

WITHOUT THE WORD OF GOD WE WOULD NOT KNOW THE TRUE HOLINESS AND THE TRUE EVIL OF OUR WORLD.

GOD/GOOD

SATAN/EVIL

GOD

SATAN

HOLINESS

EVILNESS

PERFECT HOLINESS

COMPLETE EVIL

**PERFECT LOVE SENT CHRIST
CHRIST**

COMPLETE HATE OPPOSES

ULTIMATE TOTAL VICTORY

ULTIMATE TOTAL DEFEAT

God's Word teaches that man is totally depraved. Even Christians at times do not react well to God's estimation of man. Many Christians even see that there is good in lost man. These Christians are not looking to the Word for their estimation of man, but probably are looking to man's philosophy.

Sin is viewed in relation to God's standard. If God's standard is rejected then what becomes the standard? Let us consider this question for a few moments. There are systems of right and wrong that have and do exist. Let us consider them.

1. The customs of the culture. If the natives kill and eat human flesh and have common wives then it is okay.

2. What you can get away with must be okay. If it was wrong then God would stop me from doing it. This is the attitude of most criminals in the 90's. They can get away with it so it must be okay. Even if they are caught, the punishment is so light, if indeed there is one, that crime can't be very wrong.

3. What the judicial system allows must be okay. If some people get away with murder then it must be okay.

4. Ultimately Satan's standard will take over - complete evil. We have a couple of examples in recent history. Hitler, the Manson killings and the Jim Jones cult suicide.

These systems do not disprove sin. They only prove that man left without a standard will define his own standard and live by it. The standard that man selects is always considerably lower than the standard of God.

Chafer mentions three major demonstrations of the terribleness of sin. These are worth consideration at this point. Many believers today do not see sin as something terrible.

THE SIN OF SATAN: When Lucifer turned against God other angels also turned their back on their creator. They all are condemned to the Lake of Fire. That has application, oft times, when we sin, we take others with us, or at least cause others to be tempted. Matt. 25:41, II Pet. 2:4, Rev. 20:10.

THE SIN OF ADAM AND EVE: From this we have all human suffering and ultimate eternal torment for all who reject Christ. You should remember, however that you would have done the same thing Adam did, had you been there! Don't give Adam a bad rap!

THE FACT THAT CHRIST BECAME SIN: II Cor. 5:21 tells us, "For he hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

These examples of evil show the costliness of sin not only to man himself, but to God as well. He had to send His Son to the cross because of it all! Even if Adam and Eve had had no children after the fall, Christ would have been made sin to satisfy the problem.

Some wonder where did sin come from? Did God create sin - He created Satan? Did Satan create sin? Did Adam and Eve create sin?

We dare not suggest that God created, nor caused sin. This would not be consistent with His character or nature. We can say that God in his foreknowledge allowed, and still allows many things to happen. He allows the lost to sin, He allows the lost to condemn themselves to hell, and He allows Christians to sin. None of these items are A SURPRISE PARTY FOR GOD! He knew full well what would happen and laid plans from the foundation of the world to bring mankind to the end that He desires. Within that plan is a lot of room for man's free will to mess up his own life!

Some items that you must remember:

1. God is completely holy and perfect. Prior to the creation evil did not exist.
2. God created Angels - WAS THERE EVIL IMMEDIATELY? No, but the possibility was allowed in the creation.
3. Lucifer sinned, and from that point on evil was present. Lucifer was to blame, not God.

It might be asked if prior to Satans sin, was there evil?

Chafer mentions, "Evil may refer to that which, though latent or not expressed, is ever conceivable as the opposite of that which is good." (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.)

There was no outward manifestation of evil before the fall of Satan, however after the creation of angels the latent possibility existed because God chose to allow it.

In Lucifer, was the possibility of evil, but the evil did not bear fruit till he resolved to rebel. Before the first sin, evil was latent. During the first sin, evil became active. After the first sin the evil was latent and ready for action.

Since we know that evil was allowed for, and that sin was a latent possibility before Satan's fall, is there a difference between evil and sin, or are they the same?

Evil is the latent opposition to good, while sin is the active action against God. EVIL is the "possible" that is against God - the character difference between God and others. SIN is the act, or outworking of evil against God.

Yes, there is a difference. Evil carries no penalty in and of itself, yet sin does carry a penalty with it.

Isa 45:7 has brought some interest to some people. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things." From this some would attempt to build the thought that evil proceeds from God. Not so!

1. The New King James Version as well as the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version give the verse a completely different light. The NKJV translates the word calamity rather than evil.

2. The term "create" is "bara" and it is translated create at times. It at this point however, does not convey the thought of the text to translate it create. (create = Strong's 1254, "cut down" seems to be

the thought of the word. It is translated create, as a yield of grain is created when the stocks are cut down. Cutting down to make peace - opposite is calamity. Create light - darkness is opposite.)

Leupold mentions of this verse and the way the King James translates it, "... the Hebrew would allow for such a translation. But it is not the morally good and the morally evil that are being attributed to Yahweh, but things good and bad are said to lie totally in his power, as far as their physical aspects and consequences are concerned." (Leupold, H.C.; "EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH"; Vol. I & II; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968, p 122)

God allows and controls evil, but He did not create it.

It would seem that the thought of God being holy and good, would require that the opposite be automatically true and present. Evil is the natural result of the Holiness of God.

God allows sin. Since He did not create it and since He doesn't stop it, then it is required that He has allowed it.

Let us consider why God might have allowed evil to continue:

GOD IS PROVING MAN'S REBELLION: Since Satan is at the focal point of Job's problems one must wonder if there isn't a divine defense going on. God proving to Satan that something is true. Possibly He desires to prove to the angelic host that man will fail and reject God in all situations of life - all dispensations have ended in judgment except Grace and we are told that it will also end in judgment. (The warring between the principalities and powers etc. may relate to this thought, Eph. 6:12)

GOD HAS A PURPOSE THAT WE ARE NOT TOLD OF: God has a purpose that is completely foreign to us and we have no information on it. The world progresses as He has decreed it, in His perfection, holiness, and desire. By faith we trust in His perfection, justice and holiness. All is, and progresses as He planned it.

GOD GAVE HIS CREATURES A FREE WILL: Since free will exists, there must be a possibility of choices. Evil was needed to allow this choice. God is in business of seeking a people for Himself; those

that by free choice, chose God over Satan and good over evil. Since the choice between good and evil necessitates evil's presence - God allows it to continue.

GOD DESIRED MAN TO LEARN OF HIM: To know the holiness of God, we must observe it in relation to its opposite, evil. Thus evil must be allowed as a part of our teaching situation.

GOD DESIRED TO DEMONSTRATE HIS HATRED FOR EVIL: This is one of Chafer's suggested reasons for God allowing evil. God will in judgment demonstrate His hate for evil. There is some truth to this point, however He could have done that centuries ago - there is no need for evil to continue.

GOD DESIRED TO DEMONSTRATE HIS GRACE: The angels had not seen His grace in action. Sin and evil brought the need of Christ and His work, thus a demonstration of God's grace was given.

Chafer suggests that evil is allowed for the instruction of angels. Angels are viewing the situation and are learning from what they observe. There is a problem in this line of thinking. This makes man a pawn in an angelic school of higher learning, and we see God allowing man to suffer for the education of other beings. I don't believe that this is a reason for God allowing evil, but rather it is a side effect, or benefit to man's bent toward evil.

APPLICATION:

1. Chafer makes a statement that bears repeating. **"GOD IS HIMSELF THE STANDARD OF HOLINESS AND HIS CHARACTER IS THAT WHICH DETERMINES THE SINFULNESS OF SIN."** (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.) You might contemplate that sometime and just jot down your reactions to it. You may find that you are in the process of gathering sermon material and ideas.

2. We need in our lives to learn to know God's view of sin. My wife hates bugs. When one violates her airspace there is little that controls

her, or the volume of her voice! Take something that you hate, then try to imagine how a **PERFECTLY HOLY GOD** must react to sin.

3. We need to learn to know the effect of sin on man. It is not just a little sin now and then, it is a life style, it is a part of the lost man's being. Sin's effect is complete and destructive. We tend to see sin as a little error that we need not be overly concerned with. Confess it and it's gone. True, it is gone, yet its effect may remain.

4. We need to learn to know sin so that we can avoid it! Joseph, when Potaphor's wife grabbed his cloak knew sin, and he knew how to avoid it. HE RAN! HE DIDN'T STAND AROUND DISCUSSING WITH HIMSELF IF THIS WAS SIN OR NOT. HE ALREADY KNEW, SO HE RAN!

5. We need to be realistic in our view of Holy - Gray Area - Sin. We like to label some things as gray areas. We don't know if it is wrong or right. If we follow this color coding, holiness would be pure white, and sin would be black. What we view as gray today is usually gray because we don't want to view it as black. They call that denial in the mind sciences. God's Word often is interpreted gray when it is really black. If we were to gain God's view of sin, we would see it as black more often than gray.

To illustrate our difficulty in perception, think of the graying of immorality. When it comes to proper relations between men and women it is hard to see God's view, in light of one's own fleshly views. Immorality at one time was pure, unadulterated black, but in our society today, even Christians have grayed the matter.

6. A good study for your future would be to look over Ezek. 28:11-17 and Isa. 14:12-17 and list the traits of Satan. You can learn much from knowing your adversary.

7. Some verses that relate, and that may be a blessing to you. Ps. 103:12; Isa. 38:17; Jer. 50:20; Mic. 7:19; Col. 2:13; Heb. 10:17; I Jn. 11:7.

I would like to include a chart that I received from one of my theology professors, Mr. Harvey Stranske. I think that if you consider it and

study it, you will increase your appreciation for holiness, and your hate for sin.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

**CONSEQUENCE OF SIN LOSS INVOLVED
RESULTANT STATE**

Defilement	Holiness II Cor. 7:1	Impurity
Disorderliness	Spiritual discernment	
Abnormal desires	I Cor. 2:13-14	
Paralysis	Power	Weakness
Bondage	Freedom	Slavery
Misery	Peace	Sorrow
Guilt	Righteousness	
Children of		wrath
Death and	Life	Separation
		alienation

04450

PERSONAL SIN

PERSONAL SIN - or should I say your sin? I don't sin - RIGHT? WRONG! We all, regrettably, sin.

We want to study the sin of man as he as a person relates to what he is doing - not your, or my personal sin - even though we are studying just that.

We need to understand that sin always has an effect. That effect may become visible to others, or may just become a part of our inner life. Let us consider the personal sin's of some people and consider the effects of that sin.

- a. Adam Death, sin nature etc.**
- b. Cain Abel died**
- c. Acan Israel defeated**
- d. Hitler Nations disturbed - many died**
- e. A pastor Reflects on the church - may hurt the family**
- f. Parishioner May reflect on the church - may affect the family**

What is meant by "personal sin"? Sin committed by a person. Simple isn't it!

When we confess our personal sin, is that all that is in view? Personal sin quite often is the fruit of a larger root of trouble. If you find you are confessing more and more, you should probably think deeper and find out why you are sinning more and more. Obviously you aren't as close to the Lord as you should be. Why?

THE ORIGIN OF SIN

There are some theories of the origin of sin that we need to mention.

Theory of necessity: This theory would suggest that because of man's being created "inferior," he by necessity of that inferiority, will sin. God has no authority over the situation. He only created man and the inferior being sinned.

Hodge quotes Leibnitz, "these are the two points to be established. First, sin is unavoidable; and secondly, that it is not due to the agency of God. It is unavoidable, because it arises out of the necessary limitation of the creature. The creature cannot be absolutely perfect." (Hodge, Charles; Gross, Edward N. Ed.; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, p 134-135)

Theory of the Manichaeon philosophy of duality: A man by the name of Mani was born around AD 215. He believed in two deities - one good guy and one bad guy. He divided everything into this dualism.

GOOD DEITY	BAD DEITY
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LIGHT	DARK
SOUL	BODY
GOOD	EVIL

There is definitely no foundation for this theory in the Scriptures.

Theory that God is the author of sin: Since He is a holy God, this line of thinking is undesirable, and illogical.

Theory of sin arising from misuse of moral freedom: The sin of Adam arose out of his free choice. He was free to do as he pleased and he abused that freedom. Likewise Satan abused his freedom to choose.

In short, man was given free choice in his living. He chose to abuse that freedom and thus sinned. God did not author it, nor did He create it - He only allowed it.

Do Christians ever misuse their moral freedoms? Obviously. We all sin. We all misuse what God has allowed us. WE ARE FREE TO LIE, OR TELL THE TRUTH. WE ARE FREE TO CHEAT, OR NOT TO CHEAT. WE ARE FREE TO SPEED, OR NOT TO SPEED. WE ARE FREE TO COMMIT ADULTERY, OR NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

Why do we as Christians misuse our moral freedoms at times? Did the devil make me do it? Do we do it because we want to?

Some might suggest that we can't, not sin, due to the old nature. We will consider the old nature in further studies, but let it suffice at this point to say that God has provided all that is needed for us NOT TO SIN. We do not have to sin, we do it because we choose to. We do it because we mentally make a choice to disobey.

Andy Rooney on one of his commentaries gave a perfect report on this in 1987. He related how the criminal isn't at fault - that the environment is the cause of all the troubles. He spent quite a length of time passing the buck - no one is responsible for anything in our society today. He ended with - some won't like what I've said today but that's all right - it's not my fault - the devil made me do it! (A ruff quote.)

When we sin, at times we are in times of great pressure. It may be very hard to say no, but that is just what God asks that we do. SAY NO TO THE TEMPTATION!

When in television repair work I made a change in circuitry on a television set at the customer's request. I had missed one wire that I could not see - The mistake ruined the picture tube. I told the boss of my goof. He said call the customer and tell him that we were hung up on parts and that it would be a few days. That way we could get a new picture tube and put it in and not tell the customer what had happened. I had just cost my boss \$150 and he asked me to lie to a customer. BELIEVE ME I WAS TEMPTED TO TELL THAT LITTLE SMALL ITSE BITSE TEENY WEENY ALMOST NOT A LIE, LIE.

I with much fear ask the boss if it might not be better to tell the customer the truth - that I had goofed and that we wanted to make it right. He agreed, so I called the customer. The customer was very appreciative of our honesty.

God is not the author of sin, nor is He the creator of sin. He allowed sin to come along, and He now allows sin to continue. He will, however see to it that sin stops, and that evil is finally and eternally contained in the lake of fire!

Chafer goes on to suggest three distinct beginnings of sin. I will list them for your further thought. Eternal anticipation in the

foreknowledge of God. Its concrete enactment in heaven by an unfallen angel. Its concrete enactment on earth by an unfallen human being.

He also goes on to state that God foreknew sin and that by the creation of angels and men He allowed the possibility of it to come into existence. This is a valid concept, based on Rev. 13:8. The verse mentions, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." To plan from the foundation of the world for redemption, God had to have had foreknowledge of the need for redemption, thus He had to have foreknown evil and sin.

Does sin hurt God? Certainly. It is a disregard for His rights to rule and expect obedience. It is the breaking of His law, which is an affront to Him. It also caused damage to His property, the creation.

If Satan sinned first, and set his own fate, what was Satan's purpose in tempting Adam and Eve? Along with the fact that he was rejecting God and His authority over him, he was attempting to begin to set up his "world system." He could not do this until Adam and Eve fell, for he desired to control the world, and God told Adam that he would have dominion over it.

Chafer mentions three major proofs of the awful sinfulness of PERSONAL sin. More to the point these show the awful penalty for that sinfulness.

a. ANGELIC PROOF: Jude six mentions the fallen angels and their wait for final judgment. This judgment speaks to the sin of their past. Rev. 12:9 mentions that the fallen angelic host was cast out with the Devil due to their sin.

b. HUMAN PROOF: Rom. 5:12 depicts Adams sin being passed on to all of mankind. His one personal sin had far reaching ramifications for everyone. Rom. 5:19 is the good news - Christ will set things right. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

c. DIVINE PROOF: God's estimation is that sin is terrible. It caused man's fall, and caused the death of His Son. Rom. 5:15,19 mention

that by one we are dead and that one being Adam, and by one we are made alive and that one being Christ. The result of Adam's one sin was the total depravity of all of mankind. The reason for that one sin was to be independent of God, or to act independently. His sin was an act of the will, as is every single one of our own sins. We consider and chose to do those things that we ought not do.

By allowing the Spirit to control our lives we need not consider these wrong things for we will be considering God's "right" things.

We talk of the sin nature, that nature of man that moves him toward evil. It is always evil, whether it is active or not. It is always sinful. It is by nature sinful.

Any personal sin affects God in two ways. It is a sin against Him personally, and it is a sin against His commands. It is bad enough that we disobey what He says, but to cause offense to Him personally is much worse.

When I was a teenager, I received a traffic ticket or two. Breaking the law was breaking my father's wishes, for he was the County Treasurer, and he had to keep a good image before the community. When I broke the speed limit, I knew I was going against what he wanted. When I was caught, I still wasn't too concerned about the fact that I had broken his wishes. When he found out about what I had done - THAT WAS VERY HURTFUL TO ME, FOR I KNEW THAT I HAD HURT HIM DEEPLY.

May we consider our own personal sin? Breaking that little tenny weenny speed limit doesn't bother you, EXCEPT THAT IT BOTHERS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER!

Sin always has a price. That price costs us, and it costs God. The price of salvation and forgiveness was very great for God. It was the price of sending His Son to the cross. The price had to be met, because if God had overlooked sin, He would have been disregarding His own holy character.

Sin must be dealt with! HE COULD NOT OVERLOOK IT OR SWEEP IT UNDER THE CARPET.

Sin will be judged according to His holy character. No matter how small, no matter how innocent, no matter how insignificant the sin, it will be set beside His Holy Character for comparison, and if it does not compare, AND NOT ONE WILL, it will be judged.

Judgment in reference to the lost: They will receive a variety of punishment, yet it is all torment, and separation for eternity from God based on their life.

Judgment in reference to the saved: They will receive, or not receive reward, based on their life and works. Sin will not be an issue for the redeemed, for Christ has cared for all of our sins. There is the possibility that we will be held accountable for those sins that we have not confessed. In the person that has not been walking with the Lord, there would be a large backlog of sin that would need to be considered. Just how this is cared for we aren't told.

APPLICATION

1. God uses the term, "I will" in relation to his promises to man in the Scripture. It should be of significance to us to consider the statements of Lucifer when he decided to take a dive into sin. (Isa 14:12ff)

"I will ascend into heaven."

"I will exalt my throne above the stars of God"

"I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation"

"I will ascend above the heights of the clouds"

"I will be like the most high"

Are there any areas of your own life in which the "I will's" are coming from your direction rather than God's? I trust that the only "I will's" that are in your life are those you read in God's promises to you, and your response to them!

2. Do you see the minimizing of sin in our own day? HOW? Do you hear things like: We all sin. We all have our problems. If you feel it is okay then you can do it. Well if he does it now and then, it must be okay.

The ease of I Jn. 1:9 tends to minimize our view of sin! The context of this verse is five chapters of HOLY living! When you tumble into one

sin then I Jn. 1:9 is an easy step back to the Lord. In a society that does not consider HOLY LIVING as a high priority, we need to get serious before looking to the promise of I Jn. 1:9

With our lowered view of sin it is not surprising that we see Christian business men living by the ethics of the world in their businesses.

We need God's view of sin! When we sin we are an affront to God! WE BECOME TOTALLY UNLIKE HIM! How does that relate to our being conformed to the image of Christ? In essence when we sin we are shaking our fist in His face and telling Him to get lost!

It is only grace that moves Him to continue to put up with our ungodly cycle of, sin - I Jn 1:9 - sin - I Jn 1:9 - sin - I Jn 1:9 - sin.

3. I trust that you will consider your own lifestyle of HOLINESS VS. SIN, and go before the Lord to see if there are any changes that you need to make.

4. Consider the terms that the Word uses for sin, and see if you don't obtain a better picture of what it really is. Trespass, transgression, evil, defeat, ignorance, lawlessness, disobedience, ungodliness, unrighteousness.

5. I read something once concerning sin, and I would like to adapt the thought for our conclusion. Concerning sin:

We call it an accident - He calls it an abomination.

We call it a blunder - He calls it blindness.

We call it a chance - He calls it a choice.

We call it a defect - He calls it a disease.

We call it an error - He calls it enmity.

We call it fascination - He calls it fatality.

We call it luxury - He calls it leprosy.

We call it liberty - He calls it lawlessness.

We call it a trifle - He calls it tragedy.

We call it a mistake - He calls it madness.

We call it a weakness - He calls it willfulness.

SIN IS SIN NO MATTER WHAT WE CALL IT! WE MUST GO BY HIS DEFINITION, NOT OUR'S, OR THE WORLD'S.

THE NATURE OF SIN AND FORGIVENESS

My father was a very hard worker. He never drank more than one or two drinks in a day, and that very infrequently. He smoked once or twice a month. He did good things for people every chance he was given. He belonged to a service club that did nice things for people. Was he a Christian? You don't know do you.

A friend I knew many years ago drank heavily frequently. He led the church choir. He was a very big business man. He prayed in prayer meeting. He didn't mind lying in his business. He wasn't above shady business practices. Was he a Christian? You don't know do you.

So, just how can we possibly judge a person to determine whether they are a believer or not? Some suggestions of the past.

1. The law: The law was given for us to follow and if we don't then we are not believers.

The law is a set of regulations. This has nothing to do with a persons spiritual state, eternally speaking. The obedience to the law, may or may not give hint to the person's real spiritual state. A lost person can attempt to keep the law, just as well as the saved person.

2. Works: Works may or may not give indication of a persons state eternally. A truly born again person should automatically desire to walk according to all that he knows. On the other hand a lost person can do many things that appear to be good works yet be lost.

Then there is the question of the born again person that does not know any of the Word, who is living in adultery and drunkenness. The outward appearance would indicate that he is not a believer, yet inwardly he is.

3. Life: If a person lives a good life then surely we can say that he is saved! Not necessarily. A lost person that has a good high moral value can lead a very "good" life.

We cannot know from the outward what is true.

There are things like, following the teachings of Scripture, works, and good living that will be indicators of a heavenly eternal destination, but not always. NORMALLY OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME THIS will PROVE OUT.

On the other hand good Christians at times take a wrong turn and end up in drastic sin. That does not mean that they are not born again. When we were in the northwest, a pastor fell into sexual problems with one of the church women. A one time slip into sin. Even with this sin his salvation is sure, and he will continue with the Lord. Continuing in the ministry was out of the question, but he is eternally secure. He was forgiven as soon as he sought forgiveness.

The conscience is one method that may be an indicator of a person's salvation. This is an inward indicator that only the person can know. A person that hurts in his inner being when he does wrong is probably a believer. A lost person will sin but normally not have the inner hurt. They may have guilt etc. but they will not be pained knowing they have wronged God.

The question of sinless perfection has been argued for many years. There are those that suggest that this is to be the state of the believer. They oft times redefine sin slightly, so that the small - normal - insignificant sins aren't really sin, but only mistakes. Sin is relegated to the bigger items of killing, adultery, rape, etc.

Sinless perfection? For a time. Maybe even a long time. However, they cannot be sinless to the point of perfection. We cannot from a point in our lives cease to sin. We always seem to find a good rationalization every now and then to fall into trouble.

Having said this, we need to understand that holiness is the standard set before us. We should be very close to being sinless. In Luke where he mentions the parents of John the Baptist we see in Chapter one verse six that, "...they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." NOT SINLESSLY PERFECT! But they were living a very clean and pure life.

First John is quite plain that the believer is not one that is into sin on a regular basis. His thought is that the believer is basically without sin, but if he does fall now and then, I Jn. 1:9 is there for his use.

I Jn. 1:10 is plain that we cannot be without sin. "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." thus, sinless perfection is not a possibility.

One final passage to show how sinless we should be is II Peter. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (2 Peter 1:3)

Notice that He has given us ".....all things that pertain unto life and godliness....." In salvation or eternal life, he has provided all things that are required. In godliness he has provided all things that are required. We have everything that we need to say no to sin on a continual basis. THAT PUTS THE MONKEY ON OUR OWN BACK, NOT THE DEVIL OR THE OLD NATURE. WE SIN BECAUSE WE MAKE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO DO SO.

Another question that you can think about is this. If man and creation were here, but God did not exist, would there be sin? No, for we have sinned, or missed the mark of God. If there is no God then there is no mark to aim for - no standard set to which we must measure ourselves.

Let us move now, from sin and sinlessness to forgiveness. Indeed, the existence of forgiveness, requires that the possibility of sin exist. If there were no sin, there would be no need for forgiveness.

WHAT IS DIVINE FORGIVENESS?

Vine mentions, "to bestow a favour unconditionally,"

FORGIVE is a translation of two words both of which have the idea of sending away. It may be similar to when a faculty member of a school dismisses class. He is sending the students out, or away. Release is also a word that carries the idea. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Ps. 103:12

We need to remember that God does not forgive because He is a big softy. He is Holy and His judgment is sure and proper. He can only forgive when the proper situation is arrived at. Christ's work on the cross allows God to forgive all sin based on the offering of the perfect sacrifice.

In the Old Testament times the animal sacrifice was a covering, looking forward to the perfect sacrifice which would take away the sin. The saint of that age was not righteous in their standing before God. God just could not see their sin, due to the sacrifice covering their sin. They could not be regenerated, nor any of those things that are related to salvation in this age. How could they? The perfect sacrifice had not been offered yet.

The saint, when dead was carried to a holding area for saints called sheol. The lost dead were in the same area, yet in a different compartment. Luke sixteen describes sheol nicely.

When Christ had offered Himself, then the Old Testament saints could be in the Lord's presence, so they were taken with Christ to the heavenly scene of God.

We might add at this point that the sin of the Old Testament saint was much more understandable, because they had not been given "all things that pertain unto life and godliness. . . ." They did not have the new nature, they did not have the Holy Spirit within, so how could they live up to the righteous standard that we will be held to? They could not. That is why David could be the apple of God's eye, even though he had sinned so deeply. That is why the patriarchs were considered godly men, even though some of them lived in adultery with their multiple wives.

Today we look back to the perfect sacrifice of the Lord. The sacrifice of Jesus was large enough for every single sin of all of mankind both past, present, and future. It is sufficient for any amount and any depth that might come to man!

That is the divine side. Man's side is to sin as little as possible!

Thus, divine forgiveness is that act of God whereby He eliminates our wrongdoing, via the death of Christ. He wipes the slate clean and the sins are completely gone. Not covered, as in the Old Testament, but gone - as the chorus ending goes, G-O-N-E- GONE!

WHAT THEN IS HUMAN FORGIVENESS?

Is it forgive and forget? A relative of mine, in the early 60's, pulled a tax trick on me that cost us \$300. The incident came up via his mother a few years ago that I didn't like him and that as a Christian I should have forgiven him. I had - in the early 60's. I hadn't remembered the incident for many years, until she brought it up. I had forgiven, yet memory is there for life. If you remember, and remember and remember to the point of dwelling, I would question the forgiveness. If you don't think about it, and consider it, and mull it over, then the forgiveness is probably complete.

Forgive and forget? No. We can forgive but not forget. We will remember as long as we have life. Our memory banks aren't as easily wiped clean as a computers.

When we forgive, there needs to be a change of heart from wrong feelings to right feelings. The memory tends to erase the bad part of the situation over a few years leaving only a recollection of the situation. When the person remembers with all those hateful feelings, then there has been no forgiveness.

Forgiving requires that we not have bad, or vengeful feelings toward the other party or parties. If there are bad feelings then there probably is no proper forgiveness. I have wondered if there is any true, real forgiveness in the Jewish community over the German holocaust. I realize that forgiveness would be terribly difficult in that situation, however it is the trait of the godly person. In an interview of the son of a man that had been convicted of being a German war criminal the son related the scene in the court room when his father was sentenced to death. He stated that the entire crowd gave a standing ovation, and was singing and chanting in joy. One young Jewish man came up to the son and pointed his finger at the son, saying, "And you should be the one to kill him."

Joy over a man, a being created in the image of God, is not right. In this case it would seem that the hate of one generation had passed to the next. The young Jew, it would seem, was suffering because of the former generations hate and lack of forgiveness.

Christ forgave his murderers before He even died.

We know that there is divine forgiveness for the sin of man. The old phrase, "How bad is it." comes to mind when I consider sin. Yes, man sins, but just how bad is it. Let us consider the sinfulness of man.

THE SINFULNESS OF MAN

Since Christ died for the entire world, and since His death cared for all sin then we might deduce that sin is universal in man. This thought is specifically taught in scripture as well. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one;" (Rom. 3:10). This is a quote from Ps. 14:1-3, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (This same thought is seen in Ps. 53:1-3.)

Rom. 3:9 mentions that, ". . .they are all under sin;" Gal. 3:22 tells us, "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin," Eccl. 7:20 seems to be fairly plain on the subject as well, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

I think that from these texts we might deduce that universally speaking, man is a sinful being.

TERMS RELATING TO SIN:

TRANSGRESSION: The basic meaning of the terms used is to go over, or go above, or go aside, according to Vine (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co). We might say it is being outside God's boundaries. The idea seems to be a deliberate act of stepping out of bounds. One of our kids was quite stubborn when

very small. We once told her not to hit at her mother. She looked mom square in the eye and hit her again. That was a deliberate stepping out of bounds.

It seems to have the idea of overstepping the boundaries. You're violating my airspace might be part of the idea.

When I am trying to do something with the computer and it won't do what I want it to do, I at times give up and turn it off. I deliberately step out of its bounds.

INIQUITY: Vine uses "lawlessness" and "wickedness" to define iniquity. Unger suggests "without law". Something completely wrong. When the power goes off while I am on the computer there is total catastrophe. **THINGS ARE COMPLETELY WRONG!!!!**

ERROR: (What my computer says if I do things wrong.) That which ignores, or goes away from God. Vine indicates that this is not a direct leaving of the path, but possibly more like driving down the road, loosing your attentiveness, and wandering off onto the shoulder.

I mentioned that **ERROR** is what my computer tells me at times. At times, I am typing away and decide to do something and just poke a wrong key, creating all kinds of problems. I wonder off into trouble. At times when at the computer, I go to sleep while typing into the Word Processor. When I wake up, I find garbage on the screen. I keep typing, though completely unconscious. I wonder out of the boundaries.

SIN: Missing the mark. This Greek term is used in classical Greek of a spear missing the target. The target is set - the law, or God's command, and we don't live up to them. We have missed the mark. It may be by choice, or by not watching what we are doing, or by omission.

When I find that there is something that I need to do on the computer and I don't know how, I go to the computer book that has all the answers. I read the book and think that I understand what it says to do. I then go to the computer and do something the opposite of what the book told me to do. Not wise! I miss the mark set.

WICKEDNESS: This seems to be a state rather than an action. A sinner is wicked. That state may well be an active state, a continuing state. The term is also translated "bad". Because I turn my back on the computer book I am in a state of not being able to do the task I desire to do.

EVIL: Something wrong, or against God. Again this is not an action. It describes the character of a person if he is sinning. It is also the source of sin.

I am going to shift the illustration from myself to the computer. When it goes into what is called a lockup, or crash, it is completely useless. You can poke keys, you can get frustrated, you can try all sorts of things, but nothing will help. Evil is very similar. The only way to get out of a lock up is to shut down the power and start over. Evil is complete. The only remedy is to start over and that is what God does with us. He gives the lost a new nature!

UNBELIEF: One idea of the term is that of not believing what God states. Another idea is the thought of disobedience. Certainly unbelief will bring a person to disobedience. The gentiles have opportunity with God because of the "unbelief" of the Jewish people.

Remember when I go to the book and read the instructions, and go back to the computer. If I don't believe the book and its instructions I will do my own thing and ignore the instructions.

All computer books tell you to save your material often, just in case of power failures, power troubles, kids hitting the wrong switch etc., yet many computer operators do not save often. Why? Because they don't believe that anything will ever happen to them. When the administration building was being remodeled at the school where I taught, one of the workmen flipped a breaker to see what lights would go out. Yes, it was my office, and I hadn't backed up my information for several hours. Unbelief can cost.

DISOBEDIENCE: Disobedience is the willingness to be led in ways of truth. It has the idea that if we don't believe, then we will not do as truth dictates, and as a result, become disobedient. This is the state of not following those instructions in the computer book.

LAWLESSNESS: Being without the law. This assumes that you have the law available to you, and you have not taken it - you have decided not to follow it.

Lawless would be the situation in which I refused to read the manual on the computer, and was trying to get it to do something. I would be lawless and the computer would be completely unresponsive.

The illustrations are really inadequate, yet they serve to help us understand the uselessness of a person involved in sin. The computer is a device which demands that you do according to ITS RULES AND NOT YOUR RULES! God has His rules, and if we fail to follow them then there is little He can do except follow the standards that He has set.

Is sin always an outward act? No. We can sin in our minds. Christ mentioned this, "But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Mat. 5:28

Sin can also be an omission of an act that God asked us to do. This situation would not require others to know of our sin.

Sin is not always within. It can be against God, another person or yourself.

Against God: God tells us that we are not to covet. When we covet we sin against God. We sin against God anytime we decide to go against Him.

Against another person: When God leads us to give to a missionary, or witness to a lost person, and we refrain, we sin against God as well as that person. That person is hurt by your omission.

Against yourself: God tells us not to abuse our bodies. A Christian places himself into a place where he is in danger. If the person is hurt then he has sinned against himself. Example: Someone offers to let you try drugs. You "try" it and you are hooked. The physical, mental, financial and eternal damage is against you. (Eternal in that you are sidetracked - out of God's will and not interested in things that will bring you eternal reward.)

The believer should consider his activities in relation to this. Just how much danger should we place ourselves in when we are enjoying recreation. Should we put our physical being in danger? I suspect that the believer that places himself in danger and is injured to the point of being handicapped, will suffer loss in the eternal reward that they could have had.

I heard two crack users on the news that mentioned that soon after starting on crack there were no outside interests. Crack was their total life. Family was out. Drinking was out. Friend's were out. Both even mentioned that they weren't even interested in sex. Sin can cost us everything.

A good Biblical illustration of all three of these in one case of sin is David's sin with Bathsheba. It was a sin against God as David mentions in Ps. 51:4, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight...." He sinned against another in that he had Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, killed, and he sinned against himself. He caused himself great trouble and pain - his child died.

When I was in the navy, I had opportunity at one point to be division head in the Electronics department. I was told that the captain was going ashore and that they needed a radio in his boat. I called the shop and told one of the men that I wanted him to go put a radio into the captain's boat. I assumed he would do it. An hour later I received a call wanting to know why there wasn't a radio in the boat. I called the young man and asked him why he hadn't done the job. His answer was very simple, "I didn't want to!" His I didn't want to was not unlike Adam and Eve's I WILL EAT attitude.

The moral of this story might relate to the parenting side of your nature. God disciplines His erring believers and we as believers should discipline the children in our families.

When sin is discussed, quite often the question of the unpardonable sin arises? (Matt. 12:31-32) The unpardonable sin has been described in many ways. Many believers over the centuries have worried about committing the sin. This fear arises from not knowing what it is.

The unpardonable sin is the sin of rejecting Christ. In the context it was attributing the miracles to the power of the Devil, but behind that charge was the fact that the Jews were rejecting Christ and His deity. Anyone that rejects Christ is close to the unpardonable sin. There may be multiple opportunities, yet when the person finally and completely rejects Christ his eternal punishment is assured.

In relation to salvation/forgiveness/etc. eternal security comes into the picture. Those that believe that they can lose their salvation each time they sin, believe that when they are forgiven they are again saved.

A couple of questions: Is salvation the same as forgiveness? Does forgiveness automatically bring salvation?

Salvation is a series of thirty or so things that happen instantly. When we sin and seek forgiveness only one thing happens. God forgives us of that sin. We are not rebaptized into the body, we are not rejustified, we are not re-regenerated, we are not readopted, and we are not re-reborn, etc.

Once God has brought the person into His family, there is nothing that changes that relationship. Personal sin from that point on is forgiven, but salvation is not an issue. We must remember that salvation deals with several items. There is the sin nature, there is the past personal sin, and there is the eternal death. These were cared for in salvation. Forgiveness, there after, relates to personal sin only.

In relation to the Old Testament law, and the people under it, how did they gain forgiveness? They took sacrifices and their blood "COVERED" THE SIN so that the Lord could forgive the person. This also allowed for fellowship with God. That sin remained covered until the cross when the judgment of those sins was placed upon Christ. This is why Abraham's bosom, or the good side of Sheol was there. To contain the righteous until Christ could usher them into God's presence through His blood offered in the heavenly tabernacle.

APPLICATION:

1. As we go into new churches, we need to understand that dead and problematic churches are the way they are, most likely because of sin

in the membership. If the membership is living in sin, there is no way that God can be working in and through them.

2. As we are going into churches, we need to understand those nasty things people say and gossip about are stemming from sin.

3. Take time to read Isa. 1:1-9. This is God's view of a sinful people. The better I understand sin from God's perspective the more gracious he automatically seems to become.

We cannot understand God's view of sin, for we are not infinite, but we need to strive to see it as clearly as we can.

4. Because we have men like David Brainard that were so terribly introspective about themselves, we often say because of their overemphasis on self examination, we will not do any of it. He seemed to thrive on looking for his worst parts, and his sin. We tend to go the other way and not look at all, to our inward beings.

In a devotional by Spurgeon we read, "It will be humbling and profitable for us to pause awhile and see this sad sight. The iniquities of our public worship, its hypocrisy, formality, lukewarmness, irreverence, wandering of heart and forgetfulness of God, what a full measure have we there! Our work for the Lord, its emulation, selfishness, carelessness, slackness, unbelief, what a mass of defilement is there! Our private devotions, their laxity, coldness, neglect, sleepiness, and vanity, what a mountain of dead earth is there!" (Spurgeon, Charles H.; "MORNING AND EVENING"; Mclean, Virginia: Macdonald Publishing Co., p 16 - Jan 8)

We need to ask God to teach us how vile sin is!

Martin Luther said, "The recognition of sin is the beginning of salvation." True we are saved, but do we really know the real joy of our salvation?

Because we today diminish sin so much can we really know the truth of what we were saved from?

FROM DIARY OF DAVID BRAINARD.

"At times I grew remiss and sluggish, without any great convictions of sin, for a considerable time together; but after such a season convictions sometimes seized me more violently. One night I remember in particular, when I was walking solitarily abroad, I had opened to me such a view of my sin that I feared the ground would cleave assunder under my feet, and become my grave; and send my soul quick into hell, before I could get home. Thought I was forced to go to bed, lest my distress should be discovered by others, which I much feared; yet I scarcely durst sleep at all, for I thought it would be a great wonder if I should be out of hell in the morning. And though my distress was sometimes thus great, yet I greatly dreaded the loss of convictions, and returning back to a state of carnal security, and to my former insensibility of impending wrath; which made me exceedingly exact in my behaviour, lest I should stifle the motions of God's Holy Spirit. When at any time I took a view of my convictions, and thought the degree of them to be considerable, I was wont to trust in them; but this confidence, and the hope of soon making some notable advances toward deliverance, would ease my mind, and I soon became more senseless and remiss. Again, when I discerned my convictions to grow languid, and thought them about to leave me, this immediately alarmed and distressed me. Sometimes I expected to take a large step, and get very far toward conversion, by some particular opportunity or means I had in view."

That man knew what sin was, he knew how to view sin, he knew what God thought of sin, we should have such a reality about the sin in our lives!

5. We have mentioned that sin is really only a surface action due to the real problem, or root cause down below. I personally believe that at times we deal with the surface and forget about the root.

Can you think of any examples of this in the church today? Divorce and remarriage is the outward sin activity.

We are finding ways to work with divorcees.

We are finding ways to help the divorcees.

We are finding ways to put them to work in the church.

BUT

Are we dealing with the root? The root is that we aren't teaching a proper concept of marriage. The root is that we aren't teaching a proper concept of divorce. The root is that we aren't teaching a proper concept of remarriage. When we deal with the roots, we will eliminate most of the outward manifestations of it!

Outward sin in the church MUST be dealt with. We have churches where adultery is going unpunished. We have people hopping from church to church so that they can tickle their ears. We have people leaving their spirituality at the church door when they leave, and assuming it again Sunday morning when they return.

The problems, must be met, if the church is ever again to be the light of the Gospel to this nation. We MUST be the salt of the earth, or we will be discarded.

I trust that the realization of the terribleness of sin might begin to come to the reader. I trust that God will assist the reader in finding His perception of sin, rather than the perception of the world, or the humanist. SIN IS MISSING THE MARK OF GOD, not something that we decide in our own minds.

Some references that might help in your further study: Heb. 3:13; Heb. 11:25; Heb. 12:4.

THE SIN NATURE

The sin nature is that part of us that came from Adam. It is also called: Adamic nature, Inborn sin, Original sin, and Old man.

Calvin held that God created Adam perfectly and that his nature was perfect. Adam sinned, becoming another nature which was a corruption of his original nature. Thus he would have held that we only have one nature pre-salvation. I do not know if he held to one or two after salvation. To be consistent with what has been said, it would seem that even after salvation, the nature of man would be singular - a new nature.

As the normal two nature thinking goes the Bible deals with the cause of our outward sin, and that cause being our inward nature, or Adamic nature. In short, if we as believers have sin, it is because we have a new and an old nature that war. When we don't war properly the old wins out and we sin. On the other hand if we war correctly, the new nature will win out and we will not sin.

Now, to some that makes God a God that gives us a new nature that is barely able to cope with our old nature, and that He may not be the powerful God that He claims to be. On the other hand, if He has given us a new nature that is consistent with Himself, and has changed our very being into something new, then we have the power to say no to sin. That is a God that I can deal with.

There are systems of religion that function to control and eradicate the outward sin, but never deal with the inner problem. Any system of works usually is dealing with the outward sin, and not the inner problem.

To a point some past fundamentalists did this, in that they mean mouth the outward on a regular basis, but never concentrate on the inward. This is changing and is not very common anymore.

The liberal movements also deal with the way you live your life and seldom deal with the inner man. A friend of mine witnessed to a

Methodist pastor one time and mentioned being born again. The minister stated, "Don't try to talk to me about that deep stuff. I don't understand that stuff!"

Let us consider some questions concerning the natures.

Can the Adamic nature be eradicated? Chafer mentions that it cannot be. Others believe that it can be put down on a daily, moment by moment basis. Others believe that the believer has only one nature and that, being the new nature, from God. We will consider some of these thoughts.

There are some in our day that feel that we need to kill the old nature daily - that it is a daily duty of a believer to see to it that God put's down the insurrection that comes up every single day. I was once told of a president at a Canadian Bible Institute that felt this way, and one day in chapel the speaker had just stepped to the pulpit and the president yelled as loud as he could - "KILL HIM LORD!" In short put that old nature to rest so he can preach properly. At times this thought has been affectionately termed "slain in the spirit."

Because we are totally depraved and because all believers tend toward evil naturally, Chafer seems to draw the conclusion that the old nature cannot be eradicated.

Let's consider the idea that the nature of man was injured in the fall and that his nature is similar to Adam's post-fall.

This position would hold that Adam's understanding and conscience were perfect prior to sin, yet after sin they are injured. I am sure the Calvinist would say that the injury was total and that man was left with no understanding, and that his conscience is useless. They would also feel that man's will was turned COMPLETELY away from God and toward sin. The result of the three changes is that man is totally void of any proper thoughts toward God.

The question is this. Can you buy all three of these? The understanding of man seems to have been affected, we could agree. The Scriptures tell us that the lost cannot understand the things of the Lord. Indeed, the conscience and will are damaged in lost man as well. So, yes, we can go along with this definition of man post-fall.

Some might question the COMPLETENESS of this injury. They might suggest that our understanding is injured, but not so badly that we can't respond to the natural and inward revelation of God to man.

It seems that if man is responsible to God for the revelation given, then there must be some amount of understanding left. This does not detract from the thought of total depravity. Man is always, in his lost state, completely without help, and completely bent on wrong.

This should not surprise anyone, for we have already mentioned that man is totally depraved. Not partially depraved but totally depraved. All parts of man were affected by the fall.

FOR YOUR REVIEW, READ THE FOLLOWING ON TOTAL DEPRAVITY: Gen. 8:21, Ps. 14:2-3, Ps. 51:5, Isa 42:7, Jer. 17:9, Jn 3:6, Rom. 1:28-29, Rom. 5:12, Gal 5:17-21, Eph. 2:3, and I Tim. 4:2.

Is man lost by nature? We will see some verses that would indicate that man is not lost eternally because of his nature. In Adam we were a race that were lost by nature, however Christ corrected that problem, and we will see that the lost are now lost because of their rejection of Christ's work on their behalf. He nailed all sin to the cross, and made us as if Adam had never sinned. We are as Adam was before the fall in our post-salvation state.

Remember II Pet 1:3-4? It mentioned that he gave us all things pertaining to life and godliness. ALL things are available for salvation. The sin nature of all of mankind was cared for at the cross.

This may sound strange, however if you take most of the thinking current today about the work of the cross to its logical end, you will have to agree with the statement.

Is man lost because he has sinned? No. He is lost because he has rejected Christ, not because I stole that penny tootsie roll from the dime store in 1948.

What did Christ die on the cross for? The sins of the world. What sin is involved in this death for the sins of the world? Jn. 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Notice the singular

"sin." Both the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version follow this translation. Even the Living Bible uses the singular sin.

Just what "sin" means is up for the person to decide. I would agree with Chafer that this is speaking of sin personal, sin nature and any other type of sin you want to include. Let me quote Chafer, "The sin of the world is taken away in the sense that by Christ's threefold accomplishment in His death every hindrance is removed which restrained God from the saving of even the chief of sinners." (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.)

His threefold work involved Redemption, Reconciliation, and Propitiation. Jot that down for now and we will explain those terms fully in coming sessions. Let it suffice the mind at this point, to say that Christ died for all of the sin in the world, indeed, all types of the sin of the world.

Take Chafer's quote to its logical end and you find that the person that goes to hell does so because he rejected Christ, or in the case of those that have never heard of Christ - rejected the revelation that they had. Thus, we can take one step further and say that Christ's work on the cross makes the believer as Adam was before he sinned.

Christ died for the sin nature as well as for personal sin. He removed all barriers between The Father and the sinner. The sinner has only to accept that work on the cross as payment for all that is owed! Salvation is free in all areas for the receiving.

If a person is lost it is because he refuses the free salvation that is offered to him by God. Jn 1:29, "...the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Jn 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Heb 2:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." I Jn 2:2, "And he is the

propitiation for our sins, and not for us only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

The entire human family can be saved. II Cor. 5:19, "To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Isa 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;" Col 2:14-15, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

It has been suggested that we still have the sin nature, but that God gave us the Holy Spirit so that we can live a holy life. In effect the teaching holds that the Holy Spirit allows us to win the battle between the old and new natures. I find a problem in this thinking.

If under this case I sin, I am left to understand that the Holy Spirit did not do His work properly and the fault of my sin was His. The thought set forth - that the Holy Spirit controls the sin nature, and that this is our hope for living a good life as a believer - is illogical.

Secondly, this tells us that the Old Testament saint could not have lived a righteous life, for he did not have the Indwelling Spirit as we do. Thus the Old Testament saint had no possibility of pleasing God. NOT LOGICAL! INDEED, UNSCRIPTURAL, FOR DAVID PLEASED GOD.

How did the Old Testament saint keep from bringing three thousand lambs per day for sacrifice? He had to have sinned continually if the New Testament person has a struggle. This teaching is not acceptable!

Chafer mentions, "...the gift of the indwelling Spirit as One who is able to give victory over every evil disposition." (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.) This implies that he agrees with what has been previously set forth, with the exception that it is not the Holy Spirit that controls whether the person sins or not, but that the individual controls it by being filled with the Spirit.

This line of thinking tells us that the believer has an old nature, and a new nature. The Holy Spirit, if in control, will see to it that the new nature has victory over the old nature. The emphasis is on the control of the Spirit. I have always wondered how this teaching relates to James when it tells us that sin comes from lust. The James text seems to indicate a choice of the will. If what has been set forth is true, the believer that is not controlled by the Spirit will automatically sin. If sin is automatic, then what is James speaking of? James 1:14-15 "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." If sin is automatic why does James say it comes from lust?

On the other hand if the believer has only one nature, and that being the new creation of God, and if we are as Adam was before the fall, then we have this choice of the will which James indicates. The main objection to this thought is that we still sin. Yes, we still sin, because we are humans, descended in the image of Adam. We choose to do our own thing, rather than follow God.

This is not hard to understand. Given the choice of a life of ease or a life of tribulation, we naturally want to go the easy way. It takes a choice of the will to do either. Those that want to follow God, will choose the life that He shows them, rather than what they would naturally desire.

To sin or not to sin, then is the choice to do it God's way or our own way. The committed Christian will choose the way of God and the non-committed Christian will choose his own way.

No one disagrees that man has a bent toward evil. Christianity has taught the mediate transferral of the sin nature. Chafer lists three proofs that the sin nature is received mediately from Adam. In other words because of Adam we received a sin nature. First, Scripture says it, that finishes it. Secondly, it is observable in all of history - war, Hitler, hateful things man does to man, etc. Man shows his true,

sinful, colors when he opens his mouth or acts. Finally, the fact that man is consciousness of God. Most every civilization recognizes man is not a perfect creature. Why else would they work for merit. We all work to improve our perception before man. There is always a concept of right and wrong.

Most agree that in Adam, all of mankind sinned. We are all in our earthly father's image.

THE NATURE, OR NATURES OF MAN

We have already hinted at the fact that there is discussion as to the number of natures of man. This question has been around for some time.

There are two views as to the nature, or natures of saved man. Both views would see lost man as having one nature, and that being an old nature, or possibly better termed Adamic nature.

The difficulty comes in whether the old nature, which by the way is not a Scriptural term, so let us say whether the Adamic nature, is eradicated, or if it is present along side the new creation of God.

As you read the texts that supposedly prove that we have two separate and distinct natures, read them carefully and examine them within their context. Many verses used to prove this point are poorly if not wrongly used.

I don't think anyone would dispute the fact that the saved man has an inner man. What is the inner man? The Spirit? The nature? The soul? I'd say soul, and this would require the lost also have an inner man.

The two nature people use Rom. 7:25 to prove the struggle between the old nature and the new nature. "I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of god; but with the flesh, the law of sin." One must determine if this is Paul speaking from his lost state, or his saved state. I wonder at a statement of Paul that mentions that he serves the law, being tied to his saved state. I doubt that after his conversion he followed the Old

Testament law. If he did, it was only until Christ taught him that he didn't need to.

Cambron states that this new nature is a "Christly Nature...an Imparted Nature...a Holy Nature...an Unchangeable Nature...a Non-forfeited Nature." "Its End is Resurrection and Rapture" "Every child of God has two natures; the unsaved man has only one nature. The old nature cannot be eradicated while the believer lives in the flesh; therefore, we have the fight between the old and new natures." (Cambron, Mark G., D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954)

He also mentions that Rom. 7:22 is speaking definitely of Paul as a saved man. No unsaved ever delights after the law of God. He also mentions that "...only the saved man has the inward man, which is the new nature." He offers no proof of this.

The two nature thought requires that the one nature system, eradicate the old nature. Eradicate is the wrong term. Eradicate has the idea of doing away with - getting rid of - destroying. The thought of the one nature person is more along the line that the lost person has a sin nature which is a nature of man that is injured by the fall. (We have shown that the two nature people hold to this.) The work of the cross transforms that injured nature, back into the nature that it should have been had Adam not fallen.

We are a new creation according to Scripture. We are not a depraved person that is given a new creation - the new nature, we are a depraved person that is transformed into what we should be! If this is not true how do you deal with the meaning of rebirth.

The two nature people would view the struggle of old nature versus new nature as our state, and the fact that we are Spiritual in God's eyes as our standing.

They use several verses to prove their point. I would like to list these verses with some thoughts for you to consider as you consider their position. If there is a reference with no comments, it is probably because it is dealt with later in this section.

Rom. 13:14

Col 3:10. " And have put on the new [man], which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:" I would start at 3:1. Putting off the old man was a past item of business. We will see this later. The putting on of the new man is also a past item of business. There is no continuing action.) This has to do with living as they ought to live, and not as their Adamic nature is forcing them to do.

Rom. 6:13 "Neither yield ye your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness unto God."

I would add vs. 11 and 12 also. "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in its lusts. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." This is not saying that there is a conflict - only that we can yield ourselves to serve sin, or serve God. It is our free choice - an act of our will.

Eph. 4:22 "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;"

Eph. 4:24 "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Let us look at the terms involved and see what the Scripture has to say. (I have included the tenses of some of the verbs in brackets for your convenience.) We are just listing the references and making observations.

A LOOK AT THE TERMS:

OLD MAN: Rom. 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." The old man is crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be destroyed. Three things that need to be

noticed: One is that our old man was crucified - put to death as Christ was. Secondly, we need to note the term destroy, which would give the impression that it is no longer around. The body of sin is no longer around. Thirdly, all this is so that we "should not sin." This does not say we cannot sin, nor does it say that we do not sin - only that we SHOULD NOT SIN.

II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away [aorist, active, indicative]; behold, all things are become new [perfect, active, indicative]." (The perfect is an act in the past that has continuing action into the future. It is something that is permanent.)

If we are in Christ the text tells us that we are new creatures - that old things are passed away, and that all things become new. Passed away indicates "gone." All - ALL becomes new - we are new creatures!

What can we say from all this? All the old ways are gone and they are replaced by new. Might this be speaking of our life style and way of doing things? I suspect so. There is also indication that the old is gone and that we are a "new creature" - singular.

Eph. 4:22, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" The old man is corrupt. Statement of fact. They have put off the old man which is corrupt. It is done. We are a new creation. This is not a command to put him off! Nor, is it a command to keep putting him off every day. He was put of in the salvation experience.

Col 3:9, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;" The old man was put off past it would seem from this text.

OLD NATURE: There is no listing for old nature in the Scripture.

NEW MAN: Eph. 2:15, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace;" The context seems to indicate to me that this new man is a combining of the Jew and Gentile into one people for the Lord, and that people,

probably referring to the church. This verse really does not relate to our discussion.

Eph. 4:24, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "Put on" is aorist middle, and thus is an action that they have done.

Col 3:10, "And have put on the new [man], which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:" "Have put on" is aorist middle. Renewed is present passive, thus the renewing is continuing and it is being done from outside the person. The new man is knowledgeable after the image of our creator.

NEW NATURE: There is no listing in Scripture for this term.

NEW CREATURE: II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (See above for comments.)

Gal 6:15, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The new creation availeth for something, and the context would indicate that salvation is in view. The new creature evidently comes from the salvation experience.

Miscellaneous texts:

Eph. 2:1-3 tells us of our past life that is now gone because of what salvation has done in our being. "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins; In which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; Among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." We are no longer this type of person due to salvation. all this is behind us.

II Pet 1:4 mentions that we partake of the divine nature. The context is strictly salvation and its benefits. There is no hint of struggle, or vestige of the old nature left in our being. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be

partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

I Cor. 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This is contrasted with a spiritual man. This is man in his Adamic fallen, unsaved, unregenerated state.

Gal 5:16-26 contrasts the lost, or life of the flesh, to the saved, or the life of the Spirit filled man. It is a stark contrast of lost vs. saved. Verse 24 is of interest to our discussion. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." "have crucified" is an aorist active, indicative tense, which means that they did it at a point in the past - point of fact. (Indicative shows a statement of fact.)

If you are to make this a conflict between the flesh and spirit in one person you have problems with vs. 21 which states that the workers of the flesh won't be in the kingdom of God. I think that one holding that this is old vs. new natures must also hold to the insecurity of the believer. Indeed, Bancroft a two nature man states that the saved person is not in the flesh, but relates that he still has the flesh within. He bases this on Gal. 5:16,17. That is a real problem for the doctrine of the security of the believer!

Rom. 8:12-13, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if we live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

To say that the flesh is in us and read this text where it says "if we live after the flesh, ye shall die" gives some rise to the thought of eternal security and its truth!!!

Let us move on to consider further the question of one or two natures. So, if there is no struggle between our new and old nature, why do we sin as believers? Because we make a choice to. We chose to follow our desire. Not because some ugly sin nature is pressuring us to, but because we allow our minds to dwell on things that they ought not dwell on. We allow our mind to decide to sin. James 1:14-15, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and

enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

There is a sequence involved in our sin in this text, and there is no mention of our old nature, old man, evil self or any other thing in the text. Only lust - enticement - sin.

Rom. 6:11-13, "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in its lusts. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Gal 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." "live in the flesh" relates to living life, not living with the "flesh" or the old nature.

We have the choice to do either - sin or serve God. Romans six calls us to serve God and not sin!

CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THESE REFERENCES:

- 1. The indication is that the new man is something put on in the past by some of the recipients of Paul's writings indicating that it is something that came at salvation. The putting away of our old life.**
- 2. We are told that we SHOULD not serve sin.**
- 3. Our old man was crucified, and is no longer a threat to us, if he is dead.**
- 4. All things in the believer are new.**
- 5. The old is passed away. This terminology would indicate that the old is not going to bother us at all.**

If you haven't tumbled to it yet, it should be obvious that the definition of "nature" is of great importance to us. How can we define nature?

It would seem that nature would be the sum of all parts. Everything that the being is would be the nature.

We might make note that a nature cannot sin. A person sins. A nature is the sum total of all attributes of the being.

If this definition is true then all the attributes of a lost man would include things like, fallen, vile, evil, against God, etc.

If this definition is true then all the attributes of a saved man would include things like, saved, holy, regenerated, righteous, etc.

The old attributes have passed away and the new attributes are in place.

What of the saved person that ceases to walk with God? Are his essential attributes or nature changed? No. He is still saved, righteous, etc. though he is not walking with God.

In all of my study I see nothing to warrant a doctrine of two natures in any of the texts that are normally given to prove that we have two. Nor have I run across any references in my own reading of the Word that indicate two natures.

It is suggested that Romans seven depicts the struggle between the old and the new nature. There are several possible settings to this passage. The key to understanding the text is to put it in the context of Romans 7:25 and 8:1-2. This can't depict chapter seven as a saved man's view.

Possible settings for Romans seven.

a. Paul reflecting on his lost days and his struggle as a Pharisee with following the law.

b. Newel suggests it is Paul describing his past struggle with the law as a believer before he knew he wasn't bound to the law. He did not realize he did not have to live up to it.

c. Others suggest that he is describing a constant, day to day struggle between the Adamic nature and the new nature. This requires that Christ died for only our personal sin and not the sin nature.

Rom. 7:25-8:2 are hard to accept if Chapter seven is a saved man! Indeed 8:1-4 gives the idea that we, because of salvation, don't serve this law of sin that he has just struggled with, and that we do serve God!

I am not sure I understand all I desire to know about the Romans seven text, but I see enough to say that this is not stating that we have a struggle with the flesh and the spirit going on all the time.

Indeed, the overwhelming evidence is that there is no struggle, except between the lust that we can follow with our minds, and our will. This is not two natures! This is mind over lust - matters of the will and intellect, within the recreated soul of man.

I might mention that those that believe in two natures base much of their position on this Romans text, which is in high dispute. Few can confidently state, without reservation what it truly means. So why base a doctrine on a questionable text? Look at the whole of Scripture and see how the questionable text relates to it, not look at the questionable text and attempt to relate all of Scripture to your interpretation of the questionable text.

Our new nature has attributes that make it heavenly and Godly. All our attributes are our nature.

I realize this goes cross grain with many men. Scofield, Bancroft, Cambron, Walvoord and I'm sure Chafer and many others. I wonder why Ryrie does not deal with it (that I have found anyway). Is it because he disagrees with the boys? I don't know.

Walvoord does not believe the old nature is eradicated but that it is out of luck as far as controlling the believer. "Though it is impossible to eradicate the old nature, the exhortation prohibits the old sin

nature from dominating the believer's manner of life. The old nature has lost its power in view of the crucifixion of Christ, but the victory can be wrought by God only through the indwelling Holy Spirit."

He goes on to state something that is somewhat eschew of his thinking. "...Christians continue to contend with the "old self" which is contrary to the new nature." (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 we aren't dominated by it then how can we be constantly struggling with it?

So, if we do have a left over of the Adamic nature, it is an integrated part of our one nature. I do not think that this is what we have seen, but is an option to the person that desires to retain the Adamic nature within the saved person.

The Adamic nature does not, nor can it ever, force anyone into sin. It is a collection of spiritual characteristics, and not a force to be dealt with.

The new creation is also a collection of characteristics which make up what we are. It cannot, nor can it ever force us to live correctly. It is not a force.

The individual can, at his will, decide to follow the old ways of the lost. This is termed carnal, or flesh in the Scripture. This is not something he is forced to do, but is something that he desires to do. (If we view him forced to, we must give stock to the world's favorite phrase, "The Devil made me do it.")

One must then submit that if a believer that was once spiritual, which is acting as carnal, is acting against his own character - his divine character.

We say man has three parts. Body, soul and spirit. This is pre and post salvation. Where does the Adamic nature fit in? Is it a fourth part? No. It is the characteristics of the lost being. It is the pollution of the soul and/or spirit. Which? The spirit is our God consciousness

- even in lost man. It is not clearly seeing God. The soul is polluted by sin.

Now salvation comes on the scene and we are a new creation. How are the Spirit and soul affected? Are we given a forth part? A new nature? No. It has to be a changing of the spirit and soul.

Is it a partial changing? How could God call us a new creation or new creature if we were only partly new? He can't!

It seems from what we have seen that we, as believers, are in Adam's pre-fall state, and we choose to sin as Adam did. It is a decision, or act of the will, not a lost struggle with the old nature.

We have one thing that Adam did not have - I John 1:9. We can go before the throne of grace to confess our sin and be restored to that wonderful state, anytime we want.

If you study the word nature, you will find that normally it is viewed as the sum and substance of all that a thing or being is. For example, let us consider a glass of milk. It, as milk, has certain characteristics. If you put poison in, and stir it, the overall nature has been changed. If you don't have two natures, you have one that is drastically changed. So, in our being, God regenerated us, we are born again, we are new, we have only one nature.

From all of this, we should deduce that nature is the inherent character or total collection of facts about ones character. The nature of man then becomes all that the man is.

The question then comes, how many natures does he have? Only one. The lost man has one, the saved man has one. The lost man's nature is sinful, and the saved man's is either sinful, or not sinful.

Part of that overall make up needs to have the idea of a self centered, self willed, self serving, characteristic, but still within only one nature.

We then sin because we decide. We then sin because we desire. We then sin because we are self willed, self serving and self centered.

Does that put the monkey of sin and its cause on our back? Very definitely!

I trust that as you approach sin, you will realize that if you proceed, it is because of your decision, and not the old nature, not the Devil, and not the Spirit. It is because you want to.

The ultimate reality in this question is this. If you believe that you have a constant struggle going on, as the two nature people believe, and that you can have victory by relying on the Holy Spirit, as they also believe, then when the person sins, they feel that they have failed to have the victory. Allow this to go on for many years, and you will find the many, totally defeated Christians that we have in our churches. They are totally discouraged because they can't find the victory that they have been taught they can have.

Now, on the other hand, if you tell them that the sin of their life is not due to failing to have the victory, but that it is because they **CHOSE - DECIDED - ACTED - because they wanted to, and you will give them instant relief from their terrible guilt. They don't have victory because they choose not to, not because they have failed in some spiritual battle.**

They have not failed the Lord because they haven't been able to walk with Him as closely as they needed to, to have the victory, they have failed the Lord because they have decided to sin.

There is a vast difference between failing the Lord, because you couldn't walk close enough to Him, and to fail Him because we decide with the will to turn against Him. The difference is the terrible guilt.

If we realize we choose to sin, we then realize how important I John 1:9 is to us. We will also realize that confession is that which brings us to not want to have to confess the same sin again. On the two nature side, I John 1:9 seems to be a crutch for life. You sin because you can't walk close enough to the Lord, and this is the way back.

Confession is, in part, agreeing with God about the terribleness of the sin. If we sin by an act of the will, we are in open rebellion against God. If we sin because we didn't walk as close to him as we should,

the sin becomes only the slip of the walk, and a slip of the control of the Spirit.

I see sin, and I John 1:9, as a one nature person, as open rebellion and restoration. It is a terrible process to have to go through. As a two nature person, prior to coming to the conclusions I have submitted to you in this section, I was prone to I John 1:9 my problems away lightly, because, I was just a little remiss about my walk with the Lord. "Oh, Lord, I forgot my quiet time where I ask you to control me, and got a little off track. Sorry. Forgive me. Amen."

To see sin as rebellion, to see sin as my own responsibility, to see sin as God sees it, as filthy unrighteousness, is to see I John 1:9 as a serious place to find yourself.

I trust that you have a healthy realization of what sin is. I trust that you will seriously consider ALL OF THE SCRIPTURES before you decide on one or two natures.

Remember, the crux of the decision is the definition of "nature." To have two natures is to do damage to the normal definition of the term.

Are we talking about sinless perfection. No, never. We will sin however we do not have to. Remember II Peter? "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (2 Peter 1:3)

We aren't perfect, yet we don't have to sin. Because we have tried to get away from the false teaching of sinless perfection, we have over reacted to the point of saying we sin because it is our nature. It is almost as if we have to sin - we have no choice. Based on this teaching, we have allowed sin to become a normal part of the Christian life.

We need not see sin as an integrated part of life, we should see it as something that is an option. We don't need to sin, we need to not sin!

04600

IMPUTED SIN

Man is lost due to Adams sin. Is that a true statement? In that God justly transmitted Adams nature to all mankind, yes.

In reality, man is lost in this life because of Adam's sin. In the next life, man is lost due to the fact that he did not respond to God's free offer of salvation in this life.

Rom. 5:19 tells us, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Wow! Two, huge doctrines introduced in one little verse.

WE ALL WERE MADE SINNERS BY ADAM.

WE ALL CAN BE MADE SAINTS BY CHRIST.

The thought of our sinning in Adam is foreign to some people. I wasn't there so why should I be blamed. Heb. 7:9-10 may help us to understand this one. "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him." (Melchizedek met Abraham in Gen. 14:17-20, Levi was born in Gen. 29:34) As Levi paid tithes before he was even born, so we all sinned before we were even born.

Rom. 5:12 also is quite plain on the subject. "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"

Q. Would you have sinned if you had been there in the garden?

YES! Rom. 3:23 tells us that all have sinned. It would be illogical to assume that one of us could have "not sinned" if we had been in the garden. God could not justly pass sin on to all mankind, unless it was the just thing to do. It must be, that we would all have sinned had we been in the garden.

There are some varying views as to how this concept of our being a sinner in Adam is explained.

1. Pelagian: We aren't sinners in Adam. We sinned as he did after our perfect creation. Adam himself was only a bad example, and we being big copy cats, followed his example.

2. Arminian: Because of Adam's sin all mankind is unrighteous and unable to seek God. God does, however give us enough Spirit to counteract this evil, enough so that man can respond to God, or turn to sin. This conscious turning to evil instead of to God is when God imputes sin to us.

3. Federal: God made a covenant with Adam and Adam broke it. Ever since God has been creating souls with evil natures which leads to sin. Adam was the federal head of the race. This is a result of Adam's sin, not a passing down of a sinful nature because we are sinful.

4. Mediate Imputation: The new physical body is corrupted by propagation from Adam. God creates the soul perfect but as soon as the body and soul are joined, the soul is corrupted. It is automatic. Man has no test to undergo, or to fail. (This theory again shows it to be a consequence of Adam's sin not a consequence of our nature.)

5. Augustinian: "In Adam's free act, the will of the race revolted from God and the nature of the race corrupted itself. The nature which we now possess is the same nature that corrupted itself in Adam." (From Strong.) Adam's sin is given to us not because he failed, but because it is ours. He is the representative of the race. We are corrupt because we chose to be with Adam not because of consequences of his sin.

APPLICATION:

1. If we sinned in Adam then we must also assume if it had been Stan and Faith instead of Adam and Eve, that Stan would have sinned.

If the above is true then: a. We should not be upset with people that sin, for we in their place would sin also. We do have the Holy Spirit,

however that gives us the opportunity to not sin. b. There should never be any self righteousness on our part when dealing with sin, or sinners. Our only righteousness is the best robe of the Son placed upon us by the Father.

2. Christ took ALL our sin and gave us HIS righteousness. A feeble illustration would be - at one point in my life in the 60's we owed \$6000, plus. At that point had Mr. Getty the multimillionaire, come to me and said, "I am taking over your debt and I'm going to give you every penny I have or own." I would have received not only the forgiveness of the debt, but also the riches of the debt taker. This illustrates that Christ took our sins and gave His righteousness! "Think on these things" Philippians says.

When God says, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isa 6:8b, How can anyone not respond "HERE AM I SEND ME!"

WE HAVE NOTHING WITHOUT CHRIST!

DO WE LIVE LIKE IT? IS HE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE?

A sociologist researched the family history of the Edwards and the Jukes families. This is what he found.

The Richard Edwards and Elizabeth Tuthill family over 300 years have produced 1,394 offspring. The result was as follows: "12 have been college presidents, 65 professors, 265 college graduates, 60 physicians, 100 clergy men, 60 authors, 100 lawyers, 30 judges, 80 public officials, three congressmen, two senators, and two presidents. Distinguished names like Jonathon Edwards, Aaron Burr, Eli Whitney, Bishop Vincent, Grover Cleveland, U. S. Grant, and Edith Carow Roosevelt...."

"On the other hand, during the same period, out of 1,220 members of the Jukes family 300 died in infancy, 440 were wrecked by disease, 310 were professional paupers, 50 prostitutes, 60 thieves, seven murderers, and 53 other criminals!" (From Treasury of Christian Faith; under topic of sin. by Albert W. Palmer.)

Now we all know that the Adamic nature is passed on generation after generation, but with statistics like these, one must wonder if the proper upbringing can't help in the overall situation. We all know that all of mankind is lost, but the Godly influence has something to do with the way people respond to their creator.

MAN UNDER SIN

Chafer suggests some points to describe man under sin. I would like to adapt these for our discussion.

Man is:

- 1. Definitely dead in Adam.**
- 2. Depraved, dead and damned.**
- 3. De sins de same - Devil's, Adams and personal.**
- 4. Decreed "under sin".**
- 5. Disregarded merit.**
- 6. Divine extendable grace.**
- 7. Devilish domination and deception.**

I would like to elaborate on these briefly.

1. Definitely dead in Adam. We are proclaimed by Scripture to be dead in Adam. All mankind, fell with him. The lost person has no choice in the matter, he is dead in Adam.

2. Depraved, dead and damned. Because of the common fall of man, lost man is unable to respond properly to the creator. Not only is he unable of proper response, he is dead spiritually and damned to the lake of fire because of his sin with Adam.

3. De sins de same - Devil's, Adams and personal. All sin is the same, whether it is the Devil's, Adams, or our own. Sin is missing the mark set by God, and we all have accomplished that.

4. Decreed "under sin". God tells us in the Word that all lost mankind is under sin. There is no choice, there is no option - under sin is the lot of lost man. Only in Christ can this change.

5. Disregarded merit. Had Adam lived in the garden without sin, we must assume that merit would have been the result. He would have deserved to have eternal life with God in the garden, yet he chose to eat the fruit that was forbidden.

6. Divine extendable grace. Through Christ, God was able to extend His grace to man, to provide a method of salvation. This salvation allows Christ to give HIS merit to us, so that God can save us.

7. Devilish domination and deception. Lost man is dominated by the Devil. The Scripture tells us that he is the god of this world system, and the lost are totally caught up in the system.

Now, believer, do you have a little more to be thankful for? Are we not learning a little about how great God's grace is as we study and learn of sin?

APPLICATION:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
(Ephesians 2:8-9) Not of works lest any man should boast.

God is perfect so cannot accept less than perfect into His presence. Only the works of Christ's can appear before Him.

Unless I missed some loophole I think it is like this. God did it all. We can't do anything. - OR - God did it. We didn't it.

HOW FINAL CAN YOU GET?

One final thought. There is a teaching around in the 1990's which says that grace covers it all. No matter what we do, grace will cover it. Yes, grace will cover it, but our realization of what God has done and how terrible sin is, then why in the world would we want to walk in sin so that grace could cover it.

Christ suffered and died on the cross for our sin. His suffering ought to bring us to desire not to sin.

Grace covers it all - yes. Common sense says take opportunity of grace as little as possible!

CHRISTIAN SIN

We have already established, in this book, as well as in our lives, that believers sin. We want to consider believers sin. Sin in our lives is not a top secret. We know our own sin before we step into it. We know our sin, because we consider what we want to do and then do it.

Our conscience is present, just in case we desire to sin and forget it. As we sin, the conscience tells us immediately so that we may care for the infraction. If we put off confession it remains in place to prod us into correcting the error.

As we determine to do the wrong, we know it to be wrong. As we determine to forget our wrong, we know it is wrong. The conscience is there to keep reminding us that we have done wrong. It will not go away and it will continue to return from time to time until we correct our problem.

Is there a difference between the sin of the lost and the Christians sin? Sin is sin no matter who it is that is doing it. Sin is missing the mark that was set by God. The sin of the believer may well hurt the Lord more, in that it is His own child that has gone against Him. It may be similar to my own child disobeying as compared to my neighbors child disobeying. My own child's conduct is more important. God is injured by the sin of the lost, in that His creatures are going against Him.

Christ's work on the cross is the only remedy to any sin, be it the sin of the lost, or the sin of the believer. This work was done one time in the past. We do not have to re-kill Him for each sin. He died and offered His blood in the heavenly tabernacle once and for all. His death on the cross was to care for all sin both past, present and future.

Sin severs our fellowship with the Lord. This fellowship can only be restored by confession. I John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

God will forgive, based on our confession. Confession, however implies two things. First, that you agree with God's evaluation of the act being sin, and secondly, that you will attempt to not fall into that sin again.

We also need to know that before we seek forgiveness, we must have forgiven others of their wrongs to us. Mark 11:25-26 (Matt 6:14-15 also) shows that there is a link between the Father's forgiveness and our forgiveness of others. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have anything against any, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father, who is in heaven, forgive your trespasses." Indeed, the context of I John indicates that our fellowship with the Father is directly related to our seeking forgiveness.

We need to recognize also that confessing is not just lightly admitting that you did it, but that you have God's feeling of disgust over that sin.

The blood of Christ is not applied to the sin until after the forgiveness is sought. This is only logical. If it were applied automatically, we would have no need to go before the Lord with our confessions.

Now, in light of all we know about the sin nature and sin itself, how do we approach a lost person, in an attempt to lead them to salvation? What do we tell them to do? Do we say that they need to ask forgiveness for their sins? Do we say that they need to ask that God would take away their sin nature? Do we say that they need to stop sinning?

Just what is the Gospel that we need to share? Let me share a few points that seem to be consistent with what we have learned thus far. They should know that:

- 1. They are by nature, and by walk, a sinner.**
- 2. They are by nature unable to correct their problem.**
- 3. They are dependant on Jesus Christ as the only possible solution to their situation.**

4. They must believe that He was God, that He died for their sin (singular), and that He was buried and raised from the dead.

5. If they believe that, and accept his work for their sin, they will be saved. This is similar to the Old Testament saint that brought a sacrifice and gave it to the priest to be killed. The priest would place it on the alter and the saint would place his hand on the head of the sacrifice to signify that the animal had to die because of his sin.

Forgiveness is part of salvation, as well as part of the Christian walk. It is not salvation however. Forgiveness for the lost is a step in the process of salvation. The lost person can never receive forgiveness for their past personal sin until they are regenerated.

In our Christian life, we must seek forgiveness any time we sin. If we sin a dozen times, then we should seek forgiveness a dozen times. Some ask forgiveness once a day, in which they lump them all together. This does not seem to be the proper way. When we sin, we automatically take control of ourselves. The Spirit no longer controls our lives. If we sin, and sin, and sin, then we are not walking with the Lord. To live properly, we should restore fellowship as soon as possible.

Since we know the Devil and his ways lead to sin, and that Godly ways lead to a Spirit filled life, why do we choose to sin?

There are two reasons. First of all the Devil, at times can confuse the issues at the cross over point between good and evil. We like to call these gray areas. It usually is the Devil that made them gray. We might in this case sin, due to improper knowledge.

The usual reason we sin is the fact that we decide to sin to fulfill our own lusts.

The devil has devised many tools for man to use in this STRUGGLE between evil and good. Let's look at some of these tools briefly.

Rationalization: It won't hurt just this once. A little social drink can't hurt. One time with that other woman won't hurt. (You know, two consenting adults etc.)

Gray Areas: Well the Bible really isn't clear on this. This is a disputed area - no one knows. I disagree with Paul the apostle on this one.

Desire: God gave me these desires so they must be okay. Desire is natural so why not follow them.

Service to God: I will make money to give to missions. I will serve Him next year. I will serve Him when I retire.

God has a given expectation, for the believer and the believers life. That expectation can be maintained, otherwise God would be unjust to give it to us. He has given us all the help that we need to live up to that expectation. That help is the Holy Spirit. As we allow the Spirit to control our lives and our decisions we will walk along the expected courses. When we deviate from the Spirit's leading and prompting then we deviate from the expectations that the Lord has set.

I Jn. 5:4 tells us, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (is born = perfect, passive; overcometh = present, active, indicative. The being born was something that is past and continuing into the future to a point of conclusion. The one that is born of God continually overcomes the world on a daily basis.

SO, THEN, OUR SALVATION FAITH GIVES US VICTORY TO OVERCOME THE WORLD IN OUR CONTINUING DAY TO DAY BASIS! Think on that one for a time.

God does not attempt to keep the believer from the Devil's work, but He does give us all that is needed to continually walk in the control of the Spirit. Job is a good example of the exposing of the believer to the testings of Satan.

He will however totally isolate us from the Devil and all evil, in that day when He removes us from this life for life in His presence.

God may allow the Devil access to our lives, but He will never allow him to overcome us. In I Jn 4:4 John is speaking of the false spirit's that the believer will be confronted with. He mentions, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he

that is in you, than he that is in the world." The Holy Spirit within is greater than the Devil that is without!

James tells us to resist the Devil. What does that mean? (James 4:7 "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.") Notice that one little itty bittey prerequisite! SUBMIT YOURSELVES THEREFORE TO GOD.

How do we resist the Devil?

a. SAY NO!

b. Be prepared with knowledge of what is sin, and what is not sin so that you can make your decisions quickly when tempted, and walk away from those things that are sin. Don't hang around trying to figure out whether it is sin or not. If you aren't sure don't do it, and work it out in your mind later when you aren't being confronted.

c. Avoid situations that could lead to problems, or that could lead you into a situation in which you would be forced to make a decision for or against.

d. Maintain your walk with the Lord at the highest, and best level that you can.

There is no reason for there to be sin in the life of the believer! We have the Word to guide our path. We have the Holy Spirit to lead and guide our path. When we blow it, we have Christ interceding before the Lord to be sure that forgiveness of our boo-boo's is forthcoming.

I would like to consider I Jn 1:7 for a few moments. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

It might be suggested from this verse by itself that if we walk with the Lord we are automatically cleansed by the blood of Christ. You need to take this verse within the context of verse nine. As we confess the blood is applied, not automatically!

Chafer lists seven losses when the believer sins. I would like to mention these for your thought.

1. Loss of light. We cannot receive guidance from the Spirit nor from the Word when we have sin in our lives.

2. Loss of joy. Again due to sin, the Spirit is quenched and one of His fruit is joy.

3. Loss of fellowship. This is clear from I Jn. 1:6, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."

4. Loss of closeness: The closeness that we have to God in our personal lives and quiet times.

5. Loss of peace. Again a fruit of the Spirit. Indeed, when you know what peace with God is - when you lose it you are miserable.

6. Loss of confidence. Your prayer life may suffer - lack of faith etc. You may even lack confidence to go on with your everyday life. If you rely on the Lord heavily in the daily walk then when you don't have Him to lean on, you may become very unsure.

7. Loss of confidence. In the area of His coming was Chafer's thought but it may also relate to security of the believer as well.

Needless to say, when we sin we lose fellowship, and when we lose fellowship, we lose.

Confession is for correcting things with God. However, if the sin affected others, you must correct things with them as well. Indeed, the correction with others must be a part of correction with God. Confession of your wrong and seeking of forgiveness from others that your sin has affected is necessary. (Col. 3:13, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Eph. 4:32, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.")

I SAID NECESSARY - NOT PLEASANT!

We need to be sure we realize that sin only breaks fellowship and communion with God. It can never, under any circumstance break our Father/son relationship!

When we sin there is further action taken in relation to the confession of sin and the forgiveness of I Jn. 1:9. I Jn. 2:1 mentions, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Just when is the Lord our advocate, before we confess or after we confess? The terminology of advocate would indicate that He stands up for us. When we sin there is an accusation so to speak, and this is followed by our defense. We confess and plead guilty - throw ourselves to the mercy of the court. Christ then steps in to plead our case. Forgiveness is forthcoming for the Father views the Lord's righteousness, and not our filthiness.

Chafer observes four things about the sin of the believer (on page 345). I would like to list these quickly for your contemplation: 1. The sin of the believer is as evil as the sin of the lost. 2. The sin of the believer is against a greater light than the lost's. 3. The sin of the believer is worse in that we do not have the world, the flesh and the devil to fight against. 4. The believer has the Holy Spirit, the Word and the Advocate to aid him in his sin problems.

APPLICATION:

1. As we consider our personal sin: a. Our sin hurts God immediately. b. Our sin immediately breaks proper fellowship. c. Our sin immediately places God in a bad light. d. Our sin immediately places Satan in a good light. e. Our sin immediately affects our testimony before man. SO, WHY DO WE SIN SO MUCH?

When we resist sin: a. Satan is put down - he is the loser. b. In the great spiritual arena, when you say NO Satan loses face! SO, WHY DON'T WE RESIST MORE?

QUITE A THOUGHT TO SAY THE LEAST!

THE REAL CLINCHER IN THIS IS THAT WE CAN CHOOSE TO OFFEND GOD TO WHOM WE OWE SO MUCH - OR - WE CAN PUT DOWN SATAN, THE ENEMY OF GOD, TO WHOM WE OWE NOTHING!

WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD WE WANT TO KNOWINGLY SIN?

It has to be a conscious decision to do what we want to do, when we know that God has specified that we are not do it.

WE SIN FOLKS, BECAUSE WE WANT TO!

WE OUGHT NOT SIN, BECAUSE WE WANT TO!

04700

PUNISHMENT

We have studied the Lord and His Word, we have studied sin, and we will soon move on to the great thoughts of salvation, but we need to look briefly at the intermediate topic of punishment.

Punishment comes in several fashions which we need to look at. The lost will receive a completely different punishment than the believer that has strayed. The believer, in this life, may even find himself under the punishing hand of his Heavenly father.

We want to think about trials and chastisements. Just what are trials, what are chastisements? Trials are for the building up of the believer and the stretching of his spiritual being. It is the positive side of the negatives of life.

Chastisement on the other hand is for the bringing back of the believer to his Lord, after a period of sin and rebellion. It is not meant as punishment, though there is a punitive aspect to it. It is meant to draw their attention from their own desires unto the desires of their Lord.

God chooses to chastise, rather than allow the believer continue to go his own way to the detriment of the believer, or of the believers testimony.

What about the person that is living in open sin yet is not chastised. Indeed, at times it seems that the person is being blessed of the Lord. How do you explain God allowing a person to continue in rebellion against Him, to continue walking in sin, and to continue to ruin the testimony of God?

We knew of a man that drank fairly regularly and was very close to criminal in his business life. He was making money, he was building his business, he was making all sorts of progress in the world's eyes. He had seen his business triple in less than a year, yet there was no sign of outward chastisement. Why does God allow this to continue?

There are three reasons that come to mind in this case. Possibly I don't know everything. Maybe there was inner chastisement. Maybe there were serious problems inwardly. Secondly, it is possible that he was not a believer. Heb. 12 is quite specific that God will chastise a son. If there is no chastisement then there may well not be sonship. Then the final possibility is that God was using the man in some way to prove His own case to the principalities and powers of the air. God may do as He wills with His people, and He is not required to do as we feel He should.

God is in the business of doing what He desires to bring about His own glory, and to put down the Devil's pride. He has limitless possibilities, when it comes to allowing, shaping, and molding in the believers life.

I always believed that this man was a believer, and still do. What God was doing in his life is for God and the man to know. It is our place in life to pray for such people, and to assist them in any way that we can. We must assume that they are believers, and continue to assist as if they would some day return to a proper lifestyle. This does not mean that we shouldn't prod them to consider their salvations validity, nor should we become involved in their sin, and/or business practices.

Chastisement is not something that the believer should fear, after sinning. God does not use chastisement to beat us over the head; He uses several other items, much less painful, to draw us back to Him when we stray. Chastisement is the next to last tool in His methods with the erring believer. (Taking the believer home is the final tool.)

When He has exhausted all the other possibilities, He will move on to chastisement. Before this he uses any or all of the following methods of drawing the believer back, the Word, the leading of the Holy Spirit, the prompting of other believers, the small trials of life, and the conscience.

If all of these fail, then He may move on to the harsher, yet loving, chastisement. There may be times when the sin is so outward and damaging to the testimony of the person or God, that God might use more drastic action, yet He always uses any tool, in a perfectly loving manner, for the best of the believer.

Once the chastisement has begun, it is normally quite easy to stop. Confession at any point in this line of reformation will stop the course of things. The believer should realize, however that the effects of that chastisement may flow into the future.

The believer that is walking closely with the Lord will know the moment that he sins that there is a problem, and will immediately confess, before the Lord has to take any steps.

Chafer makes the following comment: "Discipline in one form or another is the universal experience of all who are saved; even the fruit-bearing branch is pruned that it may bear more fruit (John 15:2). The testimony of the central passage of the Bible on chastisement (Heb. 12:4-15) is to the effect that every son is disciplined." (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.)

Chafer equates the pruning with chastisement, which may not be a valid point. Pruning, may be chastisement, but may also be other things.

If we don't want to worry about what tool the Lord is going to use on us, we should merely be faithful to confess our sins. He then will not need to use any tool on us. Remember when you were a child? You found that if your father spanked, you soon learned what not to do. So, God teaches His children. God on the other hand has given us the Word and the Spirit to guide us into proper living, so we should never need to learn of God's chastisement.

Chafer mentions that Heb. 12:4-15 teaches that ALL believers experience chastisement. Does Heb. 12:4-15 teach that discipline in one form or another is the UNIVERSAL experience of ALL who are saved? I personally do not believe that it does. THAT ALL SUFFER CHASTISEMENT IS PROBABLY TRUE IN THAT WE ALL TEND TO GO OUR OWN WAY AT TIMES. THAT ALL SUFFER CHASTISEMENT DUE TO A PLAN OF GOD IN THE BEGINNING FOR THE TEACHING AND TRAINING OF THE SAINTS, NO!

A reading of the text will, I believe, show that as we had earthly fathers that chastened, so we have a Heavenly Father that chastens. The fact that we all have sinned now and then would show that we all are chastened. It is because we sinned and not because God planned to chasten everyone that came into His family.

Remember Heb. 12:4-15, for it is important to the doctrine of God chastening the believer, and it also lays groundwork for the earthly father's discipline of the child.

Chafer mentions, "It is reasonably concluded that scourging refers to the conquering of the will and results in a surrendered life." (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.)

In the believers life, this is probably true. In the life of a child, in recent years this has come to be questioned. In past years there were few parents that would disagree with Chafer's statement.

Today there are those that say you must not conquer the will. The strong willed child will go far in this life because of his strength. Indeed, I have observed children that have been raised with this line of thinking.

Is it proper? Their children are very blunt in their disobedience. They will ultimately submit if the parent pressures, but they will defiantly say no several times before they do.

The will needs to be broken, but not the spirit. There is a difference. If the will is not broken in childhood, then God will have to deal with it in adulthood, and it will normally be much harder.

When I speak of breaking the will, I mean that you must break the "I will" attitude and bring them to understand the authority of the family and society.

There are two terms that are used. Scourging and chastisement. The question arises, is there a difference between scourging and chastisement in Heb. 12?

I think that they are similar. Chastisement would be any discipline that is brought to bear on the believer. Scourging would be harsh chastisement aimed at gaining the believers attention after he has ignored the chastisement.

Vine relates chastise to being "paideia" which "denotes the training of a child including instruction; hence, discipline, correction..." He mentions that "mastigoo" is similar to "mastix" which is "a whip, scourge, ... as in the Roman method...." He mentions earlier of the Roman method, "Under the Roman method of scourging, the person was stripped and tied in a bending posture to a pillar, or stretched on a frame. The scourge was made of leathern thongs, weighted with sharp pieces of bone or lead, which tore the flesh...."

There is another term which you may run across. It is not a Scriptural term, yet it describes well the plight of the lost. Retribution is used of the lost and their eternal punishment. What is retribution? It relates to the giving out of punishment after guilt has been proven. It usually relates to eternal judgment. In relation to the lost it is the dispensing of punishment as they deserve.

All forms of trials, chastisement, etc. are used to bring about proper living. There is always an instructional value to the process with the believer.

There is, however, no instructional value in the giving of retribution to the lost, unless their final kneeling before Christ in acknowledgement. This indeed will be a heavy lesson.

There is no instruction at the giving of retribution to the saved, unless it is their final realization of whom and what God is. Again this will be some heavy learning.

Rom. 12:19 tells us, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves but, rather, give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." There is application in this for both the lost and believers.

a. The believer has the peace of knowing that God has promised to repay wrong actions of others toward them.

b. The lost have the horror of knowing that this is coming.

We as believers should realize that when some lost person buffets us, it is not the believer that is being downed, but it is the Lord! Realize that when you are buffeted, the person will answer to Almighty God.

I was doing door to door visitation once and a man came to the door. I told him who I was and that I was just going door to door in the neighborhood to invite folks to church. His mouth opened and the cloud of nastiness billowed forth. As I left, I was shocked at his response, but more than that, I was concerned about that man. He will have to answer to God for his actions.

Since we know that God is just, then we can know that the punishment will be completely just and correct.

Chafer draws an interesting contrast for us in that he mentions that God's chastisement is a show of God's Divine Love, while God's judgment is a show of God's Divine Wrath.

Guess which I'm glad I'm going to be on the receiving end of?

The question that often comes when you are witnessing to some of the cults and isms of our day is the eternal nature of man. How do the cults view man and eternity?

There are some that hold to the total destruction of the lost. Others see the lost as asleep now for a time, and then they will be destroyed. Some, when describing their belief state that at the point of death, the person becomes non-existent. Think about that for a moment. If you become something, can you be nonexistent? NO!

We hold that the lost person, as well as the saved person, at death are conscious beings and always will be. The quality of life will however differ drastically.

How can we prove that those holding to "soul sleep" and total destruction are incorrect? a. Luke 16:19-31 shows the rich man and Lazarus in Sheol, one on the side of torment, and the other on the side of God. Both were conscious of their surroundings, as well as one

another. b. Logically why would God put the lost to sleep till the judgment and then torment, or destroy them. It makes no sense. c. The Scriptures never speak of soul sleep, or the total destruction of the lost. Why would anyone assume it?

The lost are going to be just as eternal as we are! They just won't be comfortable.

With all of the emphasis on the love of God, we have tended to shy away from talking about hell. Some wonder why God would ever describe in His Word, the terrors of Hell? It is obvious to many, to give people a proper choice of heaven and hell. The prophets gave God's message of destruction and the purpose was that God was hoping that some would turn from their sin, but they did not.

Hell is described quite well in the scripture. It may well be that God doesn't want anyone telling Him that they would have accepted the Lord if they had known how bad it would be.

Another heresy of our day concerns a place where God purifies the lost in preparation for their time in heaven. The Mormons teach that if you don't accept their teaching here that you will be given a second chance after death. The problem is that you will have to be purified for a while in hell until you are ready for heaven.

The Catholics also have their thought except they call it purgatory. They feel that if a church member is not good enough at death they will go to purgatory for purification. Your relatives can pray and pay you out of purgatory if they desire to. The one big question is, how much paying and praying will it take. You never know if you've done enough.

Is punishment remedial? It depends on what you are talking about. When punishing a child it is quite remedial. You will find that they respond quite well to punishment. Our daughter told us that she had said no-no to an item. Our granddaughter touched it and received a swat with the second no-no. The "little angel" touched it again, and before her mother could do anything, the angel was squinting her eyes and bracing for the swat that she knew she was going to receive. Remember the will we were talking about?

If you are talking about the believer, yes punishment is remedial, in that the chastisement is to bring the believer into a proper relationship with his God.

If you are talking about the criminal, yes there is a remedial aspect to punishment. Not only in the one punished, but in those that hear of his punishment. There is one country that has the death penalty for anyone caught with drugs. Would you believe they have no drug problem in that country?

If you are talking about punishment of the lost, then no, punishment is not remedial. Their punishment is set and eternal.

One further question that we need to deal with. If a person has not heard the Gospel will they be in heaven? Some believe that the lost are lost, because they have rejected the Gospel, however if they have never heard the Gospel, then they are not held responsible. Others say that all are lost, no matter whether they have heard the Gospel and rejected, or if they have never heard.

What is the answer? Are they lost or saved? First of all, if they are saved, then why worry about going to them with the Gospel. The great commission is a foolish thing for Christ to have given. Secondly, Rom. 1-2 shows that God has given light to all of mankind concerning Himself. If a person responds to that light then God will see to it that the Gospel is preached to that person before they die. God could not be just if He withheld the Gospel from anyone that was seriously seeking the creator.

All are responsible to respond to the light that they have. If they don't respond, then God has no reason, nor responsibility to save them.

Well, maybe just one more question. There usually is a question that comes up in relation to punishment. I would like to list some comments on the subject of babies that die. Some believe that they go immediately to be with the Lord as all dead saints, and others feel that they go immediately to the place of eternal suffering. I think that this subject was covered in a previous study, but I will include some thoughts here as well.

I will not answer this question for all readers, but would like to list some information and texts that might allow you to do further study.

A related question is the mentally retarded, or physically deformed, which do not acquire the mental capability of understanding the Gospel message. Those that cannot understand would be the same as a baby that died in infancy. Those that can understand, and that can make conscious decisions, will be held accountable, as every other man woman and child that understands the message and rejects it. On the other hand, if they accept the Gospel, they will enjoy the Lord for all of eternity.

II Sam. 12:16-23 is the key passage of Scripture that relates to our question. It depicts David in the context of losing his son to death. Verse 23 mentions, "But now he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

This is a very plain and bold statement of David's belief that his child was in paradise.

Job in chapter three laments the fact that he was even born. (11-13) "Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not expire when I came out of my mother's body? For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest." This indicates his belief that death as a new born baby would have put him at rest eternally.

Those that believe that babies go to punishment normally set forth the fact that all men have the sin nature, and that all sinned in Adam. If that is true then the only way to heaven is the Lord Jesus, however the question is this. Did Christ die for the sin of the world, including the sin nature? Yes. He did all that was required to bring man to God. The work is done. Those that reject Christ, reject His work on the cross and suffer eternally for their rejection. Those that accept are eternally with Him. The child that has not been given opportunity to say ye, or nay would automatically be included in the work of Christ.

The opposition would say of this then that the heathen are automatically saved. NO! They have rejected the natural revelation of God in nature and in them. They have rejected and are on their

way to eternal torment. Their children that have not reached accountability, or possibly a better term would be the age of understandability, will be with the Lord.

Scripture text? Only those that have been given. I have known good, fundamental men that oppose my thought, but many others that agree. Study it for yourself.

We might close with the thought that God is Just - perfectly just. He will not send a baby to heaven if it is not just, nor will He send a baby to hell if it is not just. He will do as His justice demands, no matter what we decide on the subject.

This should be a comfort to those that loose a child, or that have a badly retarded child. God is the God of comfort and He can help anyone through these situations.

Some references that may help: II Cor. 1:3; Luke 18:16; Romans 8:28; I Thess. 4:13, 16, 17.

In a situation where some parent is in one of these situations, it would be best to just comfort them without bringing up the subject. If they ask, then give them the information that you have. The key, however is the comfort that they need.

APPLICATION:

1. If I believed that God does chastise, why in the world would I continue in sin? If I believed that chastisement turns into scourging, why in the world would I continue in sin? Both are beyond me! Yet, some do it!

I have a very dear Christian acquaintance that related to me that as a young man he had a good business and God started leading him away from that business to go north to work as a layperson in a church. He said no many times to the Lord's promptings. He was on his death bed with pneumonia when he finally decided that the Lord was serious.

He said, yes and went north. He said his job over the years payed better than his business could ever have paid, and that his health was

better as well. He was able to retire and spend many years enjoying his life and family due to that simple yes to God's prompting.

2. If we really believe Heb. 12, and what it indicates about chastisement, we would certainly be moved to care for our own physical children in the same manner that our Heavenly Father cares for us. We should seek to break the self will of the child before the Lord has to do it in adult life, when the chastisement will be hard.

3. What do you know of hell? Let me just list some of the topics concerning eternal punishment for the lost.

Darkness: Matt 8:12; Ps. 49:19

Bound: Matt. 22:13

Memory: Luke 16

Conscience

Lust and Desire: Rev. 22:11

No hope: Isa 38:18; Prov. 11:7

Fire: Jude seven; Matt. 5:22; Mk. 9:44

Companions: Rev. 21:8; 22:15

Fear:

Isolation: Jude 13

Pain:

The Bible tells us that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" Rom. 3:23. The lost are sinners and deserve the very best that Satan has to offer, and that is, his eternal repose, that is his eternal dwelling place, that is his eternal destination, that is the eternal burning fire of hell.

The sinner is lost and on his way to hell and nothing can stop that decent into the place prepared for him lest he call on the merciful name of Jesus Christ.

Your choice is heaven or hell.

Your choice is eternal delight or eternal agony.

Your choice is eternal life or eternal death.

Your choice is the refreshing waters of the river of life or the flames of hell.

Your choice is eternity with the Father or eternity with the father of lies.

Your choice is eternal light or eternal darkness.

Your choice is eternal comfort or eternal suffering.

Your choice is eternal joy or eternal sorrow.

Your choice is a glorified body or a tormented body.

Your choice is eternal fellowship with Christ or eternal fallowship with Satan.

Your choice is accept Jesus Christ as your Savior or accept the consequences of following the devil into the lake of fire.

That is if you call that a choice.

To me the choice is obvious to the most casual observer.

To put it as one flippant observer of the Gospel has put it, "It's turn or burn."

TRIUMPH OVER SIN

We need to realize that evil is not eternal. It did not exist in eternity past however it is everlasting. It will exist into eternity future. It is important to know that the evil in the future, exists only in the lake of fire. Once Christ finishes the judgments, all evil will be isolated with the Devil and his, in the Lake of Fire. (Rev. 20:10, Rev. 20:14)

All evil will be eradicated from God's domain, one way or another as the eternal state is instituted!

Will all evil be confined in the Lake of fire? This is a philosophical question. The evil will be confined, that is the people and fallen angels however one might ponder whether they will be able to do further evil in their confines. I suspect, that outward acts of evil will be missing. Hell has the idea of silence and binding. This would make all but mental evil impossible. If the torment is as bad as I suspect it will be, then it is probable that they will not think of evil, but of their pain and torment.

Indeed, Luke 16:19 ff indicates that the lost have very good thoughts. The rich man was concerned with his brothers. It may be as they bow before the Lord in submission that the priority straightening will be permanent.

Reason would require that a righteous God would put a limit to the progression and lasting of evil. He must stop it at some point in time. Indeed, the lake of fire and all it means may well be His method of putting a final stop to all evil. He binds it forever.

A brief overview of the resurrections would be good at this point. The Lord took the Old Testament saints out of Abraham's bosom when He ascended to heaven. The New Testament saints will be taken at the Rapture. The Old Testament saints are resurrected at the beginning of the Millennium. Where they are at present is not clear. The thought of "present with the Lord" is clear in Scripture however they are not in Sheol. The thought seems to be that they are raised in the end time, so there may be a place for them in the earth in some

manner. My personal opinion would place them with the New Testament saints, in the Lord's presence. The lost of all ages will be raised at the end of the Millennial kingdom for the Great White Throne judgment. The saved will spend eternity with Christ, and the lost will spend eternity in the lake of fire with the Devil.

The raising of Lazarus was not a resurrection as such, for he had to go through death twice. The final resurrections are for all eternity.

1. Christ's own resurrection was the first resurrection unto eternal everlasting life. He is the example of our own coming resurrection.

2. The resurrection of the saints at the rapture for the joining in the air.

3. The resurrection of the righteous Jews at the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the millennium. They will be a part of the fulfillment of all the promises of the Old Testament.

4. The resurrection of the lost. Rev. 20:12-13, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hades delivered up the dead that were in them...."

Some feel that it is possible for some righteous from the Millennium to be raised at this judgment. They were killed in the Millennium. Whether any righteous die in the Millennium is the question. If there are, then those believers will be raised either in a separate resurrection, or at the raising of the dead. I question there being a resurrection that we aren't told of however.

Some suggest that Jn. 5:25-29 speaks of one general resurrection for all the dead. It is not viewing number, but the fact of all being raised. Other scriptures show that there are more than one resurrection.

The final enemy is death. I Cor. 15:26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." How can a believer use that verse in his own life, or in the life of others?

This may relate to the fact that believers may not die in a bed of roses. You may find some that hang onto life tenaciously and struggle to continue living right up to the last moment, and with their dieing breath desire to live. Others may die with a smile on their face, looking forward to seeing the Lord.

Death is an enemy. It need not be for the believer. If the believer finds his purpose in Christ then he may well go to see Him very peacefully. On the other hand if a person has not found that peace, and if a person has much to do for his Lord, there may be a real dread of dieing. I've on the other hand seen people that were probably lost, die in relative peace.

Death is an enemy and we need to realize it and not condemn believers, if they don't have the peace at death that we think that they should.

What is the purpose of the end times, the resurrections and the whole end times agenda? I Cor. 15:28, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." It is to give God the preeminence in all things!

Chafer mentions four dwelling places to be found in Rev. 20:11 through 22:7. The new heaven, The new Jerusalem or heavenly city, The new earth, The place known as "without". He goes into some detail concerning these three abodes of the believer. A good study is to be found in each of the four.

He mentions that there seems to be a freedom to travel from one to the other in the first three, however those dwelling without, are limited to that sphere of dwelling. In your spare time you might like to dwell on the following text and let me know what you find. I have not studied it as yet, but it has some very interesting possibilities for truth which I have never heard before (Isa 66:22-24).

The new city is evidently that city which Abraham looked for in Heb. 11:10,16. Thus we must assume that Israel is involved in this city. It is called the bride and the lamb's wife so the church will be involved in it as well.

There is a discussion about whether this city is ever placed upon the earth, or whether it may be a satellite city. In other words does it hover over the surface of the earth. Since it is never mentioned that it is placed upon the earth it is quite possible that it is hovering, or more exactly "PLACED" above the surface of the earth. It really makes little difference that I can see, other than we want to be as Scriptural as possible.

On the other hand the earth was promised to Israel not the church. It is possible that the city is basically for the church and the earth is basically for Israel. Why, I don't have the foggiest. The problem with this is that Israel's tribes are upon the gates of the city.

I'm not sure there would be a distinction since eternity is prepared for all of us. I would assume that the city is the dwelling place that Christ went to prepare for us. I would not be hurt if my next door neighbor was a Jew. I rather suspect that the city is for dwelling and the earth is for enjoying, but that is doctrine of Derickson.

The lighting system will be of the latest possible design, or should I say of the oldest possible design. It is the Glory of the Lord. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did light it, and the Lamb is the lamp of it." Rev 21:23

Indeed, the glories of the new state will be quite extreme. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isa 65:17) That's something to think about! We won't remember the ocean beaches, the mountains, the bluffs of Wyoming, the glories of Montana, The hills of South Dakota, nor the desolateness of Nebraska! (I was born and raised in Nebraska so I can say that. It isn't altogether true, anyway.)

We see in Rev 21:1-4 that God is dwelling with man and that there will be no more tears, death, sorrow, crying, pain or former things. This is not to say that before God eliminates those things that He won't confront believers with things that will draw much pain and sorrow, things from their lives that were remiss in their serving Him completely. I would relate this to unconfessed sin. We will not be held accountable, yet we may well be shown what we could have done for God had we followed Him in all that He desired.

Rom. 11:33, 36 state, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

AMEN! What a fitting end to our study of our sin as man.

Possibly a contrast would make things even more pointed.

THE TRIUMPH OF GOD OVER SIN AND EVIL

THE PLUS SIDE OF TRIUMPH TRIUMPH

**THE HEAVENS RESTORED
FIRE**

**THE EARTH RESTORED
FIRE**

**CHRIST SEATED WITH GOD
FIRE**

**NATURE AT REST
IN TORMENT**

**THE RIGHTEOUS WITH GOD
IN TORMENT**

**NEW JERUSALEM IN PLACE
TORMENT**

NO EVIL, CRYING OR PAIN

ETERNAL JOY

ETERNAL PEACE

THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF

SATAN IN LAKE OF

DEATH IN LAKE OF

THE LOST IN LAKE OF

THE FALLEN ANGELS

THE FALSE PROPHET

THE BEAST IN

ETERNAL TORMENT

NO PEACE

NO HOPE

SOTERIOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION TO SOTERIOLOGY

Soteriology comes from the Greek term "soterion" meaning salvation and "logia" meaning study. A study of salvation.

The meaning of salvation communicates the following ideas in Scripture: deliverance, safety, preservation, soundness, restoration, and healing. It is in a general sense a work on the behalf of man, by His creator. In specific, we are talking about that act or work of God that restores full and inseparable fellowship between God and man.

We will be covering the doctrine of Salvation by topics. The topics will be covered in the following order: conviction, repentance, faith, forgiveness, regeneration, propitiation, redemption, reconciliation, sanctification, justification, security, fore-knowledge/predestination/election, Calvinism vs. Arminianism, atonement, and glorification.

I heard an interview of three women healers years ago. One of them was Ruth Carter Stapleton. The host of the talk show asked her what it meant to be born again. She related that it could be many things. It could be one thing for a Roman Catholic, and something else for another person. She mentioned that it could happen when you saw a beautiful painting. She called it a religious awareness. Several questions sprang into my mind after hearing her definition of being born again.

Is there a difference between being born again and religious awareness? Can you be born again in more than one way? Does knowing you've had a religious experience get you to heaven?

On the tape is a woman that was in the hospital and she picked up her Bible and opened it. She opened to two pages that were completely blank. On those pages God literally wrote with Jesus Blood the words "I love you."

Is it any wonder why some pastors preach against the Charismatic movement? Personally, I wonder why more pastors don't.

I trust salvation and being born again mean more to you than seeing a beautiful painting.

In salvation two thoughts come to mind. Chafer puts it this way, "on the one hand, to be saved is to be rescued from a lost estate, while, on the other hand, to be saved is to be brought into a saved estate, vitally renewed, and made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." (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.)

Let us look at salvation as a whole and see where it has been as well as where it is going.

Salvation is from eternal hell: Jn 3:16 All of mankind is under the penalty of death, and eternal torment. This is true no matter how hard the liberal theologians deny it. It is a sentence that is set, and it is a sentence that is to be carried out.

Some tell us not to talk about hell, because we do not want to scare people into heaven. Personally if they have a genuine salvation experience, what does it matter if they listened out of fear, or even terror. It is the Gospel message that must be given, and it is hell that is a part of the message. Christ spoke of eternal torment a number of times in His own ministry.

Salvation is for God's purpose: Eph. 2:7 "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Naturally man is the recipient of all this, yet God did it because He desired it - not because we conned Him into it. We surely benefit from His grace and His riches, but grace and riches are only a by-product of His overall program - bringing glory to Himself.

Salvation is free and not attainable by works: Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."; Eph. 2:8-10

Salvation, the most important, the most beautiful, the most valuable thing that man might gain. It is free, it is without strings, and it is a gift from our Creator.

Many there are through the centuries that have tried to work for salvation, to fight for salvation and to gain salvation, yet it is there for the asking.

Salvation is a past, present and future condition in two ways:

1. THE PHYSICAL REALM: It is offered in the Old Testament economies, it is offered in the New Testament economy, and it will be offered in the future millennial economy. It was available to all of mankind in the past, it is available to all of mankind in this present time, and it will be available to all of mankind in the future days. It will be offered until the consummation of the age.

2. THE SPIRITUAL REALM: On an individual basis it is past, due to the election of God. It is present in that the saint is being saved from eternal damnation. It will be a completed work in the future.

We are beings in transition in this life. We are saved in God's mind at this moment in time, yet we are not yet completely and finally saved until we are present before Him in our glorified bodies.

APPLICATION:

1. God has always been in the saving business and will remain in that business until all is complete.

2. None that should be saved will be left, for God will not cut off the program before someone gets there.

Might I share a personal belief with you. I think that it is a valid application of an Old Testament account. The people who owned and occupied the land of Israel, before the Israelites conquered them, were a vile people. God gave them the forty years that Israel wandered in the wilderness to turn to Him. He was longsuffering with them. He gave them extra time, just in case they might change. This gave them many years to turn to God yet they did nothing. There would have

been grace for them just as there will be grace for any that want to respond to him today!

The solemn point is this; at some point in time the Lord will cut off His offer of salvation. He will swing into the completion of His program for this earth and it's people, closing the door to salvation.

In closing, just remember that salvation was God's idea. He did a fine job of putting together His plan in eternity past, even though man attempts to change that plan from time to time by denying God's part in it, or by denying that man needs the plan.

We need the plan, and it is free!

CONVICTION

Conviction comes in two types. The lost experience conviction when the Lord is drawing them unto Himself. The believer experiences conviction when the Lord is drawing them unto Him. The difference is that the lost benefits, when he responds, by receiving salvation, while the believer regains fellowship with the Lord.

What is it like to be under conviction as a lost person? A man I ministered with in Denver, CO years ago told me of his talk with his father, when the father was on his death bed. The man had witnessed to his dad many times, but to no avail. The father told his son just before he died that he knew that the Gospel was what he needed. He knew that his son was right in what he was telling him. With tears in his eyes, he said, "But I just can't accept Jesus." The man knew his sin, he knew that Christ was his answer, yet even when facing death, he refused the peace of salvation.

Others when faced with their conviction, fall before the throne of grace accepting the work of Christ on their behalf.

The moments before a person accepts the Lord vary from person to person. Some are very emotional. They have lived so long under sins' domination, that they are elated when they find there is a way of freedom. Others that have lived a fairly decent life, may just move through the acceptance of the Gospel with no real emotional moving.

What is it like to be under conviction as a saved person that has sin in his, or her life? What is it like when God is leading a person into something and the person refuses to move ahead?

Again, different people react and feel differently however there are a few common items that we might mention. There will quite often be a sense that the Lord is far away. If there have been chastisements, then the person knows that God is dealing with them. There may be a feeling of dread of what might come next. There may also be a very severe loneliness, spiritually.

I will share one brief illustration. I was raised in a Christian Church, and was baptized many years before I was saved. As I was learning things in Bible College, I came to the place where I knew that I should be baptized as a believer. Being a very shy person, I did not want to go through all that. As time went by, I was very definitely aware of my disobedience. The finances went to pot, work was not going well, the family was not doing well, and all because I was saying no. Conviction is powerful!

DEFINITION:

**"In evangelical PROTESTANTISM, attainment of a sense of sin and a need of salvation through the work of the HOLY SPIRIT."
(Kauffman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967)**

Do you like his thought, that it is an attainment? I think that this may be a misnomer. It is not something that is sought after in any case that I can remember. It is something that is brought upon a person not something that one might attain. Kaufman is correct however in the thought that it is a "sense of sin and a need of salvation." He is also correct to attribute this ministry to the Holy Spirit.

"To convict, confute, refute, usually with the suggestion of putting the convicted person to shame;" (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co, p 239)

"CONVICT, kon-vikt', CONVICTION, kon-vik'-shun....It always implies the presentation of evidence. It is a decision presumed to be based upon a careful and discriminating consideration of all the proofs offered, and has a legal character, the verdict being rendered either in God's judgment (Rom. 3 19) [think I disagree on this ref.] or before men (Jn. 8 46) by an appeal to their consciences in which God's law is written (Rom. 2 15). Since such conviction is addressed to the heart of the guilty, as well as concerning him externally, the word "reprove" is sometimes substituted." (Orr, James; "THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1939, article by H. E. Jacobs pp 707,708)

"The meaning of conviction as a law term is being found guilty. In common language it means being persuaded or convinced. In theology it means being condemned at the bar of one's own conscience as a sinner in view of the law of God. It is the antecedent to repentance, and is often accompanied by a painful sense of exposure to God's wrath. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, showing the heinousness of sin and the soul's exposure to divine wrath." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 219)

It would seem that the word convict in the Bible has a similar meaning to the word in our own day. It relates to a person being proven guilty. It carries, as well, the thought that the person realizes and concurs with the verdict.

So, now that we understand the term, how does conviction strike or affect a lost person? The lost person reacts to conviction much as the saved person. Both are proven guilty, and both agree with the verdict.

1. A feeling of guilt for the sin that he knows that he has committed. As a small child I enjoyed going into the dime store and shoplifting (I did not enjoy the buzz of the stealing, but rather the taste of the candy, or the joy of the item taken).

Very small items, usually just a piece of candy. As I was enjoying the candy I usually had regrets over what I had done. I had knowledge that it was wrong. I felt guilty - isn't that odd? I WAS GUILTY! So why should I be surprised that I felt that way?

The feeling of guilt can only come when you realize that you are guilty. In my case I was being confronted with what I had been taught from the Word of God in church (even though I was unsaved)! I had the sense of what right and wrong was.

The lost know when they have done wrong, else why would they try to cover their wrong. Watergate is an example. The men involved went to great lengths to cover their wrong. John 3:20 may reveal

something on this question - "For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

The saved person may realize and submit to conviction quicker than the lost person. The believer knows immediately when they are out of fellowship with the Lord. This brings conviction quickly.

Conviction comes to the Christian through their conscience and the spoken Word.

From the conscience: John 8:9, "and they who heard it, being convicted by their own conscience," The context of this passage is the woman taken in adultery. Christ told them that the one without sin in their life should cast the first stone. The lost people were convicted by their conscience. They knew that none of them were without sin. It is quite possible that they were guilty of the same sin.

From the spoken Word: I Cor. 14:24, 25, "But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convicted of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God and report that God is in you of a truth."

Just a couple of observations from this text: a. Conviction comes from prophecy in the New Testament Church. b. The unsaved have the secrets of their hearts revealed. This is a good example of the conviction of the lost. His response was neat - he fell down to worship God!

We see this in our own worship services today. At times the unsaved enter the services, hear the Gospel, and come to know the Lord. They do this because they come under conviction through what they have heard.

If the spoken Word has this effect on a person, then we could, I think safely assume, that the written word would also be capable of bringing conviction. I have heard the testimonies of several people that were reading the Word, when the Holy Spirit brought them to the Lord, without the intervention of another person. Just the reading of the Word, is sufficient to bring people to the Lord.

The prime element of all sources of conviction, is the fact that all are dependant upon the work of the Holy Spirit within the life of the person, be they saved or lost.

We can see this in John 16:7-11. 1. The Holy Spirit will convict or reprove the world of SIN. 2. The Holy Spirit will convict or reprove the world of righteousness. 3. The Holy Spirit will convict or reprove the world of judgment.

All conviction comes to the lost via the work of the Holy Spirit. All conviction comes to the believer via the work of the Holy Spirit.

APPLICATION:

1. Mr. Unger suggested of conviction, "In theology it means being condemned at the bar of one's own conscience as a sinner in view of the law of God." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright , Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.) How do we make this practical for our own lives?

If the only possible source of true conviction is via the Holy Spirit, then why do we try so hard to bring young believers into conformity with our life styles? True, we should show them what the Scripture teaches, and help them to understand that what they are doing is wrong. There really isn't any amount of pressure that we can apply, that will bring them into a state of honest conviction? We probably should leave it to the Holy Spirit.

Why don't we seek help from the person that can help in the situation? THE HOLY SPIRIT! This may not only relate to life style, but it may well relate to bad habits, or it may even relate to baptism. We need to be sure they know all they need to know about these things, yet the Holy Spirit is the only one that can bring them to a decision to change a life style, or break a habit, or come to the church for baptism.

2. Conviction seems to be a confrontation with the evidence to show guilt no matter what the response to the conviction might be. In salvation conviction brings evidence of guilt. That conviction may be ignored, or responded to. In the believer, the conscience, Word, or possibly another believer using the Word, produces proof of sin and

error. Again, that evidence can be ignored, or responded to. Matt 18:15ff illustrates this. If you go to a brother and he does not respond, you take witnesses. The person has proof given to him - he responds, and changes or continues, and suffers the consequences.

Conviction, then brings the person to the point of response/no response. It can do no more. The mind and will must take it from there. Example: In past sections the reader has been confronted with a study of the fruit of the Spirit as it was contrasted with no fruit of the spirit. All readers have been confronted. How have they reacted? Have they changed their lifestyle, or are they remaining unchanged?

The presentation of the study is like presenting the Word. It brings a person to the point of response/no response. The Holy Spirit takes over and confronts through the conscience.

It is not my responsibility to force a person to respond. The prophets presented the evidence of Israel's great sin. They did the job. The fact that Israel didn't respond was disheartening I'm sure, but the prophet had done his job.

We, as Christian's, need to go to the world and do the job. The Holy Spirit will do the convicting. The people will respond one way or another.

3. This is a judgment question, but I think it might do well to ask it anyway. What outward behaviors, or mannerisms, or frame of mind does a person present when he is under the conviction of the Holy Spirit? They may be very nervous. Many, when in church stare at the floor as if totally uninterested. They may be full of honest questions not just argumentative questions. They may at times disoriented in their thinking, and their own beliefs when they are confronted with the Word.

I think the story in John 8 may indicate an uneasiness to truth and possibly an uneasiness to be close to a man of God - in this case Jesus Himself. Note also should be taken that these were unsaved men who were convicted by their conscience. They were so convicted that they left!

It has been said of the lost, "You can't repent too soon, because you don't know how soon it will be too late." It has been said of the saved, "True repentance has a double aspect. It looks upon things past with a weeping eye, and upon the future with a watchful eye." (McKenzie, E.C.; "14,000 QUIPS AND QUOTES FOR WRITERS AND SPEAKERS"; New York: Greenwich House, 1980, p 446)

4. What about the person that has sin in their life - maybe has had for several years. Can you guess what they are like? They are unhappy, they have no peace, they are full of guilt, and they are critical of everyone else's sin. (At times super sensitive in areas of their sin.) They are quite often involved in covering up their own sin. That is one sad case. If you run into this type person, suspect unconfessed sin.

David Brainard searched for peace for twenty years. He was constantly plagued with conviction in his life. He finally found peace with the Lord. I would like to quote from his diary.

"I was from my youth somewhat sober, and inclined to melancholy; but do not remember any thing of conviction of sin, worthy of remark, till I was, I believe, about seven or eight years of age. Then I became concerned for my soul, and terrified at the thoughts of death; and was driven to the performance of religious duties. . . ."

"Sometime in the beginning of winter, 1738, it pleased God, one Sabbath morning, as I was walking out for secret duties, to give me on a sudden such a sense of my danger, and the wrath of God, that I stood amazed, and my former good frames presently vanished. From the view which I had of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed all that day, fearing that the vengeance of God would soon overtake me. I was much dejected; kept much alone; and sometimes envied the birds and beasts their happiness, because they were not exposed to eternal misery, as I evidently saw that I was. Thus I lived from day to day, being frequently in great distress: sometimes there appeared mountains before me to obstruct my hopes of mercy; and the work of conversion appeared so great, that I thought I should never be the subject of it. I used, however, to pray and cry to God, and perform other duties with great earnestness; and thus hoped by some means to make the case better."

He mentions a night when he felt that the earth would open up and swallow him, sending him to his grave and his soul to hell. "I was wont to tell God in my prayers, that now I had those very dispositions of soul which he required, and on which he showed mercy to others, and thereupon to beg and plead for mercy to me. But when I found no relief, and was still oppressed with guilt and fears of wrath, my soul was in a tumult, and my heart rose against God, as dealing hardly with me."

"At some turns, for a few moments, I seemed to myself lost and undone; but then would shrink back immediately from the sight, because I dared not venture myself into the hands of God, as wholly helpless, and at the disposal of his sovereign pleasure. I dared not see that important truth concerning myself, that I was 'dead in trespasses and sins.' But when I had, as it were, thrust away these views of myself at any time, I felt distressed to have the same discoveries of myself again; for I greatly feared being given over of God to final stupidity. When I thought of putting it off to a more 'convenient season,' the conviction was so close and powerful, that the present time was the best, and probably the only time, that I dared not put it off."

"After a considerable time spent in similar exercises and distree, one morning, while I was walking in a solitary place, as usual, I at once saw that all my contrivances and projects to effect or procure deliverance and salvation for myself were utterly in vain; I was brought quite to a stand, as finding myself totally lost. I had thought many times before, that the difficulties in my way were very great; but now I saw, in another and very different light, that it was for ever impossible for me to do any thing toward helping or delivering myself."

"At this time the way of salvation opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of any other way of salvation; I was amazed that I had not dropped my own contrivances and complied with this lovely, blessed, and excellency way before. If I could have been saved by my own duties, or any other way that I had formerly contrived, my whole soul would now have refused. I wondered that all the world did not see and comply with this way of salvation, entirely by the righteousness of Christ.

"The sweet relish of what I then felt continued with me for several days, almost constantly, in a greater or less degree. I could not but sweetly rejoice in God, lying down and rising up. The next Lord's day I felt something of the same kind, though not so powerful as before. But not long after, I was again involved in darkness, and in great distress; yet not of the same kind with my distress under convictions. I was guilty, afraid, and ashamed to come before God; and exceedingly pressed with a sense of guilt; but it was not long before I felt, I trust, true repentance and joy in God."

I suspect if the American public experienced this type of conviction, we would see some sudden changes in our country. I also suspect that if American Christians were to view sin as this man viewed it, we would see drastic changes in the Church and in the world.

REPENTANCE

When I was about ten I was commonly known as the cake and icing snitcher. I would break small pieces of icing off of the edge of the cake. As my memory serves me, I never cut a piece of cake to eat - only little snitches. One day my mother found a piece of cake missing! I was naturally the suspect of the hour, only I was innocent. My mother was bent on having me confess and repent of my crime. I told her multiplied millions of times that I had not done the nasty deed. Finally, after several hours of sitting in front of her, I admitted to the crime that I had not committed. I had many things to do, and one of them wasn't sitting in front of her.

I confessed, but there was no repentance - indeed, there could be no repentance because I had done nothing wrong. In God's eyes, He seeks people who are knowledgeable of their sin, and willing to repent.

Repentance according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary is ".....the action or process of repenting esp. for misdeeds or moral shortcomings....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Vine mentions, "to perceive afterwards ('meta', after, implying change, 'noeo', to perceive; 'nous', the mind, the seat of moral reflection), in contrast to 'pronoeo', to perceive beforehand, hence signifies to change one's mind or purpose," (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., p 281-282)

Unger tells us "in the theological and ethical sense a fundamental and thorough change in the hearts of men from sin and toward God."

"Without some measure of faith no one can truly repent, and repentance never attains to its deepest character till the sinner realizes through saving faith how great is the grace of god against whom he has sinned."

"On the other hand there can be no saving faith without true repentance." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Repentance is a change of mind:

There should be a sense of dislike toward sin, as well as a desire, and decision not to do it again. When I was snitching the cake, I was not sorry, I was not going to stop doing it; unless the punishment made it repugnant. Even when confronted with the snitching, I was not sorry for my wrong, only for getting caught.

In the case of sin and repentance toward God, there needs to be a surrendering to His will and desire. In sin, we have set aside His will or commands. In repentance, we need to include the thought of a return to what He has commanded, and turn away from our desire to set Him aside.

Repentance is a gift of God: Acts 5:31 God set Christ as the one able and desirous to extend repentance and forgiveness to the Jews. The fact that they, for the most part, rejected this free offer does not negate the offer.

God, due to the rejection of the Jews, opened His program of grace to the gentiles (Acts 11:18). The gentile world knew of their need, and multitudes received this offer of grace, repentance and salvation.

Repentance is something that God leads us to:

Romans 2:4 Our salvation is based squarely on the goodness of God. He formed the plan, He executed the plan, and He draws us to the plan. Had He not acted, we would not have sought to please Him. We would not have sought to find Him. We certainly would not have sought to repent.

Repentance can have three stages: Chafer suggests these three stages for his reader's consideration.

1. Repentance comes from fear of the penalty. In this repentance there is no sorrow over what was done, just dread of the consequences.

2. The second stage of repentance comes when the person realizes the baseness of sin. It results in self condemnation, because the person is so vile and sinful. I suspect that this is the stage that David Brainard was in during much of his struggle.

3. Upon salvation the person can more fully understand the evilness of sin, and realize the fullness of God's grace. This moves the person to genuine repentance, which can give the peace that the person has been seeking.

Repentance is a change of mind:

This thought is seen in Matt. 21:28-29 where the son that would not go to work, later changed his mind and went. Within the idea of a change of mind, is the fact that the mind must consider and weigh the information, and then decide. Along with the change of mind in this case, is the act of the will to go.

In the case of sin, there needs to be a consideration of the information, a decision not to sin followed by a continuing action of the will, not to sin. To decide, and not to act is not the desired process. To decide followed by action is what God desires in His people.

This is also true in the lost person that is considering the claims of Christ. He can consider the information, he can even decide that the information is valid, but until he acts, there can be no salvation.

Repentance requires no sorrow:

Repentance requires no sorrow however sorrow may be an integrated part of the person's experience when coming to repentance. Technically sorrow may lead to repentance, but repentance seems to be separate from sorrow. (II Cor. 7:9-11)

Repentance is not separate from belief:

"repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, but it is included in believing and could not be separated from it." (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.)

So why are there two terms? Why does the Bible speak of repentance and belief, if they are inseparable?

In Acts 16:31 the jailor was told that he needed to believe to be saved. The fact that he asked what he must do to be saved demands that he had already gone through a mental process of realizing he was wrong, and that God was right. He had already decided to follow God, rather than the world system. Thus, he was told to believe, rather than to repent.

Chafer mentions, "it is clear that the New Testament does not impose repentance upon the unsaved as a condition of salvation." (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 do not think that I can agree with his conclusion. How can you have salvation without having a change of mind, or repentance? You are lost, you are condemned, you are in the world system, you enjoy the world system, and you can't be saved without turning from that system, to God! THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE! (See the following references to see that lost people are told to repent for their salvation and belief is not mentioned. Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; II Pet. 3:9.)

I would have to disagree with anyone that states that repentance is not required for salvation. Belief and repentance are both involved in the process. You can believe, but not repent - resulting in no salvation. You can't repent unless you believe.

Repentance is based on the realization that what is (present life), is incorrect, and that what will be (salvation), is correct. It is a

realization that God has truth, and is the answer. It is also a realization that the world has no truth, and that it is deception.

World Relief had a film that depicted an old Muslim man that had seen his sons come to know and embrace Christ. He knew in his own mind that what they had done was correct. He, however, would not leave his old ways. He had the belief, but there was no change of direction - repentance if you will.

Repentance is a work of the Spirit:

Chafer states that repentance is a work of the Spirit and lists Ephesians 2:8 for proof. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:"

I do not see that this is a proof text for his statement. The thought is wrapped up in the truth of this text, yet the text does not state this.

All that God does in man is a work of the Spirit, be it belief, repentance, or salvation. As the Spirit moves in lost man, he has the choice to respond or reject that work. When lost man responds and turns to God, then that repentance is truly a work of the Spirit.

Repentance is limited in the lost person:

"No individual can turn to Christ from some other confidence without a change of mind, and that, it should be noted, is all the repentance a spiritually dead individual can ever effect." (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.)

In his concluding paragraph Chafer states, "It is asserted that repentance, which is a change of mind, enters of necessity into the very act of believing on Christ, since one cannot turn to Christ from other objects of confidence without that change of mind. Upwards of 150 texts-including all of the greatest gospel invitations-limit the human responsibility in salvation to believing or to faith. To this simple requirement nothing could be added if the glories of grace are to be preserved." (Taken from Systematic Theology written by Lewis Sperry Chafer © 1948, 1976 by Dallas Theological Seminary,

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This defines belief as a confidence in which requires a change of mind or repentance. He seems to bottle repentance and belief into one package. This is not an uncommon line of thinking, which follows quickly after Calvinistic thought.

PROBLEM: I believed in God - in Christ - long before I knew that I needed to be saved, long before ever committing myself to Him and His work on the cross for me.

I knew and believed many of the Bible stories, the miracles, etc. I knew that Christ lived, and died on the cross. I believed that Christ existed. I believed that God existed. I believed that God created the heaven and the earth.

I even, somewhere in my mind, knew that God was watching over me, yet I did not know the reason for the cross, nor did I know that I needed Christ. I had belief, but there was no knowledge that a change was needed.

Ultimately, through circumstances, I was confronted with the Gospel and knew that it was true. I still was lost as I could be as one born in Adam. Until I decided - an act of the will - there was no salvation, there was no repentance. Upon that belief, there was a decision made which turned me from the first Adam, to the second Adam, Christ.

Belief is possible without repentance, so I feel it is very hard to say they are one and the same.

It is of interest to note that the Gospel of John does not use the term repent, but only the term believe. This indicates that John felt that belief would automatically move the person to repentance and salvation. It does not mean that John was teaching that repentance was not needed.

Cambron is quite clear in his belief that repentance is an integrated part of salvation. "To those who say that repentance is not to be preached today, and that it is not essential for salvation, we point out that repentance was preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus

Christ, and the Apostle Paul. Repentance was proclaimed before Pentecost, at Pentecost, and after Pentecost." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 188)

Repentance in not reformation: Man, in his lost estate, can reform himself. He can clean up his life and live like a Christian. Many of these people probably lead a better Christian life than many Christians.

The sad fact is that this reformation leads only to reformation. It does not bring salvation, nor does it bring the peace these people often seek.

Reformation is great. It helps in the person's family, in his social relations, and may even help in the person's life. It can never result directly in eternal changes however.

Repentance is not contrition: It is not being sorry for your sin. Being sorry is great, but it alone can never bring salvation. Repentance requires a change of mind. Sorrow is an emotional response to information. Repentance is an act of the will in response to information and belief in that information.

Repentance is not penance: This is an expression of sorrow by some act. Penance is giving up of something in response to guilt or sorrow over doing something.

Repentance is a change of mind: It is a response of the mind that has been given information which the mind labels truth. It is a decision to move from one mind-set to another. The world is our natural mind-set. The lost person is motivated and directed by this mind-set. When the mind set is changed the life that mind controls, changes to the new direction.

Repentance is a part of faith: Faith is that which allows the person to turn from the world to God. God reveals Himself to all of mankind, according to Romans one. When someone responds to that revelation, further information is given. When there is enough information to confront the person with the Gospel, faith or belief in that information

will move the person to a conscious decision. That decision will shift them from the earthy, to the heavenly.

LET US RECAP

- 1. Repentance is a change of mind (the heart and life).**
- 2. Belief is an acceptance of facts (the brain).**
- 3. Salvation is a result of both repentance and belief. Without repentance there is no salvation. Without belief there is no salvation. Without repentance there can be no belief and thus no salvation. Without repentance, belief cannot save you.**
- 4. Sorrow may lead to repentance.**
- 5. Sorrow may accompany repentance, but is not the same as repentance.**
- 6. Repentance may come without sorrow.**

CONCLUSIONS:

Repentance comes from the goodness of God Rom. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9

Repentance can come from hearing the Gospel. Acts 2:37-41

Repentance can come through teaching. II Tim. 2:24,25

Repentance can come through chastisements of God. Rev. 2:16; 2:5; 3:3; (Heb. 12:6-11; Rev. 3:19 may relate - "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.")

Repentance is a gift of God. It was a gift to the Jews, Acts 5:31 and to the Gentiles Acts 11:18.

Repentance is something that God leads us to. Romans 2:4

Repentance is a change of mind. Matt. 21:28-29

Repentance requires no sorrow.

Repentance is a work of the Spirit.

Repentance is limited in the lost person.

Repentance is not reformation.

Repentance is not contrition.

Repentance is not penance.

Repentance is a part of faith.

Repentance primarily is for the lost and is part of bringing them to Christ.

Repentance is sometimes used of the believer and his need to return to something. See Rev. 2:5,16; 3:3,19.

APPLICATION

1. This should give flight to the easy believism so prevalent today in our evangelism. If you want to say, "Believe and thou shalt be saved" be sure that they have had a change of mind first, else you had better explain very carefully what you mean by believe.

2. In our own lives - when we became a Christian did we have a REAL change of mind - from trusting in, TO trusting in Christ? Many "Christians" have never seen repentance in their lives! This may well be why our churches are as they are.

3. As we witness - we need to show the person that they need to make a conscious choice to turn from, to Christ!

At times the person will know that changes are needed. I witnessed to a man years ago that was not living a proper life. He was a motorcycle nut. He knew what I had told him was true. He also knew that he needed to accept Christ. His problem was that he knew there would need to be changes. His first question after realizing this was, "But will I have to give up my motorcycle?"

As lost people repentance is needed for salvation. As believers, we do not normally deal with repentance. It is wrapped up in confession, in that we need to agree with God as to the terribleness of our sin, and decide not to sin again.

There are some believers that for one reason or another walks in the world. They are carnal. They are not walking with God. Again, in a sense repentance is required of them. They need to change their course.

Repentance - a simple change of mind that brings salvation.

Repentance - a simple change of mind that brings restoration of fellowship.

04950

REGENERATION

Let us look at a few definitions:

"A spiritual resurrection; the beginning of a new life" (Hodge, Charles; Gross, Edward N. Ed.; "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, Vol. 3, p 5)

"Regeneration is the communication of the divine nature to man by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word. (Dr. A. J. Gordon as quoted in Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 319)

"the spiritual change wrought in man by the Holy Spirit, by which he becomes the possessor of a new life. (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

Regeneration is the Greek word "palinginesia." It is only used twice in the New Testament. Vine tells us that "Palin" is usually translated again, and that "genesis" means birth. Thus, we would say that it is again born, or again birthed.

In Matt 19:28 Christ mentions that those that follow him in the regeneration will rule with him. Since Christ did not need to be saved, He could not have been referring to the salvation experience of the believer. It seems that the structure would indicate that He was stating that when the world system, or the world itself is again born, when the Lord is ruling, these things will happen. (Scofield, in his cross reference Bible holds that this is referring to "the re-creation of the social order and renewal of the earth"/Vine also views this as a restoration, "the word is used, in the Lord's discourse, in the wider sense, of the 'restoration of all things'" Thiessen also relates this to the regeneration of the Creation. He quotes Isa. 11:1-9; 35:1-10 and others as a basis for his thinking.)

The American Standard Version states, "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Christ has been asked a question about the future reward of the apostles. Christ answers as though from that future point in time. Since these things were decreed before the foundation of the world that would fit.

The American Standard Version indicates that the regeneration is speaking of the again born world. Christ will rule in the Millennium, and the world will have undergone a drastic changing in preparation for the kingdom.

The second passage where the term appears is in Titus. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;" (Titus 3:4-6)

This text speaks of the rebirth (the "washing of regeneration"). The washing of regeneration depicts the "washing" or the completeness of the occurrence, and the regeneration, the again born process.

Technically, it is the term that describes what we call rebirth, or new birth. It is spoken of in John 3 where Christ told Nicodemus that he must be born again. It is the changing of a person from lost and condemned to saved and forgiven.

REGENERATION WAS FORETOLD BY THE OLD TESTAMENT: Regeneration was looked forward to by the prophets for Israel (Ezek. 36:24-30 and Jer. 32:38-40). There are some that contradict this thought when they say that the Old Testament believer was regenerated, by his faith in the coming Christ. This is in error, because regeneration could not take place for any person until Christ settled the sin question.

REGENERATION CHANGES THE PERSON: We are told that we are new creations, that we are partakers of the divine nature, and that we are completely new. That seems to indicate that when a person accepts Christ, there will be some changes in the life. (I Cor. 5:17; Jo. 3:3,6,7; II Pet 1:4; Eph. 4:23-24.)

The simplicity of the term itself demands drastic change. Again born. There is no choice except for the person to have change in their life.

REGENERATION IS AN OCCURRENCE RATHER THAN A PROCESS: Luke tells us in 23:39-44 that the Thief on the cross was to be in paradise with the Lord immediately. Thus, we can assume that regeneration is not something that takes six months to a year to complete.

It is not related to good works nor is it related to the process of living a holy life. It is an act of God that changes the person immediately and eternally.

REGENERATION IS LINKED TO OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST: We are in Christ. This shows a close relationship. II Cor. 5:17 "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (John 3:16 tells us that it is because of what He did that we can have eternal life. Eph. 2:8-10 states that we are created in Christ.)

REGENERATION HAS RESULTS:

Firstfruits: James 1:18 We are firstfruits of God's creatures: " Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

It might be an interesting study to relate this verse to the use of the term regeneration in relation to not only our own rebirth, but that of the world. Matthew used the term of creation. We are firstfruits of "his creatures" indicating that we will be changed before the creatures of creation. Would this not indicate a pre-millennial glorification for believers. Something to think about when you have time.

Inheritance: We have an inheritance due to this regeneration. I Pet 1:3-4, "Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,"

This inheritance is sure, and it is not going to corrupt. It is ours; it is ours for all eternity.

Good works: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) We were not created in Christ to live plush lives. We were created in Christ Jesus so we will do good works.

Walk in good works. That indicates more than a casual occurrence. Our lives are to be good works. Our lives are to be filled with good works.

Pledge: Regeneration brought the Holy Spirit as our pledge or guarantee of a completion to what God has begun in our lives. Eph. 1:13-14, "In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

REGENERATION, A PROFILE:

The means: Belief/reception of Christ. Regeneration comes to the person through belief in, and reception of Christ. Due to this we become sons of God. Jo 1:12, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name:"

The author: I Cor. 3:6-7 tells us that only God can increase the population of the church. He is the one that adds to the body of Christ. We can plant and water, but He will give the increase. (See Jo. 1:10-13 also)

The agent: We are born of the Holy Spirit. He is the activation behind all of salvation. God provided salvation, through Christ, but the Spirit brings the person to salvation.

The instrument: Only when a person is able to hear or read the Word of God, can they know salvation. Salvation cannot creep up on you and win the attack. It is only through the Word that we can know of salvation. (I Pet 1:23-25; James 1:18,21; Jo 17:17)

REGENERATION HAS EXPECTATIONS: God didn't reach out and touch someone, just so they would feel good. Remember that verse we covered earlier? We are created in Christ unto good works. The natural result of regeneration should be good works. The good works are a result of a proper relationship to God. Not having sin in your life is the method of keeping that relationship proper. I Jo. 3:9 "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (see also I Jo. 2:29; 5:4,18.)

REGENERATION IS ETERNAL: We cannot lose anything based on regeneration. All is guaranteed. We are dealing with God and not some sleazy salesman. What He has said, He will do. We will live forever because of this work of regeneration, which He has done. I Pet. 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

REGENERATION IS NOT REFORMATION: It is more than turning over a new leaf. You could, from some point onward, without sin and yet know nothing of regeneration. There are many lost people in this world that live good lives, yet are still lost.

REGENERATION IS NOT CONFIRMATION: Only God can bring about regeneration. Nothing that man can devise will do the trick. Man has been trying to come up with some method for centuries, but always fails in his attempts.

REGENERATION IS NOT WATER BAPTISM: Baptism is a memorial and ordinance for the one that has already undergone regeneration. However, be forewarned, some believe this. Some believe that baptism is how a person is regenerated.

"Regeneration by baptism, or baptismal regeneration, has been a widely prevalent error. This is due in part to an improper use of the term. A proselyte from heathenism to the Jewish religion was said to be 'born again.' A corresponding use of the term crept into the early Christian Church. Those who received baptism, the initiatory rite of church membership, were said to be regenerated; but this was probably without any intention of denying the deeper work of the Holy Spirit. It was only a loose and improper way of indicating the change in a man's external relationship. And it is proper to say that some of the advocates of the baptismal regeneration in the Church of England still use the term in this sense, and make a distinction between regeneration as effected by baptism and the great work of spiritual renewal. But the error has its broader basis in an unscriptural idea of the character and efficiency of the sacraments. And thus it is held not only by Roman Catholics, but also by many Lutherans and many in the church of England." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

Let's consider baptismal regeneration for a moment. Titus 3:4-7, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." What in this verse equates "regeneration" with "born again?" Nothing.

Matt 19:28 seems to be the transformation of the earth in preparation for the kingdom. What in that verse equates "regeneration" with "born again?" Nothing.

Titus 3:5 speaks of washing (Cleansing) yet new birth has to do with getting rid of old and installation of new. The two facts don't compute. This washing is not to be construed to be baptism, for it is not.

If "regeneration" truly is "rebirth" or "born again," how do we get from baptism to regeneration? Washing is the Greek word "loutron"

which has the idea of a bath or a laver. It is used in the Septuagint in Song of Solomon 4:2 and 6:6. This passage speaks of the washing of sheep. (Eph. 5:26 and Titus 3:5 are the only New Testament usages.) Washing gives the impression of "dirty in" and "clean out." Otherwise, why wash something. This would seem to be the root of the meaning of the word.

The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit seem to be two different things. Most commentaries seem to follow similar thinking. It seems that the washing of regeneration might be the cleaning out of our past sins, while the renewing of the Holy Spirit is the removal of the Adamic nature. They are both an integrated part of the whole - salvation.

Rebirth seems to be that shift from lostness to savedness; that shift from dead to alive. It is an integrated part of salvation. Without it there is no real salvation, yet it is linked to the renewing of the Holy Spirit as well. Regeneration may refer to salvation as long as you view the work of the Holy Spirit as well.

REGENERATION IS NO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NOR THE LORD'S TABLE: Church membership and the Lord's table are never linked to regeneration itself, though a church member should be regenerated. Someone partaking of the Lord's table should also be regenerated, however becoming a member, or partaking of the table can never bring regeneration.

REGENERATION IS NOT JUSTIFICATION: "It is to be distinguished from justification, because justification is a change in our relationship to God, while regeneration is a change in our moral and spiritual nature." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

REGENERATION IS NOT SANCTIFICATION: "Regeneration is also to be distinguished from sanctification, inasmuch as the latter is the work of God in developing the new life and bringing it to perfection, while the former is the beginning of that life." [not sure I agree with his definition of sanctification but do agree that they are different.] (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger,

Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 916)

REGENERATION IS REQUIRED: John 3:7 simply states the facts. "Ye must be born again."

Cambron lists three areas which show the need of regeneration. The depravity of man (Jo 3:6); The universality of man (Rom. 3:23); and the holiness of God (I Peter 1:16)

REGENERATION IS A DIVINE GIFT: John 1:12, 13 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name; Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Regeneration comes as an integrated part of the salvation experience. We cannot continue toward eternity without it, nor can we step backward into our past life without it. Once regenerated, there is no return to the lost life of Adam. We may step into a walk that resembles our old walk, but we can never become unregenerated again.

THE WALL OF SALVATION

"Now I saw in my dream, that the highway, up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called salvation. Up this way, therefore did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back. He ran thus till he came at a place somewhat ascending; and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a sepulcher. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulcher, where it fell in, and I saw it no more." John Bunyan (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949, p 613)

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PROPITIATION

We need to define the term propitiation which we have all heard so many times before. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary states that propitiate means ".....to gain or regain the favor or goodwill of." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Pardington states, "literally signifying an appeasing, a placation, an expiation. Propitiation comes from the Latin and means that which renders one propitious or favorably disposed towards another." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 254)

Kaufman states, "Theological term for the appeasement of the wrath of God through sacrifice, prayer, or in some other way. According to the New Testament, guilt is removed and broken relationships with god restored only by the sacrifice of christ, received in faith and obedience. God has set forth Christ "to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Romans 4:25)." (Kauffman, Donald T.; "THE DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS TERMS"; Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1967)

From this we can conclude that Christ propitiated God on our behalf. In other words he regained God's favor for mankind. We were, so to speak, on His bad side, and Christ got us onto His good side. That is very simplistic, yet true.

In Adam, all of mankind fell into sin, into damnation, and into eternal death, yet Christ corrected all those problems, through His work on the cross. We can, if saved, stand before God as Adam stood before the fall. Christ made ALL things right between man and God.

There are three Greek words translated propitiation in the New Testament (All usages are listed).

1. "hilasmos" This term is seen in two passages where it depicts what Christ did for mankind. I John 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for

our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I John 4:10, "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Two things we need to notice. First of all, the propitiation was for our sins, and the work was done by Christ. Secondly, it was propitiation for the ". . . sins of the whole world." Just how the limited atonement people get around that clear statement of Scripture would be an interesting study in foot work.

2. "hilasterion" Unger mentions this passage and term as relating to the place of propitiation, however the context would indicate more specifically the person of propitiation, Jesus Christ. Rom. 3:24-25, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

Does this mean that propitiation is based on repentance as well as forgiveness? The two certainly seem to be tied to faith! It would seem in light of all we know that propitiation was for all people both lost and saved, yet there seems to be a need of faith for one to receive the benefit of this propitiation.

The term is used of an interesting place in Heb. 9:5, "And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat [this is the term]; of which we cannot now speak particularly."

The dwelling place of God in the Wilderness was named propitiation. The spot where the blood of animals was sprinkled (Lev. 16:15), is used to signify what the New Testament calls propitiation.

Hebrews tells us that Christ offered His own blood in the heavenly tabernacle as an everlasting propitiation for sin. It is faith in that blood that saves man.

3. "hilaskomai" is our third term. It refers to the act of God toward man which is propitious. Luke 18:13 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." ("merciful" is the term in view. The translation should be propitiation.)

Heb. 2:17 "Wherefore, in all things it behooved him to be made like his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." ("reconciliation" is the term that we are looking for.) The term reconciliation should appear as propitiation. The interlinear translates it this way.

Vine mentions of this term, ". . .was used amongst the Greeks with the significance to make the gods propitious, to appease, propitiate, inasmuch as their good will was not conceived as their natural attitude, but something to be earned first." He also mentions that the term is never used in a way that would suggest that man is able to propitiate our God. (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., p 895) THIS SEEMS TO BE A GOOD THOUGHT!

Cambron relates the word to the term "satisfaction." "The law demanded death for sin; therefore, the blood of the sacrifice was placed on the mercy seat (Ex. 25:22; Lev. 16:13,14), showing that death had taken place. God looked upon the mercy seat and saw blood - life - and was satisfied. Since calvary, God looks upon our Mercy Seat, which is Christ, and is satisfied. Therefore, the underlying thought of propitiation is "satisfaction." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 97)

I question his comment, that Christ is the mercy seat. His shed blood is on the heavenly mercy seat in my estimation, rather than Christ being the mercy seat Himself.

Propitiation is for all mankind, both lost and saved. I John 2:2 "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Propitiation is not automatic for the lost person. It seems to be linked to the faith of one coming to the Lord. Rom. 3:25 "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the

forbearance of God;" The provision is made yet this verse seems to indicate the application or benefit is based on faith.

Propitiation is not something that we need to ask God for, nor is it something that we have to request Him to be. Unger states, "In this present age since the death of Christ God does not have to be asked to be propitious, because He has become so, through the death of Christ." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Propitiation is the "Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "kapporeth," or mercy seat, the lid of the ark of the covenant." (Pardington p 255) The meaning of that close link should drive some young theologians into a detailed study!

Propitiation must be God's idea if it came through the cross, for man could not have devised that plan! Man's plans are evident the world over, and none even come close to the cross, nor God dying on it.

Propitiation is not salvation. "It rather secures the possibility of salvation." (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.) It places man in a proper attitude or position before God, whereby the possibility of salvation exists.

There probably is a need for further study as to the specifics of this doctrine. Since faith is involved, I assume that propitiation is a precursor to salvation - something which Christ did make available to me. Since propitiation is for the whole world, I assume that it is available to all, but must be received by faith. Though it is not salvation, nor an integrated part of the salvation process, it is necessary for the salvation process to begin.

Propitiation is NOT Jesus Christ Himself as Chafer mentions. "...His body at Golgotha, becomes the Mercy Seat in reality." (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 were really true then why did He bother to offer His blood upon the heavenly mercy seat as is indicated in Heb. 9: 22,23? True it is not stated yet the Old Testament priest did this and the context is contrasting the old and the new. Vs 23."It was, therefore, necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

Propitiation is not reconciliation. Propitiation would be a step toward that reconciliation between God and man. Propitiation makes it possible for the reconciliation to occur.

Propitiation does not bring forgiveness as some set forth. Thiessen states when he quotes from Hodge, "By the suffering of the sinner's atoning substitute, the divine wrath at sin is propitiated, and as a consequence of this propitiation the punishment due to sin is released, or not inflicted upon the transgressor. This release or noninfliction of penalty is "forgiveness," in the Biblical representation." (Thiessen quoting Hodge: Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 326) Propitiation opens the door of possibility to forgiveness, though the two are not one. Propitiation is something that is provided by an act of Christ, and recognized by the Father, while forgiveness is something that is given by God and enjoyed by the believer.

APPLICATION

1. Here we have another fact that drives home the truth that there is nothing that man can do for his own salvation, except believe and accept that which God has provided for us, even before we needed it. Does not Rom. 5:8 relate to this thought? "But God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Christ provided the act that made propitiation, The Father is satisfied, and the Spirit draws the lost person to realization of all of these truths relevant to salvation.

HE did it all, not my plan, or your plan or someone else's plan.

REDEMPTION

As in previous studies we want to define the term. Redemption according to Shedd is as follows: "God's mercy ransoms man from God's justice." (Shedd Vol. II, p 398) I think that I like this definition, but I would add just a little more to it. I like it because it centers itself around God rather than man. Man had the need, yet all of redemption is actually of God.

God planned the program, God provided the program, God will consummate the program, and God will apply the program.

Might we amend Shedd's definition slightly by mentioning the provider of the ransom? God's mercy, through Jesus Christ, ransoms man from God's justice.

Chafer's definition is good, but contains a need for logic, rather than literary licence. "The death of Christ is said to be a redemption or ransom paid to the holy demands of God for the sinner and to free the sinner from just condemnation." (Reprinted by permission: Chafer, Lewis Sperry/Revised by Walvoord, John F.; "MAJOR BIBLE THEMES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, p 61)

This definition seems to be true, except that ransom cannot be paid to demands. A demand cannot receive payment. Only a being with intelligence accepts things. The thought that Christ paid a ransom to satisfy God is correct.

It is of interest that both these men use the term ransom. I am not sure that the English word ransom, is the real meaning of the term in the Bible, nor is it the real meaning of the doctrine of redemption. The term purchase is more to the point of redemption. It is the payment of a price for something. Ransom has the idea that someone has been kidnaped. We have not been kidnaped, we are in sin, and sin always carries a price. Christ paid that price for all who will receive His payment.

So, to put it simply, redemption is the purchase of a soul by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross of calvary.

Let us look at the terms used in Scripture.

OLD TESTAMENT TERMS:

The first word we want to look at is the Hebrew word "g'l," which means according to Ryrie, a "family obligation related to payment of a price." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

Ryrie says of the term "pdh" a ". . .payment of a price as in a commercial transaction without any obligation arising from kinship. . . ." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

A third Hebrew word is used which is "kopher," which means a "sum paid to redeem a forfeited life..." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

"All these words consistently signify deliverance by payment of a price. The circumstances may vary from redeeming a prisoner of war, or a slave, or a pawned article, or the nation Israel, but always because of the payment of a price." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 290. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

NEW TESTAMENT TERMS:

"agorazo" is a term that originally related to going to the forum, but later, became a word that indicated buying or purchasing in the forum. The same term is used by the Septuagint translators of commercial purchases. Some references that might be good sermon

material for the topic are: II Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9-10; I Cor. 6:19-20; I Cor. 7:22-23. These verses should give a definite definition to the term slave in relation to the believer.

There are other terms used that are related to "agorazo." I will just list these with comments from other authors.

("exagorazo"/"compound simply adds the idea of purchasing out of the forum." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986); "a strengthened form of "agorazo", to buy... denotes to buy our...especially of purchasing a slave with a view to his freedom." Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

We see in Acts 20:28 the purchase of believers via the blood of Christ. It also pictures the importance of caring for those believers. Christ paid a terrible price to purchase them, and now He has placed them in the hands of His shepherds. Any pastor reading this passage ought to gain just a hint of his responsibility before God. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

There is another aspect to this passage. The indications are that the purchase of Christ was not only for the buying of souls, but it is also related to the church, or His Body.

Ryrie correctly and concisely, summarizes the doctrine around three points. "(1) People are redeemed FROM something; namely, from the marketplace or slavery of sin. (2) People are redeemed BY something; namely by the payment of a price, the blood of Christ. (3) People are redeemed TO something; namely, to a state of freedom; and then they are called to renounce that freedom for slavery to the Lord who redeemed them." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 292. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.) [Emphasis mine.]

Unger in his Bible Dictionary mentions that the freedom of redemption implies a former bondage. He goes on to relate this

bondage to our position in sin, our servitude to Satan, and our bondage to spiritual death. It seems that we were not in too good a position until Christ came along!

Indeed, Unger's observations should bring us to a real sense of what Christ did when He died on the cross. He didn't just save us, He saved us from sin's dominion, from Satan's dominion, and death's dominion. In response to this we live our lives as if we were still under sin's dominion, Satan's dominion, and death's dominion. We ought to live our lives as if we knew from which we came!

Some indicate that the ransom or payment was to free us from Satan's ownership. This is not true. We were under his control and bondage, yet he did not have ownership. The sinner ends up in the same place as Satan in the end, but not because Satan has any claims on the lost. Both are committed to the Lake of Fire by the justice of God for their disobedience.

Redemption is both universal and limited. It was provided for all of mankind, yet man must accept the work of Christ for it to be of value, or benefit to the individual.

Redemption involves the soul and spirit. Ps. 49:15 "But God will redeem my soul from the power of sheol; for he shall receive me." (note the soul only is mentioned however the soul and spirit always go together.) All of spiritual man is provided for, both soul and spirit.

Redemption also involves the body. Rom. 8:23 "...waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body." The body will see its final redemption when it is glorified and united with our soul and spirit (unless we are fortunate enough to be taken in the rapture, in which case body, soul, and spirit will be finally and completely redeemed at one moment).

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW: Gal. 3:13 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law" We are freed by the work of the cross, yet the proper response to that freedom is not to live in sin.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE LAW: Gal 4:5, "To redeem them that were under the law, that

we might receive the adoption of sons." We not required to keep the law for salvation, but we are expected to keep the principles of the law as rule and practice for our lives.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM INIQUITY: Tit. 2:14
"Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity"
Now, notice that verse. It relates to what we have said about our nature and our sin life. He redeemed "us from ALL iniquity" which, if we hold to plain literal interpretation says we do not have to sin, we do not struggle to keep from sin, we only need to submit to the Spirit rather than self.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM ENEMIES: Ps. 136:24
"hath redeemed us from our enemies." We may have enemies, we may struggle with enemies, but we will not fall to enemies. God will care for all our enemies, big and small.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM DESTRUCTION: Ps. 103:4 "whom redeemeth thy life from destruction" Isn't that what salvation is all about? We were on our way to physical destruction as well as spiritual destruction. Christ intervened and corrected all that.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH: Hos. 13:14, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." It is not that we will not go through the death process, but we will not suffer from the effects of the grave, or of death. This is also seen in the following point.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF THE GRAVE: Ps :49:15, "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah." The promise of bypassing the power of the grave is linked to another promise, "he shall receive me." The account of the beggar in Luke 16:22 comes to mind, where it mentions that the angels came to carry him away. The thought of going through death will be relieved if we realize the truth presented in these two texts.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM VAIN LIVING: I Pet 1:18, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with

corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers;"

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THIS PRESENT

WORLD: Gal. 1:4 "who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age" Another glorious promise. We will not have to continue in this life and in this world forever; there is a life and world yet future that is far better.

REDEMPTION IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF SIN:

Rom. 6:18-22, "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things [is] death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

Again, I would draw your attention to the thought of why we sin. Is it because we loose the struggle with the old nature, or is it because we mentally take control of our lives to serve self? This passage seems to indicate the later. Notice the terminology, free from sin, servants of righteousness, yield to righteousness, servants to God.

REDEMPTION IS ACCOMPLISHED BY: God's power: Deut. 7:8; Isa. 44:21; Isa. 43:1; Lu. 1:68. Christ's blood: Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12. God's grace: Rom. 3:24,25. Do you get the feeling that redemption is centered in God. I think that this is truly a valid observation.

There are many benefits that come with redemption. We will mention a few of these benefits. Since these verses are so self explanatory, I will just list the benefit and the verse.

BENEFITS OF REDEMPTION:

We gain forgiveness: Col 1:14, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins:"

We gain justification: Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

We gain adoption: Gal. 4:4,5, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Note the fulness of time. The time was set before the foundation of the world.)

We become God's possession: I Cor. 6:20, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (Our body and spirit are His - ours for the using only.)

We become God's people: Tit. 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

We gain purification: (Above)

We gain sealing: Eph. 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

We gain an inheritance: Heb. 9:15, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [that were] under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

The book of Ruth is a very good illustration of the idea of redemption. It is quite fitting for it concerns one of the couples in the line of Messiah.

We have already seen that "salvation" isn't as simple as it seems. Salvation is simple in its reception, but very complicated in its application. Many things are involved in God saving an individual.

Each of these items are very precious to study in and of themselves. Don't allow yourself to stop with this surface study. Take time to do further study and give much thought to these things. God can use it in your spiritual life.

05100

RECONCILIATION

DEFINITION: Thayer as quoted in Pardington states, "The word is used in the New Testament...of the restoration of the favor of God to sinners that repent and put their trust into the expiatory death of Christ" (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 254)

"Reconciliation is the restoration to friendship and fellowship after estrangement. Old Testament reconciliation contains the idea of an atonement or covering for sin" (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

RECONCILIATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

"And he slew [it]; and Moses took the blood, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it." (Leviticus 8:15)

"And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded [that] the burnt offering and the sin offering [should be made] for all Israel." (2 Chronicles 29:24)

"And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD. 16 All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince in Israel. 17 And it shall be the prince's part [to give] burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel." (Ezekiel 45:15-17)

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." (Daniel 9:24)

These are the references where the term reconciliation appears in the Old Testament. Let us gather some facts from these verses.

1. There was shedding of blood in preparation for reconciliation. The blood was a means by which the altar was purified, so that sacrifices could be offered for reconciliation. (Lev. 8:15)

2. There was a shedding of blood to make reconciliation for the nation of Israel. (2 Chronicles 29:24)

3. There will be offerings of animals in the Millennial Kingdom for the people of Israel. It is not known just why these offerings will be given. The Lord will be in their presence and Israel will have turned to Him nationally. Whether they will be under the sacrificial system literally or for a memorial, we are not told. (Ezekiel 45:15-17)

It is of note that the offerings for reconciliation were commanded by God, not devised by man. Again, we see that the different items of salvation are God's idea!

4. In this passage as well as the others, reconciliation is linked to the sin of the people. The sin was separating the people from God. (Daniel 9:24)

The question that might come to mind is this. Is reconciliation a prerequisite for salvation? We always tie reconciliation directly to salvation, but should we.

It would seem that these verses show reconciliation to be the restoration of fellowship between Israel and God. Salvation is not mentioned in these texts. It seems, at least in the Old Testament, that reconciliation may be that action which brings the believer back into fellowship with God.

It seems that Lev. 16:20 might back up this idea. It mentions a reconciling of places rather than people. It seems that the term has the idea of correcting a relationship. In the case of the holy place, it was correcting from impure to pure.

Now let us move on to the New Testament.

RECONCILIATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

WORDS USED

I will list the words and the passages where they appear. Comments will be made as needed. (All usages of the words are listed.)

VERBS

"katallasso" (Strong's 2644) "properly denotes to change, exchange (especially of money); hence, of persons, to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile." (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Rom. 5:10 "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." It seems that we may have been reconciled even before we were saved. It seems that the term relates to that action of Christ which made it possible for God and man to have fellowship. It is a changing in the relationship.

I Cor. 7:11 "But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to [her] husband: and let not the husband put away [his] wife." Though this passage is speaking of marriage and separation, it depicts the action by which the wife can be brought back into a proper marriage relationship with her husband. The term reconciliation again seems to mean the action of repairing a relationship.

II Cor. 5:18 "And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" Here we see that it was God's idea to reconcile us to Himself. It is also shown here that it is our responsibility to share the

Gospel so that others might also be reconciled to Him. II Cor. 5:19-20 adds to this thought.

"apokatallasso" (Strong's 604) "to reconcile completely...to change from one condition to another, so as to remove all enmity and leave no impediment to unity and peace" (Vine)

Eph. 2:16 "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:" This passage indicates that there was enmity between God and man, but that the enmity was done away with by the cross. Again, it would seem that Christ's work repaired a relationship, but it does not indicate that this is indeed, salvation. Salvation was made a possibility because man was reconciled with God through the cross.

Col. 1:20 "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, [I say], whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven."

Col. 1:21 "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled"

"diallasso" (Strong's 1259) "to effect an alteration, to exchange, and hence, to reconcile, in cases of mutual hostility yielding to mutual concession" (Vine)

Matt. 5:24 "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." This shows the repairing of a relationship as has been mentioned before.

NOUNS

"katallage" (Strong's 2643) "primarily an exchange, denotes reconciliation, a change on the part of one party, induced by an action on the part of another" Vine.

Rom. 5:11 "And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The word we are looking for in this text is atonement. It is normally translated reconciliation.

Rom. 11:15 "For if the casting away of them [be] the reconciling of the world, what [shall] the receiving [of them be], but life from the dead?" This pictures the world reconciled. It seems that reconciliation was provided for all of mankind, through the cross of Christ. Christ's action repaired the relationship between God and man. All has been done by Christ, so that man can come to God. If man refuses, then this results in his eternal position in the Lake of Fire.

II Cor. 5:18, 19 "And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" 19 "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

"hilaskomai" (Strong's 2433) It is translated merciful in Luke 18:13 and reconciliation in Heb. 2:17. (This term is related to the Greek term translated propitiation. Ro. 3:25; Heb 8:12)

Lu. 18:13 "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as [his] eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

Heb. 2:17 "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his] brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things [pertaining] to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Let us recap what we have learned from these passages.

- 1. We were enemies when we were reconciled. Rom. 5:10; 11:15; Eph. 1:21**
- 2. We were reconciled to God. Rom. 5:10; II Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 2:16. This reconciliation was a restoration of man to God, not the other way around.**
- 3. We were reconciled by Jesus Christ. Rom. 5:10; 5:11; II Cor. 5:18-20/by His death Rom. 5:10/by His blood Col. 1:20.**

4. We went away from God by our own will, and now Christ makes it possible for us to return. Though this verse deals with marriage it gives the essence of the term. That is one that has gone away of her own will is to return. I Cor. 7:11

5. We are ministers and ambassadors of reconciliation to the world. II Cor. 5:18-20

6. The world is in view when God was reconciling. II Cor. 5:18-20

7. We are to beseech the lost to be reconciled to God. (We do this in Christ's stead.) II Cor. 5:18-20

8. God has COMMITTED the job of reconciliation to the saved! II Cor. 5:18-20

9. We are reconciled WITH the Jews, unto God. Eph. 2:16

10. There is more to reconciliation than man alone. Col. 1:20, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself - by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

The earth and heaven are under duress in some manner due to the fall of man. The ground only was cursed in Genesis three, however this verse would indicate that the whole of creation is in the backwash of man's sin and fall.

All things have been reconciled unto Christ. The completion of this is yet to come, but the provision has been made for all things to be reconciled unto him. In the creature realm it is limited to those that can, and do choose to respond to that reconciliation. (The angels can't, but man can, if he desires.)

11. Reconciliation should cause joy in our lives. Rom. 5:11, "And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

Thiessen relates the terms propitiation and reconciliation thusly: "The two ideas seem to be related to each other as cause and effect: Christ's death 'propitiated' God, and as a result he is 'reconciled'"

(Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 327)

He relates an apt illustration. "At first God and man stood face to face with each other. In sinning, Adam turned his back upon God. Then God turned His back upon Adam. [due to His justice demanding He turn away from sin.] Christ's death has satisfied the demands of God and now God has again turned His face toward man. It remains for man to turn round about and face God. Since God has been reconciled by the death of His Son, man is now entreated to be reconciled to God." (Thiessen, p 327-328)

Have you really thought about all that we have been studying to this point? Have we really gotten hold of the truths that we have been studying? II Cor. 5: 18-19 states "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, [This almost sounds like God has not been keeping track of sins since the cross. This would be a good study sometime!] and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF"

IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST died for all sin - the sin of the world - IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST propitiated God for the whole world-IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST reconciled the whole world - IF WE BELIEVE THAT CHRIST did all there was to do to bring the sinner to a point that all he had to do was to reject or accept Christ's sacrifice for his sin - THEN - We have the sinner at what position before God? Think about it. What position is the lost person in today, before almighty God?

IS HE NOT AT THE POINT OF ADAM IN THE GARDEN IN ESSENCE - TRUE HE IS IN A DREADFUL STATE OF SIN AND ALL ITS RAMIFICATIONS BUT ISN'T HE AT THE SAME DECIDING POINT THAT ADAM WAS?

"DO I WANT TO OBEY GOD, OR DO I WANT TO DO MY OWN THING? In reality I believe that is just were lost mankind is today, and has been since the cross!

Thus, one that argues against the total depravity of man being based on the sin of Adam - he argues a mute question. It really doesn't matter in the context of salvation.

THE WORD OF GOD STATES THAT CHRIST HAS PAID THE PRICE, AND THAT YOU MUST RECEIVE HIS WORK, OR SPEND ETERNITY IN THE LAKE OF FIRE.

YOU WILL ACCEPT THAT IMPERATIVE OR REJECT IT. IN SO DOING YOU ACCEPT OR REJECT GOD'S INJUNCTION TO ADAM TO OBEY GOD.

The application of this thinking is to the fact that we are all like Adam - we all chose to sin. Thus at the point of decision which God has so graciously brought us through His Son, we will as Adam - reject God's injunction to obey. **THUS, WE HAVE THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN PROVEN AS WELL AS THE ELECTION AND DRAWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF THE ELECT TO GOD!**

HE DID HIS PART. "That man is an utterly lost sinner who could never find his own way back to God, is a very unpalatable truth for the average natural man or woman. We all like to think that there is something we can do to help save ourselves, whereas, according to God's Word we are not only lost, but without ability to retrieve our condition. It is remarkable how apt the colored folks are in quick illustrations of spiritual realities, as the following instance will show.

"A recent convert, a colored man, rose in a meeting to give his testimony to the saving grace of God. He told how the Lord had won his hear and given deliverance from the guilt and power of sin. He spoke of Christ and His work, but said nothing of any efforts of his own.

"The leader of the meeting was of a legalistic turn of mind, and when the negro's testimony was ended, he said, 'Our brother has only told us of the Lord's part in his salvation. When I was converted there

was a whole lot I had to do myself before I could expect the Lord to do anything for me. Brother, didn't you do your part first before God did His?' The other was on his feet again in an instant and replied: 'Yes, sah, Ah clear done forgot. Ah didn't tell you 'bout my pard, did I? Well, Ah did my part for over thirty years, runnin' away from God as fast as evah my sins could carry me. That was my part. An' God took aftah me till He run me down. That was His part.' It was well put and tells the story that every redeemed sinner understands."
(Ironsides/"ILLUSTRATIONS OF BIBLE TRUTHS")

Let us close with a summation of the doctrine by Unger. "By this change lost humanity is rendered savable. As a result of the changed position of the world through the death of Christ the divine attitude toward the human family can no longer be the same. God is enabled to deal with lost souls in the light of what Christ has accomplished. (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

SANCTIFICATION

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, [who is] our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:1-4

Thiessen suggests: "we may define sanctification as a separation to God, an imputation of Christ as our holiness, purification from moral evil, and conformation to the image of Christ. This statement needs further elaboration." He takes over a page to do so. (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949)

The terms for holiness and sanctification in the New Testament are very similar. The terms translated sanctify and sanctification are of the same family as terms translated holy.

The Greek term translated sanctify, sanctified and sanctifieth is Strong's number 37. This is the word "hagiazō." It is translated holy in Rev 22:1 (speaking of holy living), and hallowed in the Lord's prayer (hallowed by thy name, Mat 6:9; Lu. 11:2).

A related term (Strong's 38) is the term translated sanctification. It is "hagiasmos." It is also translated holiness at times. (Rom. 6:19; Rom. 6:22) The word seems to relate to something being set apart.

Another related term is "hagion" which is translated "sanctuary" or "holy place." It is only used in the book of Hebrews. All of the related terms refer to holiness or sanctification.

WE GOT IT. WE GET IT. WE'LL GET IT. Sanctification is both an event and a process.

We are set apart for the Lord's purposes. He should direct us into that which He desires for us. This is dependent upon our willingness to follow.

We need to mention two terms which have been covered in detail elsewhere. Standing and state relate to this study. Standing is that which we have in Christ before God. These are things which we have automatically when we are converted. Our state is the way we are living. We can live in a sinful state, or we can live in a state of relative holiness. So, standing is what we are before God and state is what we are living like before God.

As an event sanctification is an event of standing, something which happens at the moment of salvation. Believers are sanctified no matter what their state is. You can be submerged in sin (state), yet you are sanctified in God's eyes (standing). We are set apart whether we act like it or not. If we are living for God, then we are sanctified in both our standing and state.

I Cor. 1:2 mentions, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called [to be] saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:" This pictures the sanctification before God. It is something that is a done deal.

Sanctification as a process is the process by which we make ourselves, with God's help, sanctified. Col. 3:4-13 mentions things that we as believer are to do. Take a moment to read this passage.

In this passage we are encouraged to "Mortify" our members. Verse 8 tells us to put off the works of our former life. Verses 10-12 tell us to put on the new man - the works of the sanctified person, as opposed to the works of the lost life.

We are sanctified in God's eyes, yet this is not complete. We still have that state in which we sin. There is a day in the future, when we will reside in our glorified bodies when we will be finally and completely sanctified for all of eternity. God will see to this event for all that have accepted His Son's work on the cross.

Let me list some references and comments which will cover the sanctification of the believer.

IT IS AN EVENT

GOD SANCTIFIED US: Jude 1; I Thess. 5:23.

CHRIST PROVIDED FOR IT: Eph. 5:26; Heb. 2:11; Heb. 13:12.
With his blood (Heb. 13:12) and His body (Heb. 10:10).
Righteousness and redemption are also linked to sanctification, in
relation to Christ's provision. I cor. 1:30.

THE HOLY SPIRIT ENACTED IT: Rom. 15:16; I Cor. 6:11; I Pet. 1:2.

IT IS A PROCESS

GOD DESIRES SANCTIFICATION: Sanctification is God's will. I Thess. 4:3 "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication;" It should be our desire as well. We need to see to it that our mental faculties bring about decisions which keep us in a state of sanctification. (In our state. We have nothing to do with our standing sanctification. It is complete and set by God.)

WE ARE TO SET GOD APART IN OUR LIVES: The Lord's prayer (Matt. 6:9) uses the term of God's name. "Hallowed be thy name" This relates to using the Lord's name improperly. His name should be something that we set apart for only Him.

He should be uppermost in our lives. I Pet. 3:15 "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" He should rule our lives. This is our decision. Either we allow him to or we rule ourselves.

WE ARE TO SET OURSELVES APART FOR GOD: II Tim. 2:21 "If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and fit for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." That seems to be self explanatory!

WE CAN SET OBJECTS APART FOR GOD'S USE: This was done in the Old Testament. II Chron. 29:17 "So they sanctified the house of the Lord" This might relate to building dedications. As long as the service is centered on God, and the buildings use for Him, it would be quite appropriate to dedicate a building. (Or possibly an airplane for missionary service, etc.)

Sanctification for food is mentioned in I Tim. 4:4,5 "For every creature of god is good, and nothing is to be refused, if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

A question might have come to your mind. Just how does sanctification relate to salvation. We have seen that it is something which takes place at salvation. We have seen that it is a provision of God through Christ. We have also seen that it has other aspects, but how does it relate to salvation? Let us consider this for a moment.

1. We, at salvation, are set apart for God, or should we maybe say unto Christ. John 6:39-40 "And this is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." This text seems to show two things. First, God has given the believer to Christ, and secondly, He will take care of those given Him unto eternity.

2. Romans 8:28 and following indicate that there was a setting apart in eternity past. It is related to the predestination of some unto salvation. I Pet. 1:2 also relates to this train of thought. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:"

3. We are a peculiar people. Eph. 1:14 "Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory." ("purchased possession" is the same term translated a peculiar people in I Pet 2:9)

Notice here that we have redemption tied to possession. Christ bought us to be a possession. The term redemption has the idea of "buy out of the market." This idea of sanctification seems to be the setting apart of the believer after the price has been paid. The taking home of the product, or the servant if you will.

Eph. 1:4 may well be the clincher to this thinking. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we

should be holy and without blame before him, in love." Chosen to stand before him without blame!

Another passage which ties in well with this is I Pet. 1:20, "Who [Christ] verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you," Christ was foreordained to die for those that were predestinated to be His peculiar people or His possession! He purchased us (redemption).

Sanctification is an event which takes place at salvation. It is also a process as we attempt to maintain holy lives. We are set apart in standing before God, but we are to be set apart in our state as we live before Him.

APPLICATION:

**"Once there lived another man within me,
Child of earth and slave of Satan he;
But I nailed him to the cross of Jesus,
And that man is nothing now to me.
Now Another Man is living in me,
And I count His blessed life as mine;
I have died with Him to all my own life;
I have ris'n to all His life divine."**

Rev. A. B. Simpson.

We are to be holy people, or set apart for His purposes. I Pet. 1:16 "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am Holy." A simple instruction! God is Holy and that is the example that we are to follow!

We must make the decision as to how we live this life that we have been given.

ON DIFFERENT TRACKS

"An eminent Eastern divine was riding, some years ago, on one of two railways which ran side by side for a mile or two, and then diverged, ending at points far distant from each other. Sitting with him was a clergyman of 'liberal' views, who had what he supposed to be an unanswerable question to ask.

"You orthodox have among you regenerate souls, as you call them, who are proud, and penurious, and uncomfortable to others, as husbands, fathers, and friends. Then, too, you have unregenerate sinners who are amiable and genial, public spirited, and, in short, make for the present, at least, a better show than the saints. Now, I want to know the real difference between the worst Christian and the best sinner.'

"Just then, his friend, looking out the car window, saw another train moving by their side, and said, 'You see that other train?'

"'Yes.'

"'With the same number of cars as ours?'

"'Yes.'

"'And the two engines are alike?'

"' Yes.'

"'Not much difference as to looks between them?'

"'No.'

"'But, my dear friend, they are running on different tracks!'"

Lorenz, (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949)

Many years ago I picked up a quote from somewhere, I know not where. It is great for our thoughts so I would like to share it. "Sow a THOUGHT, and you reap an ACT. Sow an ACT, and you reap a HABIT. Sow a HABIT, and you reap a CHARACTER. Sow a CHARACTER, and you reap a DESTINY."

So it is with the life of holiness. A thought moves to being an act, which if repeated becomes a habit, which becomes part of your character, and that becomes part of your destiny. You will become a holy person.

05200

JUSTIFICATION

"Justification may be defined as that judicial act of God by which, on account of Christ, to whom the sinner is united by faith, He declares that sinner to be no longer exposed to the penalty of the law but restored to divine favor." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, pp 316-317)

Pardington continues in a note, "In the New Testament, the word "justify" means not to make righteous, but to declare righteous. And justification is the state of one who is thus declared righteous"

Let's look at the terms used in the New Testament.

NOUNS

"dikaiosis" "denote the act of pronouncing righteous, justification, acquittal; its precise meaning is determined by that of the verb "dikaioo", to justify" (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.) Rom. 4:25 "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." (Scofield mentions "for" in both cases can be translated "on account of.") Rom. 5:18 "...by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

"dikaioma" "has three distinct meanings, and seems best described comprehensively as "a concrete expression of righteousness;" it is a declaration that a person or thing is righteous, and hence, broadly speaking, it represents the expression and effect of "dikaiosis"" (Vine) This word is translated ordinances, judgment, righteousness and justification.

VERBS

"dikaioo" "primarily, to deem to be right" (Vine)

These terms are very closely related to the terms translated righteousness.

Now that we have seen the terms, we need to draw some conclusions from their usage in the Scriptures.

JUSTIFICATION IS DEPENDENT ON THE RESURRECTION: Rom. 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." It would seem that the resurrection was a prerequisite for our justification. This would relate to the fact that if there were no resurrection, Christ could not enter the heavenly tabernacle to offer His blood. Without the offering of His blood there could be no justification.

JUSTIFICATION IS A FREE GIFT FROM CHRIST: Rom. 5:18, "Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life." Christ provided, in His death, the justification of all that come to Him for salvation.

JUSTIFICATION IS DEPENDANT ON BELIEF: Acts 13:39, "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (See also, Rom. 3:26)

JUSTIFICATION IS NOT BASED ON WORKS: Rom. 3:20, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law [is] the knowledge of sin." (See also Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16) There is nothing that we can do to secure justification. We cannot gain it by keeping the law, we cannot gain it by keeping a list of do's and don'ts, and we can't gain it by giving up material items.

We might just insert a brief commentary on the thought of legalism. Legalism in the Bible is the attempt to keep the law to gain salvation. There are those today that relate legalism to many other thoughts. BIBLICALLY, legalism is keeping the law for salvation.

Some charge that anyone that keeps a list of do's and don'ts is a legalist. NOT SO! God keeps a list of do's and don'ts in the Word, and He is not a legalist. Lists are not wrong! If a person is attempting to gain salvation by keeping those lists, then they are legalistic.

Don't allow someone to condemn you because God has burdened your heart to not do something. It is between you and God, and it is not legalism. If your convictions are based on the Word, then you are responsible before God to follow them. Do it.

JUSTIFICATION CORRECTS THE PROBLEMS OF THE FLESH: Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16. The natural position of man is one which will result in the lake of fire. That position is changed by the work of justification. Justification corrects all that Adam brought upon mankind.

JUSTIFICATION IS RELATED TO REDEMPTION: We cannot be justified, until we are redeemed. Yes, the two occur in an instant, yet justification cannot occur until we are redeemed. Romans 3:24

JUSTIFICATION COMES VIA THE GRACE OF GOD: Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" (Also Titus 3:7) We fell with Adam, and God was not responsible. He had no obligation to do anything, yet because He was gracious, He extended salvation as a remedy to our problem.

JUSTIFICATION BRINGS SONSHIP: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:7 Again, we see the sequence of the salvation event. We are justified, and then we have sonship available. Sonship then is dependent upon justification. This is only logical. God is not going to share His Son's kingdom with children of Satan.

JUSTIFICATION IS BY FAITH: Justification cannot be worked for, bought, or stolen. It is dependent on the faith of the individual that comes to Christ for salvation. (Rom. 3:28, 30; 5:1; Gal. 3:24)

JUSTIFICATION IS PROVIDED BY GOD: "Seeing [it is] one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." Romans 3:30 (It comes by belief; Rom. 4:5. It frees us from all charges; Rom. 8:33.)

JUSTIFICATION IS ACCOMPLISHED BY CHRIST'S BLOOD: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Romans 5:9 His blood being offered in the

heavenly tabernacle opened the way for justification to become a reality. With no blood, there would be no justification. We were fully dependent upon Christ and His provision.

JUSTIFICATION IS A RESULT OF PREDESTINATION:

"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:30) Again, we see the sequence aspect of salvation. In this text justification is preceded by our calling, and followed by glorification.

JUSTIFICATION IS CARRIED OUT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT:

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:11) As in most of the great doctrines of salvation, God the Father enacted the program, God the Son made provision for the program, and God the Holy Spirit brings the program to pass in the individuals life.

JUSTIFICATION IS FOR ALL PEOPLES: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Galatians 3:8) God provided salvation to all peoples in the beginning, but in Abraham narrowed His focus for a time. This is not to say that only Jews could be saved, but that the Jews were the messengers. In Abraham, all nations were to be blessed.

JUSTIFICATION SHOULD RESULT IN A CHANGED WALK:

"the just shall live by faith." Our walk should be based completely on faith in God. Our lives should be planned by faith, our years should be planned by faith, and our every minute should be planned by faith.

This is not a request, but a command. God expects us to live by faith, no matter what situation we find ourselves in. It has always interested me to notice that our Christian colleges and seminaries attempt to teach their students to live by faith. They expect their faculty to live by faith. Yet, the organization is somehow magically exempt from this concept. The School must survive, so the students WILL have money for school before they arrive. Many students have been turned away at registration because they do not have a specific amount of money.

If the student is to walk by faith, and the faculty is to walk by faith, then how can they learn this concept if the institution is not operating by faith? Seems somewhat illogical to me.

I would like to list some quotations which will further define the thought of justification.

Chafer mentions, "Imputed righteousness is the ground of justification. According to the New Testament usage, the words "righteousness" and "justify" are from the same root. God declares the one justified forever whom He sees in Christ. It is an equitable decree since the justified one is clothed in the righteousness of God. Justification is not a fiction or a state of feeling; it is rather an immutable reckoning in the mind of God. Like imputed righteousness, justification is by faith (Rom. 5:1), through grace (Titus 3:4-7), and made possible through the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 3:24; 4:25). It is abiding and unchangeable since it rests only on the merit of the eternal son of God.

"Justification is more than forgiveness, since forgiveness is the cancellation of sin while justification is the imputing of righteousness. Forgiveness is negative (the removal of condemnation), while justification is positive (the bestowing of the merit and standing of Christ)." (Chafer, Lewis Sperry/Revised by Walvoord, John F.; "MAJOR BIBLE THEMES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, p 200)

Chafer in his systematic theology: "Theologically considered, the term justification means to be declared righteous. It is true that, being in Christ, the believer is righteous; but justification is the divine acknowledgment and declaration that the one who is in Christ is righteous. That which God thus publishes He defends. Justification is immutable." (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 Westminster Shorter Catechism states, "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us

as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone."

The opposite of justification seems to be condemnation. We were condemned to the lake of fire, and now we are justified.

CONCLUSION

I would like to share some thoughts from Best Sermon Pictures by Lawson; Moody Press. They were quoting The Sunday School Times. "An instrument used for weighing gold in the assay office is balanced so delicately that, when two pieces of paper, of exactly the same size and weight, are placed on the balances, it still retains the same poise. But if a name be written on one of the papers, it will turn the scale. The name of Jesus on the heart turns the scale into peace and presence of God. It is the possession of His name thus written that spells "saved." It is the lack of it that spells "lost."

Justification has been defined as "just as if I had never sinned." Indeed, it is more than that. It is as if I were Christ, in which there is no sin. I have the same standing before God that Christ has. Ponder that point for awhile.

SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

When I arrived at Bible college, I was very young in the Lord and had very little training in the Word. I had one misconception of the Christian life which lead me to doubt in other areas of life.

I felt that as the believer matured, it was similar to the mountain climber's experience. As the believer goes through their maturing process, I felt that they had many problems, and trials which lead them to the maturity that they were seeking. As the mountain climber climbs, and works, and struggles up the mountain they are under heavy trials, but once they reach the summit, they can lay down and relax and enjoy the view. My feeling was that as the believer reaches maturity, the trials and problems disappeared, so that we can enjoy the Lord and His life for us.

This misconception lead me after a year or two of hard work, trials and many problems to wonder, whether I was really saved. I did not have the peace of knowing that I was eternally secure. Many are the quiet times and drives to work that were spent in wondering if I were really saved.

As my Bible training progressed, I was taught that we are maturing throughout this life, and there was no summit, where we have no more trials. I also learned that my salvation was not based on what I felt, nor on what I could do for God. I found that my Salvation was God's idea, and that it's ultimate completion in the next life was up to Him, not me.

I spent way to much time in spiritual turmoil, because of my lack of knowledge.

I trust that the study will bring you to the same knowledge. The knowledge that our salvation is not up to us, but it is up to God.

This doctrine may be hard to find in the theology books because of the diversity of terms by which it is called.

Some list it as "security," some as "eternal security," while some use the term "assurance" and yet others have used "perseverance".

Briefly, we might put it this way. It is the place of salvation with in God's realm of authority in which the believer stands forever. Since the position is "in" God, and "in" Christ there is nothing from without, which can harm the believer's position, nor is there anything from within which would want to harm the believer's position.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer quotes, and agrees with the Westminster Confession of Faith. "They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved" (17.1)

In words that I can understand, I believe that he is stating that once you are born into the family of God, you are stuck - you can't get out, you can't fall out, you can't get thrown out, you can't get enticed out, you can't get yanked out, and you can't think yourself out.

I would like to make two introductory statements concerning this doctrine.

1. I do not believe that this issue is one that can ever hinder or assist your salvation, nor standing before God. You are in the family of God whether you believe the doctrine or not. I base this on the Word of God, and will show this to you shortly.

2. The belief in eternal security can and should be of great benefit to the believer. Not only in facing their own death, but the death of others in their family.

It is not license to sin. Just because you're in, it doesn't mean that you shouldn't live a Godly life.

The lack of belief in eternal security can lead to a great lack of peace and unsureness in the persons personal life. It on the other hand tends to be a good motivator to Godly living!

There are basically two views to the doctrine. The Arminian and the Calvinist. The Arminian believes that you can lose your salvation, and the Calvinist believes that you cannot lose your salvation.

Let us consider these views this.

THE ARMINIAN VIEW as we have mentioned, is that the saved can be lost. We won't attempt to consider all of the passages that these people present. We want to concentrate on what the Bible tells us concerning our salvation.

Thiessen lists several objections to security which the non-security person would raise.

1. "That it induces laxness and indolence." To which the security person would reply - yes, you may well be correct on that point, yet it is God that set the doctrine to words in His Message to man and He is responsible for the consequences of His Word.

2. "That it robs man of his freedom." Once saved from eternal punishment and separation from God, it is hard to see anyone worrying about the fact that they can no longer go to hell by their own free will.

3. "That the Scriptures teach the contrary." Very emphatically this statement would have to be refuted!

4. "That there are many warnings." Warnings of lost reward, lost peace etc. yes, however none of lost salvation.

In considering verses which are presented by the non-security people there are some things which need to be considered. These thoughts are condensed from Chafer's Major Bible Themes. (Mr. Chafer continues with a very nice presentation of evidence for the eternal security of the believer.)

1. One holding to security usually realizes that a person can, from outward appearances, accept Christ, but that in reality at times this is an acceptance in the mind and not in the heart. After awhile there can be a falling away which the non-security person will point to as

someone losing their salvation, which is in reality the falling away of a professor.

2. At other times it is admitted that "Christians" act like the world. Paul is very clear in his thinking on these "Carnal Christians" that are saved yet live like the lost. The lost that live like the saved can return to living like the lost and appear to be people that have lost their salvation as well. This situation can confuse the issue.

3. Some texts set forth by the insecure deal with rewards which may be won or lost, yet this has nothing to do with salvation.

4. A Christian that is out of fellowship is not the picture of Christ either.

5. The wayward Christian may be chastised and appear to be on God's black list yet God is trying to draw him back.

6. Gal. 5:1-4 mentions that the believer can fall from grace, however this is speaking of way of life not position before the Lord. In the early church there seemed to be the thought of encouraging the believers with the fact of their eternal salvation, yet needing to encourage them in keeping their spiritual life in proper working order.

7. Both the misinterpretation, and the interpretation out of context problems, mislead people into the thought of losing their salvation.

8. The crux of the matter is the one, or the person if you will, that brings salvation to pass. If it is man, then yes I would assume that we could walk in and out of anything that we could dream up, yet we know that the Lord God is the author and finisher of this work and it is a bewilderment to me how anyone could believe that God could not devise a better plan than one that I could slip from.

9. A point which I am surprised Mr. Chafer did not bring up is the fact that there is an overabundance of teaching which shows that the believer is eternally secure.

10. The person needs to understand that trials, troubles, and problems, are normal in the Christian life. These are not problems that are caused because we are not believers.

11. Feelings are irrelevant when we are dealing with God and His work in us.

THE CALVINIST VIEW

The view of the Calvinist is held to and defended quite extensively in Chafer Vol. III beginning at page 267 (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.). This view is based on four items of which one is the security of the believer.

1. "Depravity, by which term is meant that there is nothing in fallen man that could commend him to God. He is an object of divine grace."

The Wesleys believed in the depravity of man, indeed they agreed with most of what the Calvinists held, including grace to bring man to God, and election by a sovereign God. They did differ when it came to the security of the believer. They felt that piety and good works, were those tools given to man by which he might retain the salvation that had been given to him.

2. "Efficacious grace, by which term is meant that fallen man, in being saved, is wrought upon wholly by god - even the faith which he exercises in his salvation is a "gift of God"

3. "Sovereign and eternal election, by which term is meant that those who are saved by efficacious grace from the estate of depravity have been chosen of God for that blessedness from before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; Rom. 8:30)."

4. "Eternal security, by which term it is meant that those chosen of God and saved by grace are, of necessity, preserved unto the realization of the design of God. Since sovereign election purposes this and sovereign grace accomplishes it, the Scriptures could not -

being infinitely true - do other than to declare the Christian's security without reservation or complication."

SECURITY TEXTS

Jo. 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"

This passage states that we are children of God - we can't be unborn thus we must be eternally secure. We have three children. Laurie, Stanley and Timothy. They were born unto the couple, Faith and Stanley Derickson. They are our children. They may deny it, they may dislike it, they may hate it, but these things do not change the parentage, nor the lineage.

We as believers, are of our Father, Almighty God. We cannot change that relationship no matter how we try. I have to wonder why anyone would feel that we could, or would want to change that relationship.

Jo. 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We have eternal life. It is wrong to say we can lose our eternal life because if we can lose it then it wasn't eternal (I only had it for a very short time).

The phrase "shall never perish" is a double negative in the Greek language. A good translation would be "by no means perish."

Jo. 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." Now, if a person can lose his or her salvation, how can Christ promise that the believer will never come into judgment? Impossible.

Jo. 6:37 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." We come to Christ for our salvation, and He will not, indeed cannot cast us out.

John 10:27-30 "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Some say yes but they can jump out. How foolish to use such an

argument. Never perish. Never plucked out. How much plainer can the Word be?

Jo. 14:13,14 "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

Christ used a contrast in tenses that is very important here. The well water - you drink continually - this a present tense, while the water from Christ, you drink only once - this an aorist - one time act of drinking. If salvation can be lost, then once lost always lost, because you cannot redrink.

Jo. 17:12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Christ lost none of the disciples except Judas. Judas was not one of His, he was a professor in the following for the money.

Rom. 5:8-10 "being now justified" is an aorist tense - one time occurrence. There is no indication that it can be repeated.

Rom. 6:3-5 We are in Christ so that if we can loose our salvation then He also can slip from the hand of the Father. NOT SO!! IMPOSSIBLE!

Romans 8:30 shows that we are already glorified in God's eyes. This is impossible, if we can ruin our salvation.

Rom. 8:35-37 lists a number of things that can't separate us from Christ. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, nor the sword.

Rom. 8:38,39 lists things which can't separate us from the love of God. If we are in His love, we are in Him. Death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any creature.

I Cor. 1:8,9 We are to be kept blameless till the day of the Lord. (This blameless means blameless in God's eyes - not sinless. This

blamelessness is due to Christ's work. We are justified in God's eyes, even though this action is not in its completed state as yet.)

Gal. 4:5-7 Vs 5 states, "receive full rights of sons". An aorist tense - one time occurrence. Once received, it would no longer be available.

Eph. 2:8,9 show that salvation is by grace not of works - thus if salvation is based on what we do or don't do, as they believe, then the Scriptures are wrong in stating that it isn't of works!

I Thess. 5:23,24 Our spirit, soul and body will be kept until Christ's coming.

Titus 3:3ff Our righteous works have nothing to do with our salvation.

Heb. 1:3 Christ is upholding all things. He is maintaining the heavens and the earth. He is maintaining governments in the world. Can't He hang on to me if I sin? I THINK SO!

Heb. 7:25 God is able to save completely.

And many many more verses if you only will think about them.

Salvation is seen in Scripture as being totally God's responsibility. When we accept Christ, THEN God is responsible to carry it through. What we feel, or think, or do, has nothing to do with it.

Good works and a holy life are the normal response of the Christian. If a person claims to be a Christian, but continues in a life of sin, then one might wonder if that person was really saved. Even seeing Christians turn to lives of sin. They may not have been saved either.

We must remember that unsaved people can lead a "good life" without God. Our job is to witness and leave the judging to God.

There are many other texts and logical arguments to this doctrine.

DOES IT MATTER THAT WE BELIEVE IN SECURITY?

YES

- 1. It gives us confidence to share an everlasting gospel.**
- 2. It will lead to Holy living - He's done so much - we will want to live His way, to please Him!**
- 3. It will determine how we interpret some texts. Every promise to the New Testament believer will be dependant on me, rather than the one that makes it - God. In the family situation, if a father promises to take the child for ice cream, it is not the child's responsibility to drive the car, take the parent, and pay for the treat. The father promised it, and it is his responsibility to carry it forth to completion.**
- 4. It will shape our view of God. Is He an ogre watching for a slip, or is He gracious and wanting to do things for us?**
- 5. It will give us a peaceful life - confident in our destination. If we aren't secure our life will always be up in the air.**
- 6. Security is a tremendous comfort in time of trials. We can know that the trials are for a time and for a purpose, and that one day we will reap the reward in our after life.**
- 7. If we don't believe in security then we will be doing works for the wrong reasons. (We will be working to stay on the road to heaven, rather than for Christ and His glory.)**
- 8. It is proper doctrine taught by the inspired Word of God, so we should very definitely believe it.**

CONCLUSION

From the daily bread.

"An aged woman who had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ was still plagued with doubts about her eternal destiny. So my father and another elder were delegated to counsel with her concerning her fears. After quoting several texts on assurance, my dad said, "Grandma, if you saw one group of people drinking, cursing, and singing worldly songs, and right next door a gathering of joyful believers were singing gospel hymns and testifying of God's saving grace, which company

would attract you?" Without hesitation she exclaimed, "Oh, I'd only feel at home with the saints of God. I love to fellowship with them!" Then he showed her" the following text. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren...." I Jo 3:14a (Used by permission of Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

VERSES PRESENTED BY THOSE THAT BELIEVE THAT A BELIEVER CAN LOOSE THEIR SALVATION:

I have listed all that I have run into. I will comment on some of them, but usually a long look at the context will explain what the verse is really talking about. This is usually true in all doctrinal questions. The context normally clears the fog raised.

Mark 13:22 This verse is very specifically speaking of leading astray and has nothing to do with eternal life.

Luke 8:13 supposedly pictures a believer that fell away. Seems more like an intellectual belief.

Acts 5:32 The Holy Spirit is given to "them that obey him." The context looks like Peter may have been slamming them and they didn't realize it. Peter in verse 29 states they "obey God rather than men." Then in 32 again mentions obey as though - we obey God, not man - and the indication - **YOU OBEY MAN IN YOUR RELIGION AND NOT GOD!**

Another possible interpretation is that Peter is speaking of those that obey in the realm of salvation. He was speaking to those that were rejecting the message that God had been giving. Chafer holds to this in Vol. VI, p 131 and lists II Thess. 1:8 as reference. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that **OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL** of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This seems to speak of the Gospel when Acts mentions obeying "Him" yet may shed light on the meaning of the passage. Another verse which may help is Heb. 5:9 "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him,"

(Another possibility is seen in the fact that they had been told to stop speaking - they hadn't and now are trying to explain the situation. Vs. 32 fully states, "And we are HIS WITNESSES of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to THEM THAT OBEY HIM." IN THE WITNESS. The text seems to be speaking of only those involved.)

Acts 11:21-23 "exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." I would imagine the insecure believe that you need to hang on, or the Lord is going to shake you off.

This means nothing more than is encouraged today! "Hang in there baby!" This common expression is indicative of maintaining what is there. This text is not speaking of salvation. Hanging onto the Lord is not salvation, but is keeping Him close for help and encouragement.

Acts 13:43 "persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." I would assume that this is speaking of the general walk of the believers. We would urge the same thing in our circles today. Encouraging one another to continue in the grace that God has been giving to you in your daily lives.

Acts 14:21,22 "exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "in the faith" in scripture is used of the Christian beliefs. "The Faith" has nothing to do with continuing in salvation. The idea of tribulation is the fact that they were going through hard times and it was through much tribulation they would go before they entered into the kingdom.

Rom. 6:11-23 I see nothing here to comment on. This is a discussion of the old way of life and the new way of life in Christ.

Rom. 8:12-17 Again this is a discussion of the way of life. It does mention "ye shall die" however this is the context of living and being taken home not eternal living.

Rom. 11:20-22 This text is speaking of two groups of people and is contrasting Jews and Gentiles, not individual believers and non believers.

Rom. 14:15-23 Again this text is speaking of personal living and has nothing to do with salvation or eternal things.

I Cor. 9:23-27 If this text is placed in a salvation - eternal things context, then verse 24 states that there will only be one person in heaven. "but one receiveth the prize" It would seem that this is speaking of rewards rather than salvation.

I Cor. 10:1-21 I'm not sure what could be built from this text.

I Cor. 11:29-32 The context is the misuse of the Lord's table. Some evidently had died because of it. The exhortation "that we should not be condemned with the world." evidently is used to show that believers can be condemned with the world. True, they can, for it says it, however what is meant by it is the question. The text is clear that it is physical death. If that person were left on earth his sin would cause him to be condemned before the other Christians. Judged would have the idea that the Christians were weighing Christian conduct and finding some of it was similar to the worlds conduct. Might this be the condemnation that is in view? I think so.

I Cor. 15:1,2 "believed in vain" would indicate a belief that failed. I would say he is calling into question the people's belief. Was it really valid? If it was then you stand in it. If it was a false belief then you do not stand in it.

II Cor. 11:2-4 Paul is simply stating that he is concerned about them, and those that might come teaching falsely. He is concerned that he present them to the Lord in good shape. Not that they can fall and not be at the presentation, but that they be less than Paul desires at the presentation.

II Cor. 12:21 Concern over sin yet there is nothing of an eternal nature in view.

II Cor. 13:5 It would seem that faith is used in the thought of beliefs and walk here. Nothing eternal here either.

It seems to me thus far that people that would use these verses to show a loss of salvation must also believe that sinless perfection is also the alternative to loss of salvation. If this indeed is the case then they

must have an awfully frustrating life trying to stay perfect and "in" without sinning and falling "out"!!

Gal. 3:4-4:1

Gal. 5:1-4 This is speaking of falling from life of faith into a life under the law.

Gal. 6:7-9

Phil 2:12,12 "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." If you work it out yourself then you'd better do it with fear and trembling yet if you allow God to work it out you will have complete confidence.

Col. 1:21-23 The context is Christian walk not salvation. The "if" in verse 23, by the way is a 3rd class condition which means "if, and assumed so," Paul was assured in his mind that this would be the case. Again in the faith is speaking of living and beliefs.

Col. 2:4-8,18,19 Again there is nothing eternal in these verses. They are speaking of being misled by false teachers.

I Thes. 3:5

I Tim. 1:3-7,18-20

I Tim. 2:11-15

I Tim. 4:1-16

I Tim. 5:5-15

I Tim. 6:9-12,17-21

II Tim. 2:11-18,22-26

II Tim. 3:13-15

Heb. 2:1-3

Heb. 3:6-19

Heb. 4:1-16

Heb. 5:8-9

Heb. 6:4-20 It should be remembered that this passage is to be interpreted in light of all of scripture. There are multitudes of verses to show the security of the believer.

Hebrews 10:14 "FOR BY ONE OFFERING HE HATH PERFECTED FOREVER THEM THAT ARE SANCTIFIED."

Remember this verse is coming up in the book when you interpret the one we are dealing with!

Three main views are presented to thwart the Arminian view of this passage.

1. That these people are non-Christians. Chafer Vol. 3, p 302 states that Scofield holds to this position. Chafer goes on to defend that position himself.

2. That this is a hypothetical warning given by the writer. This warning was given to believers.

3. Thiessen holds that these are Jews that had nominally accepted Christianity [they were saved people], but had returned to Judaism. This position, though slightly different, would fit into the thinking of number four.

4. That these are carnal Christians.

If these are saved people then you can't resave them for they are still saved no matter what. Thus pick them up (get their lives straight before God) and continue from this point on. You cannot bring them again unto saving repentance. That is an impossibility.

A return to 5:1 to read the whole text helps see a flow around the passage.

Actually, it seems that Paul was trying to show the same thing we are. He was dealing with people that didn't understand that they couldn't resave people. If they are going to go through saving repentance again then Christ will have to be crucified again. Indeed, that is one of the teachings in this book that the author sets forth. That is that Christ offered once for all and there is no need to offer, and offer, and offer, as they did in the Old Testament.

Ryrie states in his Basic Theology, "I personally understand the passage to be describing born again people. The phrases in verses 4 and 5 clearly refer to a conversion experience (cf. "enlightened" in

10:32, "taste" in 2:9, and "partakers" in 12:8), but they are willfully immature believers (cf. 5:11-14). Now, the writer warns, since it is impossible to go back in the Christian life to start it over (but if one could it would be necessary to fall away first in order to go back to the beginning), there are only two remaining options: stay where you are in this state of immaturity, or move forward to maturity (6:1). Since their present state was undesirable, this passage was a strong warning to go on in the Christian life. This warning is similar to that which a teacher might give a class: "It is impossible for you students, once enrolled in this course, turning the clock back (which cannot be done, but which would have to be done if one could go back to the beginning) to start this course over. Therefore, go on to further knowledge." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 333, 324. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

Heb. 10:19-39

Heb. 11:13-16

Heb. 12:1-17, 25-29

Heb. 13:7-17

James 1:12-26

James 2:14-26

James 4:4-10

James 5:19,20

I Pet. 5:9,13

II Pet. 1:5-11

II Pet. 2:1-22 vs. 22 "a dog returns to its vomit" Prov. 26:11

Septuagint: "As a dog becometh odious when he returneth to his vomit; so is a fool for his wickedness, when he returneth to his sin."

King James "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly"

This text is speaking of false teachers. The quote from the Old Testament indicates that it was a matter of them returning to their old ways rather than turning from a good walk to a fleshly walk. Either way the reference is not speaking of eternal things - only way of walk.

II Pet. 3:16-17

I Jo. 1:5
I Jo. 3:11
I Jo. 5:4-16
II John 6-9
Jude 5-12, 20, 21
Rev. 2:7,10,11,17-26
Rev. 3:4,5,8-22
Rev. 12:11
Rev. 17:14
Rev. 21:7,8
Rev. 22:18,19

To sum up:

Salvation is from a life of sin to a live of holiness.
Salvation is from the sin nature to a new nature.
Salvation is from hell to heaven.
Salvation is from death to life.

It is hard to believe that a logical, systematic God would design a system of salvation that intricate, and then have to reverse His decision or reinstitute His work at the whim of the one that He had given His Son on the cross to save.

We are saved by the substitutionary atonement of Christ. To not be saved after the atonement has been applied to us would be an affront to the work that Christ did on the cross.

It boils down to which you believe. Once saved, always saved. OR Once saved, always worried. Since God promises us peace, it would seem that the former would be the plan of salvation that He would have designed.

05300

FAITH

**Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. Heb 12:2
Without faith we cannot please God. Heb 11:6**

".....allegiance to duty or a person: LOYALTY.....belief and trust in and loyalty to God.....belief in the traditional doctrines of a religion.....something that is believed esp. with strong conviction; esp.: a system of religious beliefs....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Cambron mentions that there are three parts to faith. Knowledge, belief, and trust. Knowledge: Rom. 10:17 "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" 2. Belief: "The second element of faith is belief. Everyone knows what belief means, that is, to accept something as the truth. People can know that there is a Savior by the name of Jesus, and believe that He can save. Yet, this is not saving faith." 3. Trust: Trust is essential to faith in anything. It is most essential in saving faith. It is one thing to know that Christ died, and believe it; It is quite another thing to trust Him, the dying and resurrected Savior, for salvation.

He likens it to a chair. You must KNOW of it's existence before you can BELIEVE that there is such a thing. You cannot TRUST the chair until you have tested it by sitting in it. You must have faith in your judgment and quick reaction, to test it.

A look at Romans 10:14,15 would back up the idea of a process involved in these items. "How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Do you agree with his analysis that faith is made up of these things? They may lead to faith, or help faith to grow, but they are not faith by themselves, nor combined.

So, what is faith? In Hebrews 11:1 we see what faith is. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Verse three is an illustration of this thought. We by faith can accept that God created the heavens and the earth. That is a vivid example of faith. (This would indicate that the unsaved can have a certain amount of faith. I believed in the creation by God long before I was confronted with the Gospel.)

Eph. 2:8,9 mentions, "For by grace are ye saved through faith;" We cannot be saved without faith. Faith is of utmost importance, so we must understand what it is.

Pardington defines faith thusly: "Faith may be defined as that voluntary change in the mind of the sinner whereby he turns to God. Like repentance, it involves a change of view, a change of feelings, and a change of purpose." (Pardington, Rev. George P. Ph.D.; "OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE"; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1926, p 316)

Pardington breaks faith into three parts as does Cambron. I will list these for your study. "Intellectual. This is belief in the existence of god and in the teaching of the Scriptures: John 1.22,23; James 2.19." "Emotional. This is personal faith that Christ is the only Saviour from sin: Matt. 13.21; John 5.35; 8.30,31." "Volitional (will). This is the actual surrender to Christ and present trust in Him as Saviour and Lord: Acts 16.31; Rev. 3.20."

How can we define this term? Might we suggest that it is the mental process by which we accept as true, something that cannot be proven true?

Faith is the Greek term "pistis." Faithful is the term "pistos." "pistis" is the noun, "pistos" is the adjective. It is of interest that a term that is closely related is "pisteuo." "Pisteuo" is translated "believe" in the New Testament.

Let's illustrate the difference between these terms with the word process. There is a process (noun) for developing film. To develop the film you would have to process (verb) the film. Is there a difference between the two? Yes, there is a difference. The noun

"process" is dormant, dead, unproductive and worthless, while "process" the verb is working, active, productive and worth while.

It would seem that we can apply the similar reasoning to "faith" and "believe". Believe is the verb form and is active, while faith is the noun and is inactive. Belief is the action part of faith. When we mentally give assent to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and trust in that assent, we have saving faith.

Let us consider faith.

Faith has degrees: Acts 6:5,8; 11:24; Rom. 12:3; 14:1 The degrees of faith can be seen in the lives of believers. Some believers have great faith in their prayer life, while others don't have faith enough to ask for even the smallest request.

Most have heard of the great faith of Hudson Taylor. He trusted God for the support of many missionaries in his mission. He trusted that God would bring in the funds needed. God honored that faith by providing the funds needed.

Faith purifies the heart: Acts 15:9 speaks of the salvation of people. "purifying their hearts by faith." This passage links faith directly to that wonderful transition between being lost and being saved.

Faith brings justification: Rom. 3:28,30 We have already seen that justification is an integrated part of salvation. There can be no justification, except by faith, since there can be no salvation without faith. (28 "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.")

Faith brings righteousness: Rom. 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." It seems that this verse may well illustrate the noun verb relationship that we were speaking of earlier. By the act of believing the person is justified. His faith being inactive can do nothing yet it was counted as righteousness.

Heb. 11:6 is a verse that shows the same contrast between the two terms. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that

cometh to god must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Faith brings propitiation: Rom. 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" Clearly, faith precedes propitiation as well as remission of sins. Faith in Christ's sacrifice brings about that shift of relationship that allows salvation to be possible.

Faith allows us to stand in His grace: Rom. 5:2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Our spiritual standing in God's family was accomplished by faith. We stand a picture of the Grace of God because of faith in His Son.

Faith comes from the Word: Rom. 10:17, So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This is not only a statement of Scripture, but is of logical necessity. Without the message from God, it would be impossible for man to know what was desired of him by the Creator.

As the lost mind is confronted by the Word of God, the Holy Spirit moves in the life to draw them unto God. We hear or read the Word and then our being must react to that information.

Faith allows us to stand: Rom. 11:20, Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:" This passage with its context pictures the believer as a branch that was grafted into the vine after the Jewish branch had been removed. We stand in salvation through faith. This speaks of our position before God. By faith, we came to Him for salvation.

Faith can be a gift: I Cor. 12:9, To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;" In the New Testament church there were spiritual gifts that were active to give sign of the Messiah that had come. One of these gifts was that of faith. The person with this gift had great faith in prayer. I suspect that this is what James speaks of when he talks about the prayer of faith.

Whether this gift is active today is not clear. The sign gifts were of a very special type. The results were special. For example the healing that Paul did. The cured bodies were special examples of the power of God. The gift of faith most likely was also special in result.

I personally do not believe that this gift is active today, however I do wonder if God does not give some saints a special capacity to have faith. When circumstances are bad, I have observed that most believers have a real faith, yet when they are in better circumstances their faith tends to falter a little. This may relate to the next point. Are we trusting in our God or ourselves.

Faith has an object: Christ is the object of our faith (Col. 1:4; 2:5). Any other object will fail us. When we sought salvation, Christ was the only answer, and thus the only object in which we could place our faith.

FAITH BRINGS SALVATION: II Tim. 3:15, "...the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in christ Jesus."

Faith must be mixed with the Gospel for salvation: Heb. 4:2, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." This relates to the fact that faith cometh by hearing. If we hear the Gospel, but do not place our trust in it, it can do no good. Mix in faith, and you have all that is necessary for the salvation of that being.

Faith without works is dead: James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Even though I had faith in the creation of God before I was saved my faith was dead for it produced nothing. This verse in itself proves also that the lost can have faith.

Can we say concerning faith then, that it is that which allows our mind to make that step of action called belief? That mental ability that allows us to take our faith one step further.

Might we also say that faith is the intellect reacting, and that belief is the will reacting? By belief I mean a belief that has repentance built in.

Faith then can be possessed by the lost and not be leading them toward salvation. (As in the case of Heb 11:1-3)

Faith is the - shall we say - precursor to belief/repentance. Belief is the step of action which moves the lost person into the family of God.

Can we say then the Word Working in the intellect, causes the intellect to have faith? Can we further say that the faith of the intellect moves the will to act, or believe, causing salvations plan to become active? I think so.

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How does, and where does trust come into the picture? Trust must be the ingredient which causes faith to bear fruit in belief. I had faith and trust in the Word, in creation, in God, but didn't know the Gospel.

I heard the Gospel and faith moved me immediately to belief in the Gospel and my new salvation.

Belief can be active in the lost; belief in creation, in God, in Christ, in the resurrection, or in many things. What moves that person to belief with repentance? Faith and trust? Faith? Trust? How about the Holy Spirit?

Can the lost have faith and trust in creation? Yes.

Can the lost have faith and trust in the resurrection? Yes.

Can the lost have faith and trust in the Word? Yes.

Can they still be lost? Yes.

If belief is active - as above, then belief activated by faith in relation to Christ's work is what saves.

So.

Faith - trust - repentance - belief can be present in the lost persons life without salvation. It is when these are centered on Christ that salvation can occur.

The further we study, the more it seems that man is very close to the same place that the angels were. At a point in eternity past they accepted, or rebelled. We also come to a point where we accept, or reject.

Can you have belief without faith? Yes, the devil's believe. It seems that belief in facts is simple belief, yet belief of facts and trusting in those facts is complex belief which leads to salvation.

Faith, belief, and repentance are almost instantaneous, however there seems to be a sequence of events. Faith the inactive takes action in belief. Faith may be present before salvation. Belief may be present before salvation. However, the faith that trusts God's Gospel causes the active.

CONVICTION/REPENTANCE/BELIEF/FAITH/TRUST seems to be the sequence.

Faith - where lostness turns to blessedness, where sinfulness turns to holiness, where rebelliousness turns to submission, where separation turns to family ties - the only place to be!

05350

FORGIVENESS

What is forgiveness? Some thoughts from Mr. McKenzie: "Sign on a company bulletin board in Grand Rapids: 'To err is human, to forgive is not company policy.'" "Have you noticed that it's much easier to forgive an enemy after you get even with him?" (McKenzie, E.C.; "14,000 QUIPS AND QUOTES FOR WRITERS AND SPEAKERS"; New York: Greenwich House, 1980)

The result of God's forgiveness: Rom. 5:18, "Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life."

Acts 13:37-39, "But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men [and] brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Some suggest that forgiveness pardons us for our sins. We are more than pardoned. We are righteous because we paid for our sins. We did not personally pay the price, but Christ paid the price for us.

Forgiveness is a part of our salvation. "The forgiveness of sin is accomplished for the sinner when he believes upon Christ and is a part of his salvation. Many things which constitute salvation are wrought of God at the moment one believes; but forgiveness is never received by the unsaved apart from the whole work of saving grace or the ground of believing on Christ as savior." (Taken from the book, MAJOR BIBLE THEMES by Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord. First edition copyright 1926, 1953 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Revised edition copyright 1974 by Dallas Theological Seminary. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 186)

One of the word's translated forgiveness is Strong's number 859, which is the Greek word "aphesis" which is translated forgiveness six

**times, but it is also translated liberty, deliverance and remission.
(remission being the more common translation)**

Vine tells us that anaphora "denotes a dismissal, release." (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.) Christ used the term to portray the loosing of those that were in bonds (Luke 4:18-19) It relates to the freeing from sin, or the removal of the handcuffs and release from prison.

Forgiveness is available through the shed blood of Christ. Matt 26:28 and Col. 1:14 both boldly set forth this fact. We have forgiveness because of the blood that was shed. Indeed, there is no forgiveness from God except through the shed blood of Christ. The Old Testament saints brought their blood offering to COVER their sins, until the perfect sacrifice could be offered in the heavenly holy of holies.

The Old Testament saint was required to bring a sacrifice for a covering for his sin, due to the fact that there was no finished work accomplished, whereby sin could be taken away. The blood of animals covered until the blood of Christ took the sin away.

Forgiveness comes from repentance. Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This invitation was to gain the remission, or forgiveness of sins. We have seen in previous studies that repentance is one of the first steps toward the salvation that is offered.

Forgiveness is based on different things in different economies. "Though, on the divine side, the freedom to forgive sin is always secured, directly or indirectly, through the blood of Christ, the requirements on the human side vary to some extent with the different ages of time. During the period between Abel [I would say Adam not Abel personally] and Christ, forgiveness was made, on the human side, to depend on the presentation of a specified sacrifice. During the present age, it is made to depend, for the unsaved, on faith in Christ; but for the saved, who are already under the value of Christ's blood, forgiveness is made to depend upon confession and is impelled by the fact that God has already forgiven (Eph. 4:32)."

(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.)

Forgiveness comes from God. Mk. 2:7,10, "Why doth this [man] thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, [Thy] sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)" Even the Jews that rejected Christ knew that forgiveness could only come from God. So why do so many seek forgiveness through works and deeds?

Forgiveness may be a SLIGHTLY post salvation item. Acts 26:18, "To open their eyes, [and] to turn [them] from darkness to light, and [from] the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." The phrases "turned to light" and "released from the power of Satan" precede the forgiveness. The action of the Holy Spirit linked with the persons belief system evidently brings the person into a place where they can see adequately and begin to respond to God, even before their forgiveness is realized.

Forgiveness is expressed in many ways. I would like to list some of these for you. Isa 38:17 "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back"; Mic. 7:19 "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"; Jer. 31:34 "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more"; Isa 43:25 "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions"; Ps. 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Forgiveness may be a synonym for justification. This is the thought presented in THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA. "Paul rarely uses the term "forgiveness," but in its place prefers justification. They are to his understanding practically synonymous (Stemen's, Theology of the New Testament, 418) He preferred the latter, however, because it was better fitted to express the idea of secure, present and permanent acceptance in the

sight of God. It connoted both a complete and a permanent state of grace. In popular thought forgiveness is not so comprehensive, but in the Bible sense it means no less than this. It removes all of the guilt and cause of alienation from the past; it assures a state of grace for the present; and promises Divine mercy and aid for the future. Its fulness cannot adequately be conveyed by any one term or formula." (Orr, James; "THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1939, par. 7)

We have only looked at one of the Greek terms translated forgiveness. I would like to just list the others and share some of Vine's comments on these.

"aphiemi" "primarily, to send forth, send away...denotes, besides its other meanings, to remit or forgive" "firstly signifies the remission of the punishment due to sinful conduct, the deliverance of the sinner from the penalty Divinely, and therefore righteously, imposed; secondly, it involves the complete removal of the cause of offence; such remission is based upon the vicarious and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ."

"charizomai" "to bestow a favour unconditionally, is used of the act of forgiveness, whether Divine, Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13;3:13; or human, Luke 7:42,43 (debt); II Cor. 2:7,10..."

Scofield says of forgiveness, "It means, TO SEND OFF or AWAY. And this, throughout Scripture, is the one fundamental meaning of forgiveness -- to separate the sin from the sinner."

Unger states in his dictionary, "Forgiveness under this consideration [for the unsaved] is never an isolated operation but always connected as an integral part of the whole divine undertaking for man called "salvation." Forgiveness is only one of the many transformations wrought of God in the unsaved in response to simple faith in Christ." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

Chafer mentions, "The underlying thought which the word FORGIVE universally conveys when expressing the act of God is that

of putting away, releasing, or pardoning. It is the taking away of sin and its condemnation from the offender, or offenders, by imputing the sin to, and imposing its righteous judgments upon, Another." (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.)

APPLICATION:

1. A person is forgiven of ALL, sins at salvation! God doesn't select out a few choice ones to hide away so He can bring them out later to beat you over the head with. ALL ARE GONE.

As a believer, as you confess them, they are also, ALL GONE.

2. If a person wants forgiveness - salvation is the only way to receive it - that is, true, eternal forgiveness.

3. All sin is cared for at once - all penalties and causes. Just after salvation we are without sin.

How hard is it to be saved? So simple a child can do it. You simply reach out and take the gift.

So apply that to Col 2:6, "As ye have, therefore received Christ Jesus the lord, so walk ye in Him," Your walk should be as easy as your salvation.

Realize that one! How does that relate to the terrible struggle that supposedly goes on between what is taught, as the old and new nature? There is no struggle. You accept the walk of the Spirit, and enjoy it.

4. If you were given a new car, with a twenty five coat of candy apple red paint job, wouldn't you wash it when it got dirty? Wouldn't you park in a garage to keep it clean? So, why do so many Christian's allow their new soul paint job get so dirty before confessing?

Forgiveness at salvation should be special, and we should want to keep clean. I John 1:9 is not limited. You can use it at any time of the

day, at any time of the week, and at any time in the year. God provided all that is necessary for us to continue on in holiness. All we need to do, is to make mental decisions in keeping with that provision.

05400

FOREKNOWLEDGE

Before we get into this section, I would like to consider a question. Why does this subject call forth such emotion?

- 1. Some feel it is an affront to God, to allow man to have any part in salvation. Foreknowledge pictures man seeking God, which is counter to texts like Rom. 3:23.**
- 2. Others see the others setting "foreknowledge" aside and ignoring that it is involved.**
- 3. Others just like to argue.**

When teaching Systematic Theology I gave an assignment asking the students to jot down what they thought foreknowledge, predestination and election were. One of the students mentioned that he thought that if foreknowledge was involved, then the game was fixed and it isn't fun playing a game that is fixed, even if you are the winner.

Probably there are many strong Calvinists that would follow a similar line of thinking, however those that read the Word and understand it as simply written, feel that since God tells us foreknowledge is involved, then we must include it in our system of theology.

From God's view everything was set in place and decreed before the foundation of the world. From man's view we have a free choice to accept, or reject God. To this point is there any conflict? No there is no real link between the two statements as yet.

Man has a choice. God has given man a witness of Himself. All of mankind has opportunity to respond to God. This witness comes in four forms. Creation, Rom. 1:20-23; Inner witness, Rom. 1:19; The written Word; and the spoken Word.

Man has the choice to respond to his inner consciousness and to nature. If he does not respond to this information then he is lost of his

own choice. If he does respond then God will see to it that he has all the revelation he needs to find Jesus Christ as his Savior.

This final revelation must include all information needed for salvation. This includes knowledge of the gap that sin has caused, that he is a sinner by nature, that Christ died on the cross for his sins, and that Christ died in his place, if he will accept Christ's work on the cross.

This decision must be based on knowledge, understanding and fear if need be. Emotions are a part of our being so may well be involved. (Heb. 11:7)

Since the terms are normally viewed in the same doctrine, I would like to look at election along with foreknowledge. Let us look at the Biblical use of the terms. Elect in the Old Testament is "bahir" (Strong's 972/TWOT # 231c). It has the idea of chosen, and is translated chosen at times.

The Theological Word book mentions of the term, "The root and its derivations occur 198 times with this meaning. The root idea is evidently 'to take a keen look at'"

"This derivative is used exclusively to indicate the relationship of the subject to God. It commonly occurs in a direct quotation of God, having the first singular possessive pronoun suffixed to it. Thus, God himself attests that this person or nation is his own personal choice." (Taken from: "THEOLOGICAL WORDBOOK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT"; Harris, R. Laird/Archer, Gleason L. Jr./Waltke, Bruce K.; Copyright 1980, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 100-101)

This may help us understand the New Testament concept.

I will just list some references and comments on them from the Old Testament.

**Isa. 42:1 foretelling of Christ. His "elect" "servant"
Isa. 45:4 Israel - God's elect
Isa. 65:9 God's elect will inherit
Isa. 65:22 God's elect**

II Sam. 21: 6 God chose Saul (king of Israel)
I Chron. 16:13 Israel - His chosen ones
Ps. 89: 3 God has made a covenant with David - His chosen
Ps. 105:6 Israel - His chosen
Ps. 105:43 Israel
Ps. 106:5 Israel
Ps. 106:23 Moses - His chosen
Isa. 43:20 Israel future - God's chosen
Isa. 65:15 God's chosen

Remember, God calling them HIS elect, or chosen is the Old Testament concept of the word. Now the New Testament.

In the New Testament elect is the Greek word "eklektos" (Strong's 1588). The English term eclectic comes from this term. It is the picking of the best of something. The Greek term translated church is also from this word. (ecclesia)

The "tos" ending means that a product of something is in view. "lit. signifies picked out, chosen ("ek", from, "lego", to gather, pick out)" (Vine, W. E.; "AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Let us look at some references.

Mat. 20:16 Christ was speaking of His own.
Mat. 22:14 Those having no wedding garment bound & cast out.
Mat. 24:22 tribulation to be shortened for the elect's sake
Mat. 24:24 False Christ's will try to deceive the elect.
Mat. 24:31 Angels will gather elect
Mar. 13:20 (same as Mar. 24:22)
Mar. 13:22 (same as Matt. 24:24)
Mar. 13:27 His elect (same as Matt 24:31)
Lu. 18: 7 His own elect
Lu. 23:35 The Christ "The chosen of God"
Ro. 8:33 God's elect
Ro. 16:13 chosen in the Lord
Col. 3:12 Elect of God
I Ti. 5:21 Elect angels/some weren't elect it would seem
II Tim. 2:10 The elect's sake - (prior to salvation)
Tit. 1:1 God's elect (speaking of Paul)

I Pet. 1:2 elect according to foreknowledge of God the Father
I Pet. 2:4 chosen of God
I Pet. 2:6 Christ the cornerstone - elect
I Pet. 2:9 chosen generation - believers Peter is writing to
II Joh. 1 elect lady
II Joh. 13 elect sister
Rev. 17:14 chosen with the Lamb

The term election is the Greek word "ekloge" (Strong's 1589). Vine mentions that it "denotes a picking out, selection."

Acts 9:15 Paul is chosen vessel (by God)
Ro. 9:11 Isaac's sons elected prior to birth.
Ro. 11: 5 election of grace. Again it is not of works
Ro. 11:7 Israel blinded - Gentiles obtained election
Ro. 11:28 Israel beloved - elect - for the Father's sake
I Th. 1:4 election of God
II Pet. 1:10 make your calling and election sure

The term elected is "suneklektos" (strong 4899). "elect together with." (Vine) The "tos" ending means a product is in view.

I Pet. 5:13 church at Babylon - elected together with you

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING ELECTION:

- 1. Good angels are elect.**
- 2. Elect is something which God is vitally involved in.**
- 3. Christians are the elect, however so is Israel future.**
- 4. Isaac's children by Rebecca were elect prior to birth.**
- 5. We are elect or chosen by foreknowledge.**
- 6. Elect and chosen are not linked to predestination.**

FOREKNOWLEDGE

FOREKNEW is (Strong's 4267) "proginosko." "to know before ("pro", before, "ginosko", to know) (Vine)

Acts 26: 5 Jews knew Paul before his conversion.
Ro. 8:29 Whom He did foreknow He did predestinate
Ro. 11:2 God foreknew the Israelites

**I Pet. 1:20 Christ's death set before foundation of the world
II Pet. 3:17 Speaks of knowing before hand**

FOREKNOW is (Strong's 4267) see above

FOREKNOWLEDGE is (Strong's 4268) "prognosis." Webster mentions "to know before." Vine tells us "a foreknowledge." The term prognosis in the English language means "foreknowledge." (Webster)

Acts 2:23 Christ crucified by Jews according to foreknowledge of God.

I Pet. 1:2 Elect according to foreknowledge.

CONCLUSIONS:

- 1. God foreknew the Jews.**
- 2. God foreknew the Gentiles.**
- 3. God foreordained Christ's death.**
- 4. Foreknowledge is not always used in relation to salvation. (Acts 26:5; II Pet. 3:17)**
- 5. Foreknowledge is linked to election. (I Pet. 1:2)**
- 6. Foreknowledge is linked to predestination. (Rom. 8:29)**
- 7. The Jews that crucified Christ were lost. Christ was delivered via foreknowledge, and they crucified Him. This seems to link God knowing a situation beforehand, and electing based upon that knowledge.**

PREDESTINATION

PREDESTINATE AND PREDESTINATED are the Greek word "proorizo" (Strong's 4309). "Note: This verb is to be distinguished from "proginosko", to foreknow, the latter has special reference to the persons foreknown by God: "proorizo" has special reference to

that to which the subjects of His foreknowledge are predestinated."
(Vine)

Acts 4:28 God determined something beforehand to be done (context Christ before the judges). This is an aorist tense indicating that God did this at a point in time.

Ro. 8:29 Whom He foreknew He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ. (looks to be pre-salvation from context/this is aorist also)

Ro. 8:30 links predestination to calling, justification and glorification.

I Co. 2:7 The word that Paul spoke was "ordained before the ages"

Eph. 1:5 Predestined us unto adoption

Eph. 1:11 We have an inheritance because of predestination (aorist).

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING PREDESTINATION:

- 1. Christ and His death seemed predestined - at least events surrounding it. (Acts 4:28)**
- 2. Predestination is linked to foreknowledge.**
- 3. The Word was predestined, or set.**
- 4. We are adopted as sons, by Christ because we were predestined to it. (Eph. 1:5,11)**

Concerning foreknowledge the following have been spoken.

Dr. Bryce Augsberger past president of Baptist Bible College and Seminary in Denver, CO stated that those opposing his view would say that God did not predestine individuals to be saved, but that in His foreknowledge, He saw some of faith (a group, or class), and called them His elect. This would include Methodists, Pentecostals, many Baptists). Basically this would be followers of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609).

In stating his view he said, "God foreknew that no sinner would accept Christ and so chose "many" to receive the gift of faith in order to secure His saving purposes. This would include Presbyterians, Reformed, many Baptists). This thought comes from John Calvin (1509-1564)"

What is your reaction to these two statements? First, I don't think that all that hold to the first are Arminians. Secondly, I'm not sure that the first group would specify that God foresaw a group. Rather He viewed the individual and his life in the future.

Lorraine Boettner in "The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination" states, "Since God's foreknowledge is complete, He knows the destiny of every person, not merely before the person has made his choice in this life, but from eternity. And since He knows their destiny before they are created, and then proceeds to create, it is plain that the saved and the lost alike fulfill His plan for them;"

He goes on to say, "Foreknowledge presupposes [assume beforehand - Webster] foreordination.... The actions of free agents do not take place because they are foreseen but they are foreseen because they are certain to take place." (this seems to say that the decrees were before foreknowledge. This is a problem because the Scripture states that the election was based on the foreknowledge.)

Doesn't the first par. seem to say that God knew the outcome so He chose. How can he know the outcome if the choosing wasn't already done if He is going to be involved in it?

You can't foreknow something that wasn't done. For this position to be true, foreknowledge and choosing would have to be simultaneous. That is impossible because you can't foreknow until the choosing is done.

Is there a sequence to these items of decrees, foreknowledge, election and predestination? It would seem from Scripture that the last three are in order. Fit Decrees into the matter and you may be close to the answer.

SO WHERE DOES ALL THIS LEAVE US?

1. Foreknowledge is the crux of the issue it would seem. Since all we know is based on four verses we should be able to define it fairly accurately.

- a. God foreknew all the redeemed.**
- b. God foreknew Christ's death.**
- c. God elected and predestinated based upon foreknowledge.**
- d. The word has the general meaning of knowing before hand.**

It would seem that election took place in time, at the same time as Christ's death was planned. I believe that this would be among His decrees. This would state then that the decrees followed the foreknowledge. If not then He could not have foreknown and decreed Christ's death.

He had to foreknow to realize a need for redemption. Indeed, His planning for redemption proves the definition of foreknow that we want. HE KNEW BEFORE HAND THAT MAN WOULD FALL, THUS PLANNED REDEMPTION. To define foreknow in any other manner would be inconsistent with Scripture. As He foreknew the fall, the rejection of the Messiah by Israel, He also foreknew those that would accept Him if salvation were presented.

Chafer states, "The Westminster Shorter Catechism asserts that it is 'his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.'" Later, on the same page he mentions on his own, "The term decree of God appears first in the singular, since God has but one all-inclusive plan. He sees all things at a glance. For convenience, the separate features of this plan may be called the decrees of God; but there should be no implication in this that the infinite understanding of God advances by steps or in a train." (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.)

It would seem that God has always foreknown all things, in that, He is omniscient and it is further to be assumed that He existed for maybe eons, OR SHOULD WE SAY FROM ETERNITY PAST, but that it is also logical that the Decree, which relates to man and his existence, was set at some time down the line from eternity past.

Chafer believes the decree to be eternal. "It should be observed that God formed His decree in eternity, though its execution is in time. The decree being eternal, all its parts are, in the mind of God, but one intuition, though in its realization there is succession." (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.) However, in reference to his comment, "God formed His decree" we need to observe something. If it were formed then it is not coexistent with omniscience. It is not coexistent with His existence. It occurred later and cannot be eternal as God is eternal.

Thiessen states "By His foreknowledge God was fully aware of the fact that man would fall into sin and become utterly ruined even before He created him. Still He created him for His glory and purposed and planned a way of redemption when He 'chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love' (Eph. 1:4). This purpose is indicated in human nature and in the Scriptures." (Thiessen, Henry C.; "LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949, p 275)

Thiessen states, "Divine foreknowledge. If God could foreknow that man would sin without causing him to sin; if He foreknew that the inhabitants of Keliath would betray David into the hands of Saul before they had had the chance to do so (I Sam. 23:11,12); if Jesus could know that the fate of Tyre and Sidon, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, would have been different had they had the manifestations of His works which were granted to Chorazin and Bethsaida and to Capernaum (Matt. 11:21-24); if God could foreknow that the Jews would kill Christ without causing them to do so and before He had created a man (Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:27, 28); then He can also foreknow what men will do in response to prevenient grace, whether or not they will receive 'the grace of God in vain' (2 Cor. 6:1, 2). The Scriptures teach that election is based on foreknowledge (Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:1, 2)." (p 156)

Thiessen also mentions, "Since mankind is hopelessly dead in trespasses and sins and can do nothing to obtain salvation, God graciously restores to all men sufficient ability to make a choice in the

matter of submission to Him. This is the salvation bringing grace of God that has appeared to all men. In His foreknowledge He perceives what each one will do with this restored ability, and elects men to salvation in harmony with His knowledge of their choice of Him." (p 344, 345)

This would be a good recap of the foreknowledge position. What God foreknew may vary but basically this is it. God DRAWS people to Himself.

One last question might help you understand which position you would like to settle into.

God chose based on foreknowledge. Now, if he did not use foreknowledge, as in He knew before hand, then He chose with no knowledge of the people or the plan. That is impossible. You cannot choose without knowledge. I can't pick a car, if I don't know what a car is, or what cars are available to pick from.

Foreknowledge, as in knowing beforehand, is required by logic and is clearly stated in Scripture, so why do so many try to leave it out?

I would like to close this section with a thought from Spurgeon. "When Moses sang at the Red Sea, it was his joy to know that all Israel were safe. Not a drop of spray fell from that solid wall until the last of God's Israel had safely planted his foot on the other side the flood. That done, immediately the floods dissolved into their proper place again, but not till then. Part of that song was, 'Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed.' In the last time, when the elect shall sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb, it shall be the boast of Jesus, 'Of all whom thou hadst given me, I have lost none.' In heaven there shall not be a vacant throne.

'''For all the chosen race Shall meet around the throne, Shall bless the conduct of His grace, And make His glories known.'

"As many as God hath chosen, as many as Christ hath redeemed, as many as the Spirit hath called, as many as believe in Jesus, shall safely cross the dividing sea. We are not all safely landed yet:

"Part of the host have crossed the flood, And part are crossing now.'

"The vanguard of the army has already reached the shore. We are marching through the depths; we are at this day following hard after our Leader into the heart of the sea. Let us be of good cheer: the rearguard shall soon be where the vanguard already is; the last of the chosen ones shall soon have crossed the sea, and then shall be heard the song of triumph, when all are secure. But oh! if one were absent - oh! if one of his chosen family should be cast away - it would make an everlasting discord in the song of the redeemed, and cut the strings of the harps of paradise, so that music could never be extorted from them." (Spurgeon, Charles H.; "MORNING AND EVENING"; Mclean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Co., p 42)

05450

ATONEMENT

Atonement in the New Testament is a translation of the Greek word "katalithozo" (Strong's 2643). It appears as atonement only once, in Ro. 5:11. The other appearances are translated reconciliation. Ro. 11:15; II Cor. 5:18; II Cor. 5:19.

In the Old Testament atonement was always related to the idea of a sacrifice being given to atone for sins of the people. It is used almost exclusively in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Only four other occurrences are found outside these three books.

There are two words translated atonement in the Old Testament. ("Kip-poor" and "kaw-far") The first comes from the second and the meaning is to cover. It is the word that is used in Genesis 6:14, "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch." Noah was to use pitch, or kawphar to cover the ark.

Indeed, is not Noah covering the ark with pitch and being saved, a picture of the Old Testament saint that sacrificed an animal, and the animal becoming a covering for the sin, to protect the saint?

The New Testament term is one which we studied under propitiation. The term is translated reconciling or reconciliation in the New Testament usually, and atonement only once in the New Testament.

Atonement is the paying of a price to bring man and God back together. The question of whom the atonement was for, is often raised.

Some see the atonement as only for the elect. The strong Calvinist would be in this group. Christ died only for those that God in His sovereign will did elect in eternity past. Others view Christ's work on the cross for the sins of the world - for all of mankind.

The abundance of Scripture seems to indicate the unlimited atonement is best.

John 1:29 Christ taketh away the sin of the world.

John 3:16 God loved the world.

John 6:51 Christ gave flesh for the world.

Rom. 11:12,15 Reconciling of the world.

II Cor. 5:19 Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

I Jo. 2:2 Christ propitiation for sins of the world.

II Cor. 5:14 Christ died for all.

I Tim. 2:4,6 Christ ransom for all.

Tit 2:11 Grace that bringeth salvation appeared to all men.

Heb. 2:9 Christ tasted death for every man.

II Pet. 3:9 God wants all to come to repentance.

(Pardington notes p 261 ff list more references if they are needed.)

It would seem from these verses that Christ died for the sins of every individual that has, or will live on this earth. The fact that many are lost shows that the work of Christ must be accepted to become effectual in the life.

There are some inadequate views of the atonement. We should look at these briefly.

1. REPLACEMENT THEORY: (Ireneus) Christ's obedience to God replaced the Devil's disobedience, and thus Christ conquered the devil. This theory does not deal with sin, however, and that is the problem that man needs cared for.

2. RANSOM TO SATAN: (Origen) Christ died to buy us back from the Devil. The problem with this theory is that the Bible nowhere

mentions that we are Satan's, nor that we need to be bought back from him.

3. MYSTICAL THEORY: (Schleiermacher/a liberal) Christ took on a sinful nature. Just how making Christ sinful in nature cares for lost man's sin, I don't know. This theory does not deal with death nor penalty.

4. MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY also known as the **BUSHNELLIAN THEORY: (Abelard)** Death of Christ softens our heart to lead us to repentance. As we consider and meditate on the death of Christ our soul is moved to repentance.

5. HONOR, COMMERCIAL or ANSELMIC THEORY: (Anselm) Christ received honor and he didn't need it so Christ passed it on to us if we follow the Gospel.

The Roman Catholic church expands this thought and see grace as coming from this source. They feel that the Church Saints also had extra grace which went into a pool with that of Christ, where the person can come to gain grace, through the sacraments.

6. TRUE DOCTRINE: (God) The atonement must be manward as well as Godward. God's holiness demands sin be punished. (eternal torment) Christ died as our substitute for our sin. This affects both God and man. Man becomes correct before God, and God can see His creatures face to face.

Christ did all that was needed to bring man to God. We could not do it.

7. SOCINIAN: (originally set forth by Laelius & Faustus Socinus of Poland in 16th century. Today it is basically a Unitarian doctrine.) Only man has a problem. God is okay and when man gets it right all will be well. Man does this by his own will and works. Christ was an example for us to show how we are to be faithful to duty.

8. GROTIAN, or GOVERNMENTAL THEORY: God's governmental set up requires that the punishment be levied and carried out. This is what Christ was doing. It has nothing to do with God's nature.

9. IRVINGIAN, or THEORY OF GRADUALLY EXTIRPATED DEPRAVITY: (Set forth by Edward Irvin in England 1792-1834 and presently held by some German scholars.) Christ took upon Himself a fallen human nature and through suffering here on earth lived a perfect life and purified that nature. His death on the cross was His final reuniting the perfected nature with God. (This may be similar to the mystical theory that has already been covered.)

10. DRAMATIC THEORY: (Aulen 1879-1978) "Christ in His death gained victory over the powers of evil." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 309. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

11. BARTHIAN THEORY: (Barth 1886-1968) "Christ's death was principally a revelation of God's love and His hatred of sin." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 309. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

12. SUBSTITUTIONAL OR SATISFACTION THEORY: This one is the correct one by the way. It was mentioned in number six previously. This view was set forth by Augustine, and later Calvin. It is present in today's Reformed and Presbyterian theologies. "Christ the sinless One took on Himself the penalty that should have been borne by man and others." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 309. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT is a term we often use today. It describes the fact that Christ died in our place as a substitute for us on the cross.

This principle is seen in the Old Testament sacrificial system. The saint was to lay his hand on the sacrifice as it was slain. Ryrie seemed to think that there was a substitution of the sacrifice for the person bringing it. He mentions transmission, delegation and by implication, representation.

Pardington has more information on the theories if you want more study materials. Ryrie goes into great length on the use of prepositions in relation to the atonement, if you would like further study.

APPLICATION

- 1. Christ died for the sins of the world. THAT'S MISSIONS!**
- 2. Christ died in our place. THAT'S GRACE!**
- 3. Christ paid the price. THAT'S LOVE!**
- 4. Jesus last words on the cross were these, "It is finished". THAT'S VICTORY!!**

He was speaking of the work that God had given Him to accomplish on this earth! He did all that was required of Him. All that was required of Him was all that God had planned for Him before the foundation of the world.

Q. How do you as a believer react to what you have read in this series of studies? Has it changed your life one whit? Has it brought you under conviction about any of the overindulgences you allow yourself in the material realm?

Has it brought you face to face with the 2-3 BILLION people that have never heard the Gospel once. 2-3 billion people that we have discussed as being lost and without hope of salvation. Have you really faced that issue in your life? (In 1992 the world's population was 5 1/2 billion. The estimates tell us that half of these people have never heard the claims of the Gospel.)

Has it put you into prayer about the multitude of things that Christ provided to you when you simply trusted Him as your personal savior?

Has it made you think of the 30,000 missionaries that will be retiring in the next few years. Many missions were established and manned shortly after World War II when the Christian servicemen were

coming home after seeing the needs of people over the world spiritually. Most of these people are in their 60's and 70's.

We only have about 5,000 appointees and applicants on the line today to replace those 30,000 that are coming home!

If you truly believe all that we have studied this semester, then there is no way you can put these questions aside. You must deal with them! To ignore them is to ignore the Lord, for Missions is what it is all about!

Theology books may seem to be a funny place to talk of these things but let me tell you something! Our schools and seminaries are geared for raising Pastors and Missionaries. They raise them in separate gardens and the two are only allowed to learn from one another those things that happen accidentally. If we don't start teaching pastors to be missions minded we are never going to have a missions minded church.

If we don't apply what we learn here in these studies to the program of God then we are wasting both our time and His.

If in your mind, Theology is not related to the ministering of that knowledge you learn here to the souls of men, then PLEASE stop wasting your time!

If the things you are learning in these books today aren't in your mind aimed at reaching the lost with the Gospel, you have a wrong concept of what is going on.

We have been studying the very essence of the Gospel. We have dissected it, we have chewed it up, we have inspected it and we have labored with it. We should have a good understanding of what Christ is sending us out to preach.

MAN is lost in SIN and God has provided SALVATION!

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO RELATE THIS INFORMATION TO YOUR PERSONAL LIFE? HOW ARE YOU GOING TO RELATE IT TO THE WORLD? HOW ARE YOU GOING TO FACE GOD IF

YOU DON'T RELATE IT TO BOTH YOUR PERSONAL LIFE AND THE WORLD?

BACK TO GOD'S PLAN

"The day after the air raid which resulted in the demolition of the House of Commons chamber at Westminster, when we knew the worst, the thought was in millions of minds that after the war we must build that old historic house 'according to the original plan,' but alas! the old plan was nowhere to be found. The prime minister confessed to the House that all possible research was being made and would be made.

"Away back in the year 1882 a famous architect was going over a number of old plans and distributed those for which he had no further use to his staff of young designers and draughtsmen. One of these young men who chose a plan and who is still alive today was recently listening in to a talk on 'Planning,' and the speaker reminded his listeners that old plans and old papers had acquired a new value as munitions of war and suggested that those listening in should immediately search their houses and turn in all old papers for salvage. The architect who in his youth had acquired the plan from his chief made search in his attic, and there amid the dust of the years, discovered he had in his possession something of great value which had long ago been forgotten. It was the original plan of the House of Commons! The good news was at once conveyed to the House, and the plan pronounced valid, and a great relief filled the minds of many people that in the period of reconstruction the House of Commons chamber would be rebuilt on the model of the old plan.

"There is surely a parable in this story. The world is in a terrible mess of trouble and disaster because the old plan of God's word and God's will has been lost or set aside. Men have either rejected it altogether or tampered with it. God's plan is the only solution! Nothing less will do. Let us seek out that old plan for the reconstruction which must follow war. Charles S. Rodenberg (Stuber, Stanley I. and Clark, Thomas Curtis; "TREASURY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"; New York: Association Press, 1949)

I trust none of us mislay, or place in storage what we've learned in this section. We have the plan that millions need! How can we personally help in furthering God's program?

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ARMINIUS 1560-1609

Actually his name was Harmen. Arminius was a Latinization of it. Some authors mention him as Jacob or James. He was Dutch. (Thomas, W.H. Griffith; "THE PRINCIPLES OF THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979, p 245)

Steele and Thomas will be mentioned from time to time in this section. They have two books out which compare these two systems.

This is what Arminianism teaches however there are some differences with what Mr. Arminius taught. His followers set forth "his" doctrine to the church of Holland in 1610, but they were pronounced unscriptural in 1619. Some authors state that the true Arminianism is somewhat different from that presented at Dort. These thoughts were written by Hugo Grotius and others. It is called the **REMONSTRANCE** which is a presentation of reasons to oppose something.

Though condemned, the system of thought spread. Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645) introduced it into the Anglican Church where 100 years later John & Charles Wesley picked it up and used his thinking in establishing the Methodist Denomination. (George Whitefield also was involved.) I should make note however, Laud, I think was a minority and that the Anglican church for the most part was, and is calvinistic. Indeed, some list the Anglican 39 Articles as descending from Calvin's work.

The system teaches the following:

1. Free Will: Man is depraved, however not so badly that God can't help him find God. He is not slave to his sin nature, but can respond to God's drawing, or reject it. He is not forced against his will to accept God. The Holy Spirit will assist him if he so desires.

2. Conditional election: God chooses people on the basis of his foreknowledge that is he knew before hand that they would respond to His working through the Holy Spirit. He elected only those that He

knew would respond to Him. This makes election dependant upon what man would do.

3. Unlimited atonement: Christ obtained salvation for everyone on the cross however this does not give everyone salvation. They must respond to God before this is effectual to them.

4. Resistable grace: God the Holy Spirit calls all that are to be saved unto God. That call, however is not compulsory. Man can and does reject that call of the Spirit, thus condemning himself. The Holy Spirit can do nothing without the free will decision of the person.

5. Insecurity of the believer: The standard Arminian today holds that a person can lose his salvation. This doesn't seem to be the original position however, as the Arminians when the controversy started stated that this needed more study. Indeed, some Arminians over the years have held to a very strict view of the Security of the believer.

The system views God as the instigator of salvation (the call) and man the receptor. Between the two of them they get the job done, so to speak. Man is given the choice between heaven and hell, between peace with God and turmoil, between God and the Devil. He may choose as he wills. (I wonder why anyone would not choose God!)

CALVIN

At a meeting with King Charles IX in 1561 the Calvinists claimed the term "reformed" for themselves. They wanted to say by this that they were more reformed than the Lutheran churches were under Luther.

Calvin set forth his views in his Institutes in 1536.

John Calvin supposedly invented an acrostic to refute the Arminians at the Synod of Dort in 1619.

It would be good to point out that Augustine held these truths 1000 years before (according to Griffith Thomas in *The Principles of Theology*, p 246).

Some of the many confessions that grew out of different countries where his followers were located are the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of the Synod of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith and in the Church of England the Anglican Confession, or Thirty-nine Articles.

His acrostic was as follows:

T. Total depravity of man.

U. Unconditional election.

L. Limited atonement.

I. Irresistible grace.

P. Perseverance of the saints.

Let us go through his points.

Total depravity of man: We are totally corrupt and unable to respond to God in any way shape or form, unless God does the moving. The strong Calvinist might even suggest that regeneration comes to the person, so that there is enough life within him to respond to the Gospel and call of God. Without this regeneration, it is utterly impossible for the person to respond.

Unconditional election: God chose the elect based on nothing but His sovereignty. There is nothing that the man can do at all. He is totally unable to help himself.

Limited atonement: Christ died on the cross for only the elect. Christ's work provided all that was needed for the salvation of man.

Irresistible grace: The grace that God extends cannot be rejected. The person must turn to God. There is a call to all to be saved which can be, and is often rejected, however for the elect there is an inner calling which cannot be resisted.

I MUST OBSERVE FOR A MOMENT! The terms "to come freely and willingly" that the Calvinist uses, are hilarious in this discussion! If he cannot resist, and if he cannot respond, and if the Holy Spirit is doing it, and if the man can do nothing except respond THEN how can they use "freely and willingly"?

Perseverance of the saints: The saved person cannot lose their salvation. They are forever saved by the power of God. Since this salvation is based on the power, election, provision, calling and work of God, how can it fail. Once the person is a child of God, there is nothing that can separate him from His God.

There is another system that has never been set forth with an official title. It is a system that is held by many theologians.

While in a college full of strong Calvinistic professors, some of the students, including myself, became dissatisfied with what was being taught. The professors found that there was a lack of acceptance of their doctrine, so they proceeded to teach Calvinism in every class, in every chapel, and in every other opportunity they had.

The result was that the dissenters were very frustrated. I finally wrote an open letter to the faculty asking that the Calpush be stopped. I included a poem of humor, and signed it A. Calminian. Since, I have used the term to describe what I believe to be the proper mix of Calvinism and Arminianism to be.

CALMINIANISM

- 1. Total depravity:** Man is totally depraved.
- 2. Conditional election:** God chose and elected based on His foreknowledge of what a person would do if placed in a certain set of circumstances leading up to the point of a decision about Christ.
- 3. Unlimited atonement:** Christ died for all mankind as John 3:16 states. Christ made universal payment for all of mankind, however we must remember that Christ's death saved no one. Only applying that work will save.

4. Grace:

Desired grace: God has revealed Himself within man and through nature according to Romans 1. This revelation if responded to would, I assume, lead to further revelation, and ultimately a confrontation with the cross of Jesus Christ. (In other words the drawing that

brings the person to the decision.) Moving men to an effective faith in Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Common grace is grace that is extended to all of mankind - rain, sunshine, etc.

Convicting grace is grace that convicts man of sin and judgment. This can be resisted even if believed;

Confessing grace which brings the person to salvation and is irresistible.

5. Security of the saints: Saved cannot lose their salvation. This view allows for logically bringing election and freewill together. By free will it is meant that the person has a free choice when he decides for, or against Christ. It is also indicated in Scripture that the person would not choose Christ except for the work which the Holy Spirit has been doing in the life.

CALVIN AND ARMINIUS CONSIDERED

These thoughts are not designed to prove my view, or anyone else's view, but are presented for your thought and consideration. I make no condemnation of these men, nor do I want to try to judge them in anyway. I merely want to observe some facts and draw from these facts some possible conclusions.

These conclusions may or may not be true, but I think they are worth considering when we are going to study and comment on two men's theological systems.

Calvin studied under the humanist Guillaume Cop at the University of Paris. He also studied law for awhile at the university at Orleans. Then came Calvin's conversion. To the astute mind that looks at things from the cause and effect point of view, you must wonder if Calvin's back ground wasn't very heartily affecting his theological studies!

Indeed, Mr. Carins gives comment to one occasion which might help us to visualize this possibility more easily. "Forced to leave France in 1534 after he had collaborated with Nicholas Cop, the rector of the

University of Paris, in an address that was tinged with Humanistic and Reformation ideology, he went to Basel." (Taken from the book, **CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTUREIES** by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.)

His "Institutes of the Christian Religion" was put out for the first time in 1534-36. It was not into it's final form until 1559. However, Calvin himself states that the work that he added to it was additions and enlargements - not change of any major approach. This came out when he was 26 years old. Fresh out of a humanist and law education and conversion. There is little doubt that humanism was a factor in his thinking!

"In the first edition of this work, not expecting that success which the Lord, in his infinite goodness, hath given, I handled the subject for the most part in a superficial manner, as is usual in small treatises."
"...In every succeeding one the work has been improved by some further enlargements. But though I repented not the labour then devoted to it, yet I never satisfied myself, till it was arranged in the order in which it is now published;" (Taken from the book, **CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTUREIES** by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.)

If he felt free to mix his thinking in the early days then you must see the distinct possibility of it later in life. His humanistic training would influence his thought most of his life.

Carins further mentions the fact that his first book is very plainly influenced by Luther's Catechism. He is a man being influenced on many sides.

It seems to me that anyone converted from the thinking of humanism might well over react in his thinking where man / God relationships are involved.

Carins mentions that Arminius studied at Leyden and Geneva under Beza. Mr. Beza, if you have studied Calvin, was the man that took over the banner when Calvin died in Geneva. "Theodore Beza took over his [Calvin's] work of leadership in Geneva." (Carins p 338) If

Arminius studied under a staunch and strong, freshly cultured Calvinist, is it not somewhat possible that his theology might well be tainted with a pendulum swing of reaction also, and in the other direction?

Carins mentions (p 338) that Arminius came under great opposition from his colleague Francis Gomar, and as is seen later in history with others that opposed his teaching. What does the underdog usually do when opposed? Dig in, hold on tight, and look for further proof that he is right. This would not necessarily make for an open mind when looking into Scripture for proof of one's beliefs.

It seems to me that we may well have in Calvinism and Arminianism the two extremes of theological thought that are back swings to humanism. This may well be why today we have most conservative theologians somewhere in the middle - Calminians.

APPLICATION:

- 1. When you study these two men be sure you temper what they say with their backgrounds. Indeed, when you study anyone maybe you should look at their backgrounds.**
- 2. Indeed, when you listen to someone, temper what they say with their background. To allow you to do this let me tell you my background. I was raised in a Christian Church. I did not hear the Gospel in that church. I received Christ in a Fundamental Bible church. I went to college at Western Bible Institute for two years. The faculty were staunch Calvinists. Indeed, they took several weeks to pound Calvinism into the students minds. Chapel sessions as well as in many of the classes. Out of this I was very frustrated because I had just studied the Word of God to find the answers to these questions and now they were telling me I was completely wrong. I then attended two years at an Independent Baptist College which was also very Calvinistic. Now you know my back ground. Maybe my study of the Word was based on some over reaction, however I don't think so. My study was done before anyone had told me what they thought to be the proper belief.**
- 3. When you get tired of looking at backgrounds and trying to figure out just what is affecting each author you might try going to the Word**

of God and see what He thinks. HE HAD A PERFECT BACKGROUND UPON WHICH TO DRAW, WHEN HE SPOKE!

4. Is it any wonder that a middle of the road position which mixes the two systems has come on the scene? Maybe, should we say a system which stems from many pendulum swings over the years to a more Biblical accounting of what the Word of God says?

CONCLUSION

In the dedication of his "Institutes" to "His Most Christian Majesty, Francis, King of the French and his Sovereign" he states, "But our doctrine must stand, exalted above all the glory and invincible by all the power of the world; because it is not ours, but the doctrine of the living God, and of his Christ, whom the Father hath constituted King,..." (Taken from the book, CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE CENTUREIES by Earle E. Cairns. Copyright 1954, 1981 by The Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission.)

This man, as I am sure did Arminius, believe what he taught was the very best they could do with the Scriptures, and that what they believed was the truth that God had revealed.

I trust that you will consider what you have read in this section and come to the point that you will center your studies on the Word of God and use the commentaries, and theologies, and the other books as tools to assist you and to check you in your studies. Do not look into these books for your answers but look into THE book. Do not look into these books for your truth but look into the Book of Truth!

THE DECREES

I will include a brief listing of the positions concerning the decrees. Most theology works have further information, if you would like further study.

Rightfully expressed, most feel that God had only one, over all decree, but that for our ease of understanding we break it into several decrees. Four lines of thinking as to the sequence of decrees are to be found. INFRALAPSARIAN, SUBLAPSARIAN,

SUPRALAPSARIAN, and ARMINIAN. The first three are to be found in the Calvinist camp.

The term "lapsarian" comes from the idea of the fall - the lapse.

SUPRALAPSARIAN

Those holding to this sequence would usually be the Ultra or High Calvinist. They would place the order of the decrees as follows:

- 1. Decree to elect some to be saved and to reprobate all others.**
- 2. Decree to create men both elect and non-elect.**
- 3. Decree to permit the fall.**
- 4. Decree to provide salvation for the elect.**
- 5. Decree to apply salvation to the elect.**

INFRALAPSARIAN

Those holding to this order are usually moderate Calvinists.

- 1. Decree to create all men.**
- 2. Decree to permit the fall.**
- 3. Decree to provide salvation for men.**
- 4. Decree to elect those who do believe and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.**
- 5. Decree to apply salvation to those who believe.**

SUBLAPSARIAN

Those holding to this order would be classified as moderate also. There is little difference between the Infra and Sub. That difference being that the Sub. place the decree to elect after the one to allow the fall.

- 1. Decree to create all men.**
- 2. Decree to permit the fall.**
- 3. Decree to elect those who do believe and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.**
- 4. Decree to provide salvation for men.**
- 5. Decree to apply salvation to those who believe.**

ARMINIAN

The Arminian view is as follows.

- 1. Decree to create all men.**
- 2. Decree to permit the fall.**
- 3. Decree to provide salvation for men.**
- 4. Decree to elect those who do believe and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.**

The election that they speak about is based on the foreknowledge of God. That is the foreknowing of "human virtue, faith, and obedience" (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 election in the Calvinist camp is based upon God's choice only.

- 5. Decree to apply salvation to those who believe.**

STANDING AND STATE

This study will be a bit abbreviated due to the depth to which we could take it. I will list topics, references and a few comments followed by some application. This section will cover standing, state, and then a comparison of the two.

STANDING: THE RICH KID

"The two doctrines of Christian standing and daily life or state merge into one important truth, hence may be treated here together.

Standing, as distinguished from state or daily contact with Christ, is a reference to Christian position - the unchangeable and perfect work of God for the believer, while state refers to the changing and imperfect condition of his soul from moment to moment. Faith secures standing, but adherence to all the laws governing a spiritual life must secure daily benefits for the soul."

Dr. Chafer comments in closing, "All that enters into the believer's experience after he is saved - divine training and development - is to the end that he may be more conformed in his state to what he possesses in standing from the moment he is saved." (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.)

We've all heard of the big muscle man fellow that can whip five guys at once in a fight. Now, imagine this man after he's had a few drinks. He begins bragging about his abilities and strengths. As he gets drunker and drunker he becomes weak - dizzy and disoriented. Finally as he's leaning against the wall for support, he is bragging about his ability to whip every one in the room.

His standing is that of a very strong man - he can beat several fellows at once. His state is - poor - sick - dizzy - unable to stand up - about to pass out.

Now, His state doesn't change what he really is, but it doesn't make him look like he has that standing.

Standing is the believer's place before God, provided by the work of the cross. State is the walk of the believer in this life.

STANDING: God has given us certain things, and they are ours no matter what we do in this life.

Rom. 5:1,2 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." We stand in the grace of God almighty. Grace is all around us. To bad we don't act, and live like it!

I Cor. 15:1 "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;" Our standing finds it's origin in the Gospel of Christ that we heard, and accepted at salvation.

STANDING/TERMS USED:

In Christ: We are in Christ's body, the church (invisible). We are an integrated part of His organism, His body. (Rom. 8:1)

We are in Christ and as a result, there will be no condemnation. We stand before God as if already glorified.

Because we are in Christ, we have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (I Cor. 1:30). These things are done in God's mind but we have to wait for these things for a time - His time! He will bring these to pass in their completeness at His own time.

We are a new creature. Think back on your pre-salvation life. Remember what you were. Now, what are you at this point in time? There should be a change (II Cor. 5:17).

We will be changed physically at the rapture (I Cor. 15:51-57).

We have all spiritual blessings awaiting us. These too are partially unfulfilled to us, but not to God. The blessings we have today may have nothing to do with these promised blessings (Eph. 1:3).

With Christ: We are crucified with Christ. He lives in us. This is not obvious in our state, but it is true (Gal. 2:20). Can you fathom this doctrine? This doctrine of Christ living IN us! That is similar to me finding a slimy smelly garbage can to live in!

Our life is hidden with Christ in God. We are to seek things above (Col. 3:1-3).

We Sit in heavenly places: This is obviously still future. We see promise of our resurrection! (Eph. 2:6)

THE FACT OF STANDING: Many things are done and are ours through our standing.

- 1. The believer is redeemed: Eph. 1:7; I Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:30.**
- 2. The believer is justified: Rom. 5:1; Rom. 4:25; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 3:19-28.**
- 3. The believer is translated: Col. 1:12,13; Eph. 2:6.**
- 4. The believer is sanctified: I Cor. 1:2.**
- 5. The believer is in God's family: John 1:12.**
- 6. The believer has an inheritance: Eph. 1:11.**
- 7. The believer is sealed: Eph. 1:13.**
- 8. The believer is glorified: Rom. 8:30**

APPLICATION:

How do we use all of this information?

**Let's recap.
We're part of Christ**

**No condemnation
Wisdom
Righteousness
Sanctification
Redemption
New creation
Blessings
Heavenly eternal dwelling
Forgiveness
Inheritance
Sealed
Glorified**

All of this is made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ. All of this plus more is tied up in the gift of God in Rom. 6:23. All of these are ours at the point of our salvation.

In light of what He has prepared for us, shouldn't we have a walk befitting our future position. This should be our example to prepare us for our future with God.

We truly are rich kids! We should act like it at our Fathers feet in our thanksgiving and praise.

When we really comprehend what we have in this standing we will.

**Realize just how wonderful God is.
How blessed we are.
How much we owe God for sending Christ to die for our sins.
How much we owe Christ for dieing for us.
How really sinful we are when we place ourselves first.
How much God really loves us.
How we have nothing whatsoever to be proud of.**

He has given us everything we have. As we really realize how worthless we are He will begin using us more and more.

STATE: A ROSE OUGHT TO BE A ROSE!

God is full of decisions for us to make. First of all He tells us we are a sinful lot, and on our way to eternal Hell. We are worthless and

worthy at the same time. We are worthless to Him, but we are worthy of His wrath and judgment because we are sinners.

Then He gives us a choice. He tells us that Christ died for our sins and that we can go to heaven. We now have a choice. **HEAVEN OR HELL.** What is that choice based on? A choice. A choice to accept Christ, or to reject Christ.

After we take the logical choice and accept Christ then we are told in Scripture that we are the children of God. We have many new gifts given to us. We have seen these in our study of standing. We are redeemed, justified, forgiven, glorified etc.

BUT We still have another choice to make. How are we going to live in the future? This leads us to state.

STATE: What, who and why we are in this life is our choice and this becomes the state in which we exist.

Phil. 2:19,20 "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state." This pictures Paul's concern for how the believers were living.

I have a standing - I'm a son of God. I am His child as I stand before Him, however I am in a miserable state. I'm sinful at times. I'm rebellious at times. I'm lazy at times. Let's face it, I'm not much of a son at times! I'm not much in my state even though I am a son of Almighty God in my standing.

STATE/TERMS USED:

In the World: Phil. 2:15 We are to be blameless, harmless children of God without rebuke. We do these in a crooked and perverse nation to be shining lights.

Titus 2:12 We're to deny ungodliness, deny worldly lusts, live soberly, live righteously, and live Godly, **IN THIS WORLD!**

Walk in Him: Col. 2:6 The context shows that we should live a life centered in Christ.

THE FACT OF STATE:

- 1. The believer should walk by faith: II Cor. 5:7 This is fact - not a request or an option! We are to live by faith.**
- 2. The believer should walk in love: Eph. 5:2 We should walk in love, or live our life and base it on love.**
- 3. The believer should walk in light: I John 1:5-7 In short our walk should be centered in God. God is light and we are to walk in light. This means we should check with God about everything we do This means the buying of a house, of a car -- every area of life.**
- 4. The believer should walk in newness of life: Rom. 6:4-11 We are to have a change of life. Instead of serving sin we can turn our backs on it and walk in our new life with God. This doesn't only mean the lying, drinking, covetousness, immorality etc. It includes the pride, the gossip, the self esteem and the self righteousness. ALL SIN!**
- 5. The believer should walk in the Spirit: Gal. 5:16 What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? It means a life with Him in control.**

How do we do this? By allowing Him to control our lives - every aspect of our lives. We need to constantly try to allow Him to exhibit His fruit in our lives. Gal. 5:22,23 Mention this fruit.

A spiritual king of the mountain contest. Who is it that will control your life - YOU, OR THE HOLY SPIRIT?

- 6. The believer should walk worthy of his vocation: Eph. 4:1-3 This includes: lowliness, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another in love, and trying to keep the unity of the Spirit in a bond of peace.**
- 7. The believer should walk circumspectly: Eph. 5:15 Walk as wise not as fools. Verse 16 "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." In short if you use your time for Christ properly you are wise, but if you use your time improperly you are a fool. Our time on earth is for God's purposes, not our own! Are you wise or a fool?**

8. The believer should walk in Christ: Col. 2:6 We've already looked at this one. It tells us to center our life in Christ - 3:1 tells us to set our aims on things above!

9. The believer should grow in grace: II Peter 3:18 Grow in grace. We, as sons of God, are sons because of God's grace. We then should grow, or mature as children grow - into adulthood. "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior..." Part of the maturing process seems to be from the Word of God.

Point of interest: Apostles, prophets evangelists and pastor teachers are for the educating of the saints. Now, What if a pastor, at the leading of God prepares lessons, or sermons that certain Christians really need, or maybe the Christian has told the pastor he needs it and that person doesn't show up for that lesson or series. I believe that person is responsible for the knowledge he missed if it was an unnecessary absence. We can't grow as Paul says, unless we are learning, be it at Church, or at home.

APPLICATION

When the child of a very important person is seen, or read about most people are very alert to see if they are up to snuff.

When I was in high school everyone's eyes were upon the pastor's son. They wanted to see if the son reflected the father.

I was quite surprised at President Fords daughter and son. The son admitted to smoking marijuana and the daughter had her mother's permission to try sex before marriage. Miss Ford also requested a song that is, at best, suggestive to be played before the President of the United States, the Queen of England, and other dignitaries. This does not reflect well upon the parents.

A Christian that has outward sin in his life is no different in a spiritual sense because he is reflecting poorly upon God his Father.

WE ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ALMIGHTY GOD! We should act like it! If God truly be our Father, then we truly should try to conform our walk to a walk similar to Christ, our example!

We covered a verse earlier - let me quote it again. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation to which ye are called."

If, today you are a born again Christian, you have an holy calling from God - a holy vocation - you are the son or the daughter of Almighty God.

Paul begs us to live like it. When you go to the home of someone you know is quite important how do you want your children to act? You hope they are on their good behavior. You want them to be at peace with one another - to be helpful - to be, or act somewhat intelligent.

God is trying to impress the unsaved world with His children. He is trying to show the unsaved that His family is worth being a part of! He wants us to be on our good behavior!

The question is this, are you a proper child, or an embarrassment to your Father?

State is a personal choice for the Christian. You may not approve of the way I live. Maybe you think I'm wrong in some area of my life. That is between myself and my Father. I choose my state for myself, and you choose your state for yourself.

The point is this: We should all be before God planning our state. He will show us what He wants our state to be if we will ask Him. This state will always, let me emphasis ALWAYS be in line with the Scripture and always upward toward service and holiness.

He will never tell you to go downward in your spiritual life! He may give you a choice, but never say God told you to detract from your spiritual life!

Once, while we were between churches I didn't really feel like trying another new church so threw a prayer to God and came up with the fact that we shouldn't go to church that morning. GARBAGE! He gave me a choice, and I said no to Him. He didn't tell me not to go to church!

State is the believers chosen place and practice on the earth.

If we are committed to God, our STATE becomes His chosen place and practice on the earth for us. If we are not committed to Him then we do as we please. May each of us worry about our own states half as much as we worry about everyone else's state.

STANDING AND STATE COMPARED

STANDING	STATE
1. In heaven Eph. 2:6	On the earth Phil. 1:1
2. It is perfect Heb. 10:14	It is imperfect Phil. 3:12-14
3. It is eternal Heb. 10:14	It is till death
4. It is changeless Heb. 10:10	It is changeable I Peter 3:18
5. We are sanctified I Cor. 1:2	Yet to be sanctified I Cor. 3:1-3
6. Result of one act Acts 13:38,39	Result of many acts II Cor 5:9,10
7. Justification by faith Rom. 4:1-5	Justification by works James 2:21-26
JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD BEFORE MAN	JUSTIFICATION
8. It assures salvation reward I Thess. 4:13-18	It determines I Cor. 3:11-15
9. In it resurrection is past Eph. 2:5,6	Resurrection is future Phil. 3:20,21

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CONCLUSION

Realizing that salvation is something that takes place in a moment, we must also realize that there is a sequence of events. As a house is built one phase at a time, and each phase depends on the prior, so salvation is built one concept upon another. Without this sequence, there cannot be salvation. For example you cannot have salvation until the step of belief has been made.

When I was teaching, the final test for this section was to graphically present this process for the purpose of making overlays for an overhead projector.

If you want a good review and challenge, take the following topics and place them in chronological order graphically.

CALLING
ADOPTION
UNDERSTANDING
SIN
ACCEPTANCE
SEPARATION
HOLINESS
ATONEMENT
REDEMPTION
SALVATION
REGENERATION
HOLY SPIRIT
RIGHTEOUSNESS
ADOPTION
GLORIFICATION
WILL
REPENTANCE
MEDIATION
LORDSHIP
STANDING
SUBSTITUTION

HEIRS
FALL
FAITH
BELIEF
CONFESSION
SANCTIFICATION
GRACE
PROPITIATION
JUSTIFICATION
RECONCILIATION
RENEWING OF THE

FORGIVENESS
SECURITY
INTELLECT
SENSIBILITY
CONSCIENCE
OBEDIENCE
PERFECTION
STATE
TEMPTATION

GOD'S WILL

FOREKNOWLEDGE

PREDESTINATION

ELECTION

SIN NATURE

NEW NATURE

PERSONAL SIN

RESURRECTION

BODY

SPIRIT

DECREES

CHOSEN

IMPUTED SIN

OLD NATURE

PUNISHMENT

QUICKENED

SOUL

BEGOTTEN

SACRIFICE OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS

SACRIFICE OF CHRIST IN THE HEAVENLIES

05650

GLOSSARY

CALLING
HEIRS
A SON
ADOPTION
FALL
SIN
UNDERSTANDING
KNOWLEDGE
FAITH
UNSEEN
SIN
BELIEF
ACCEPTED
ACCEPTANCE
CONFESSION
SEPARATION
SANCTIFICATION
RIGHTEOUSNESS
HOLINESS
GRACE
DESERVED
ATONEMENT
PROPITIATION
RECONCILIATION
TOGETHER (CHANGE)
REDEMPTION
JUSTIFICATION
SALVATION
REGENERATION
RENEWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
FORGIVENESS
SECURITY
GLORIFICATION
ETERNAL JOY
INTELLECT
WILL

INVITATION
RIGHT OF BEING

BEING MADE SONS
FROM INNOCENCE TO

GRASPING
TRUST IN THE

MISSING THE MARK
KNOWLEDGE

ACTING ON BELIEF
AGREEING WITH GOD
WALKING GODLY
SET APART
HOLY LIFE
SET APART
GIVING WHAT ISN'T

MAKE RIGHT
SATISFACTION
BRINGING

PURCHASE
DECLARED RIGHTEOUS
SAVED FROM
MAKE ALIVE
REBIRTH
PUTTING AWAY
IMMOVABILITY
FINAL STEP TO

MAN KNOWING
MAN DECIDING

**SENSIBILITY
REPENTANCE
CONSCIENCE
MEDIATION
OBEDIENCE
FATHER
LORDSHIP
TO CHRIST
PERFECTION
STANDING
STATE
SUBSTITUTION
TEMPTATION
GOD'S WILL
FOREKNOWLEDGE
BEFORE
PREDESTINATION
END RESULT
DECREES
ELECTION
CHOSEN
SIN NATURE
SIN
IMPUTED SIN
NEW NATURE
GODLINESS
OLD NATURE
PERSONAL SIN
PUNISHMENT
RESURRECTION
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST/THE CROSS
SACRIFICE
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST/HEAVEN
OUICKENED
BODY
SOUL
OF MAN
SPIRIT
MAN
BEGOTTEN**

**MAN FEELING
CHANGE OF MIND
MAN JUDGING
GOING BETWEEN
MINDING THE

BELIEVERS RELATION

FUTURE HOLINESS
HOW GOD VIEWS US
OUR WALK
IN PLACE OF
DESIRE TO SIN
HIS DESIRE
KNOWING

SETTING THE

GOD'S PLAN
CHOICE
SELECTED
BENT TOWARD

OURS IN ADAM
BENT TOWARD

BENT TOWARD SIN
DISOBEYING GOD
JUST DESSERTS
NEW ETERNAL LIFE
SUBSTITUTIONARY

ATONEMENT
RENEWED
MATERIAL MAN
MIND AND INTELLECT

ETERNAL PART OF

BORN OF**

ECCLESIOLOGY

05700

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE CHURCH

I undertake this study realizing that I have limited experience in pastoring a church in person. I do bring with me to this work the realization that I have been in local churches for twenty-five years and have observed many things over those years.

These observations have impressed me with the trouble, the problems and the anguish that can come within a church. I have also realized that many of these items could be bypassed if the church was operating under a Biblical form of church government.

I am aware that all churches feel their forms of government are "Biblical," but since there are multitudes of forms out there, SOMEONE MUST BE WRONG! Some feel that the Scripture is general enough to leave room for all forms of government. This does not really make good sense if the Bible is REALLY our rule for faith and practice. This is very similar to the church's view of divorce and remarriage today. We declare unabashedly that the Word is our only rule of faith and practice, yet there is a multitude of views as to whether a person can be divorced and remarried. The views run from no remarriage to remarriage for any reason. Now, can all those views really come from the same standard of faith?

It is my purpose to look at the Word of God to see what It teaches on the subject of the Church. I personally believe that most church government systems are designed around personal desire and the need of the day with a few proof texts added in to make it "Biblical."

I trust that this study will concentrate on the Biblical, and not the "Biblical." We need to understand what God wants in our churches, not what we want propped up by His Word.

sld 8-30-91

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH

In our day and society, does "Church" communicate what the Scripture presents when It speaks of church? I doubt it.

Years ago I wrote my dissertation on church renewal and some comments I ran across were very relevant to our study. Many realized several years ago there were some problems in the church. It is sad that we must report that the great renewals of those periods have not changed the church as a whole. There have been individual churches that have made some serious attempts at change and have had a measure of success, however the general condition of the church in the U.S.A. has not changed for the better, but for the worse.

Renewal has the idea of renewing something that is lacking. If you renew a car you go through it and repair or replace all problematic parts and components.

Some have called for the resurrection of the church. Resurrection was a drastic request in the 1970s. Though the term was drastic then, RESURRECTION may be a good term for the church today. At the very least we need a reanimation of the church!

Today little is being done in the church and reanimation would correct that. We need to become active in the local church!

Renewal has been likened to the rearranging of chairs on the deck of the sinking Titanic. Renewal just has not been successful.

When I was in the Navy, we had occasion to meet a ship of the British Navy with the same name as our ship. I was on the USS Cavalier and it was the HMS Cavalier. Some British sailors mentioned when talking about painting their ship, they never chipped away the old paint. They just painted over the old. On US ships all old paint and rust are chipped away and anti-rust paint is applied, then the color coat. The British sailors mentioned that on one of their ships the rust had continued to work over several years to the point that the metal was completely gone. They discovered the problem when a man fell through the deck. The rust had been doing its work in a certain spot for years and finally had eaten away all of the metal and had left the

layer upon layer of paint and there was no strength left to support the people above.

The church is akin to this in many people's minds today. It looks good on the outside but is rotting on the inside. Let us consider some problems that are quite observable in the church of our recent past and up to our own day.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES INCONSISTENT: In the late 1970s a church in Mid-Nebraska split over the issue of allowing a negro/white couple into the fellowship of the church. Some were willing to have segregation within their church.

In the late 1980s we attended a Southern Baptist Church in North Carolina. The smell of cigarette smoke was throughout the church. They raise tobacco so there is nothing wrong with it, even though it is killing the church membership.

We preach against divorce in the world, yet it is a very prevalent problem in the church. We need to be consistent in our beliefs and lifestyles.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES IRRELEVANT: A missionary to Zambia tells of a man dying of starvation only a few hundred yards from the mission compound where the big discussion was what to do with left over communion bread. Today half the world awaits the bread of life and we are too busy eating the bread of this life.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES INCOMPETENT: When we were on deputation to go to Ireland, our children were concerned about some things we might not find in Ireland. One of our children asked if we could buy Coke there. I told them that I was sure that we could, because Coke is all over the world. The realization of my comment struck all of us. Coke is everywhere in the world, yet we were still trying to get the Gospel to the lost in Ireland.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES ISOLATED: Geographically most of the work is being done in our own country. Geographically most of the money spent on missions is being spent in this country. Temporally we are isolated to the 11:00 service. Personally we are isolated by the fact that we allow the pastor to do everything.

THE CHURCH IS SOMETIMES INANE: In a church in Denver I suggested that we glue chorus sheets into the front of the hymnals. This suggestion would have to go through three committees. The music committee to get the sheets, the finance committee to pay for the sheets and glue, and the building committee to okay the gluing of the sheets into the hymnals.

HOWEVER! ALL IS NOT LOST! I finally saw a Christmas program that caught my interest because it had a message that was clear and understandable this year! The teenagers in a local church youth group wrote and produced it.

Why do I bring up these comments? I have seen many steps downward over the last few years. If you are going out to perpetuate this type of church, then I believe that you shouldn't bother. Either get out there and start a life giving church or go find a dead church where you can rot away. **WE DON'T NEED ANY MORE DEAD OR DYING CHURCHES. THERE ARE TOO MANY POOR CHURCHES ALREADY!**

This is a study of the church and I trust that it will produce within you an excitement about what the church is supposed to be like so that you can go out and reproduce it so it can reproduce other living churches! I trust that we will find the Bible's view of the church and see how it fits into God's plan, and then I trust you will go out prepared to help mold and shape lives into this scriptural style of church. Allow the studies to challenge your thinking about what the church is and what the church is to be doing. We may challenge what has always been. We may challenge what has always been taught. We may challenge what has always been believed. **THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO BE OPEN TO THE WORD AS WE MOVE ALONG AND ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE CHALLENGED.**

WHAT IS "THE CHURCH?"

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH The church defined.

Everyone has self-concept, or what they think they are and their value to others. We all have some idea of what we are to ourselves.

What is your concept of the church? What good is the church to you as a Christian? What good is it to the unsaved? What is the main function of the church in your life?

May I introduce you to some concepts of church in the Christian world today? The National Association of Evangelicals has built sewers in South America. I was told recently that a church in this country was spending a million dollars to build a gym for the youth group. How about the congregation that was going to build a million dollar church because they were tired of carrying hymnals in and out of their rented building. Many nominal believers see it as a front for their religiosity.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Is it worship? Is it learning? Is it evangelism? Is it helping others? Is it teaching? Is it missions? Is it praise? Is it growth? Is it fellowship? Is it counsel? Is it giving? Is it help? Is it prayer? Is it God's work?

THESE ARE PART OF CHURCH, OR AT LEAST SHOULD BE! THE QUESTION IS, "IN YOUR CHURCH ARE ALL OF THESE THINGS TAKING PLACE?"

What offices should a church have? Deacons, deaconesses, elders, board members, trustees, pastors, evangelists, teachers, physical plant engineers?

What type of church government should a church have? Ecclesiastical, congregational, dictatorial, one board, two board, elder rule?

Who can be a member of this church? What are the qualifications? Baptism, salvation, testimony, good life, a business in the city? Consider these things a few moments before you go on.

NOW THAT YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH, WE WILL CHECK THAT WITH THE SCRIPTURES AND SEE WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

OR RETAIN IN YOUR CONCEPT. We trust that it won't be too painful.

II. THE CHURCH DEFINED

Just what do we mean when we talk about the church? Do we mean a building? Do we mean a group of people that listen to tapes from a man in another state? Do we mean an organization? Just what do we mean?

To see the Biblical idea of the church you must see two items of business. First of all the church is a universal body made up of all believers no matter what color, shape or breed they are. This universal church will make up all those that are raptured when the Lord returns for His Church. Secondly, there is the local aspect of the church. The local aspect is the body of believers that calls themselves a local church. This local aspect of the church will be the emphasis of this study.

Another way of distinguishing between the church universal and the church local, is found in the terms "organism" and "organization." The Universal Church is an organism or a living body that has its life in its Head Jesus Christ. The local church is an organization to control, guide and feed the local gathering of believers in a certain geographical location.

Before we begin this look into the local church we should take a brief look at the Church Universal. We will look at this aspect in more detail later in the study as well.

When Christ spoke to Peter about building His Church in the Gospel Christ was speaking of the Universal Church, His church, His Bride to be. This Church is comprised of only believers, and He is the only one that knows the true extent and membership of that body of believers.

There will be believers from many denominations, organizations, and fellowships of our country. There will be believers from areas where there is no organized church.

These people will be those that have accepted Christ's work on the cross as a substitutionary payment for their sin. These people may be from any group or church as long as they have that one thing in common - that free salvation that is in Christ alone.

The Universal Church met only once in the past as a complete body and that would have been on the Day of Pentecost when the church began. We will meet in mass in the air at the Rapture, and then will attend the marriage feast of the Lamb together. That should prove to be a time of pure joy as well as a time for some surprise concerning those that are present. Many will attend that we probably could not have associated with here on earth due to their life styles and doctrine, yet there we will have pure and complete fellowship, not only with one another, but with the Lord.

We are automatically baptized into the Universal Church when we become Christians. We are placed into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. We then identify with that body when we are baptized with water. The water baptism should be tied to a local church as the deliverer of the ordinance, but the act is the identification of the person with Christ and His body, the Church. Taking of church membership then identifies us with a particular local church.

Some have suggested that when we speak of the church universal we capitalize the word church and then when we speak of the local church we use a small letter. This will not be followed in this study for it seems an item more of tradition than necessity. The local church should be made up of people from the universal church so the distinction is not needed.

A good study that we won't attempt to get into on this subject would be to take all occurrences of the word church and determine which are speaking of the universal and which are speaking of the local church. I find many times that pastors use the references interchangeably and this ought not be done. At times what is true of the local church is true of the universal church, yet at other times there may be differences.

To sum up our study thus far, we have seen that the church local, is a part of the Church Universal. All local churches make up the universal church. All local churches also should be made up of only

believers from the universal church. The local church governs our activities in this life and the universal church will be our place for all of eternity.

The universal church is composed of all those that have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. The local church is a body of believers that have gathered for specific purposes. Those purposes will be discussed shortly.

There are those that teach that where two or three are gathered you have a church. The Lord mentions that when two or three are gathered that He is with them, but He never declares that to be a local church, nor do any of the New Testament writers. This is not to detract from the fellowship that we can have together in small groups, but there is a difficulty in two or three practicing communion when they are not an organized church.

Some suggest that the book of Acts shows that in the early days of the church there were meetings in homes, and these fellowships comprised the functioning of the local church at Jerusalem. The item that is usually left out is the fact that the apostles were overseeing the functions of the church. This is very clearly shown in chapter six when they called for a new office of deacon to serve the church in a specific manner.

It is also to be suggested that the breaking of bread in the early part of Acts is not easily shown to be the Lord's table observance. It could just as easily be the breaking of bread in a meal. The other side of this coin is the possibility that we might see in the Acts that the believers were commemorating the Lord's death each time they gathered to eat. That might have application to our own potlucks and get-togethers. It might well be if we were concentrating more on His death we might be closer to Him and our service to Him.

In defining the Church there will be five aspects to the local church which we want to look at. First, it was organized, second it was made up of believers, third it was a Spirit filled group of people, fourth it was the deliverer of the ordinances and finally, it was in a geographical location. We do not want to expand our definition further at this point. We need to understand these five points of our definition before we go on to look at the purpose of that body - the

edification of the saved and the evangelization of the lost. Those two purposes must be an integrated part of the church, or it is not really a church, but the five points are really the definition as opposed to the purpose.

a. Organized: Just how do we know the early church was organized? Many things could be offered as proof of this point. The apostles were over the church. The people came to the apostles with problems in chapter six, and again we see in chapter fifteen there was a council to settle a dispute of doctrine. Later in the New Testament we see that Paul gives instruction concerning the elders and deacons, the ministers of the church.

It might be wise to set the stage for this study by stating that we are not pushing organized church, or organizationalism. The study will look at what the Lord had in mind for His local churches. There will be an attempt to show what the New Testament shows organizationally and go no further. There was organization in the early church, but we are quick to point out there was LIMITED organization.

b. Comprised of believers: The church is comprised of believers only. This is clearly seen in the Scripture in Acts two when the church was started. Only believers were present and only believers were baptized into the Body of Christ. Later in Acts the idea of belonging is linked with that of accepting Christ. The book of Second Corinthians shows clearly that the believer is not to be yoked with non-believers. This is applicable to the church membership in that the logic that Paul used in this text precludes lost people in our relationships or in the church (II Cor. 6:14-18).

It is easy to observe in many of our churches today there are non-believers in membership where they ought not be. Indeed, there are lost people in places of leadership in churches today. This causes no end of difficulties for that particular church. How can a church be directed by its Head, Jesus Christ, if there are lost people in places of leadership? ILLOGICAL! The communication link is broken.

CHURCH DEFINED (CONTINUED)

c. Spirit filled: The Spirit filled the believers on the day of Pentecost and we know from our study of the Holy Spirit that He indwells each believer in this age. The New Testament tells the believer to be filled with the Spirit as we gather together for worship and fellowship (Eph. 5:18-20). (The filling of the Spirit makes reference to the fact that the Spirit is in control of the believer and not the believer controlling himself.) If every believer is controlled by the Spirit of God, then they can be properly lead of the Spirit to do the will of the Head of the church, Christ. If part of the body is not controlled by the Spirit then there will be limited, if not impaired, control of the body by Christ.

d. Deliverer of the ordinances: In this point we do not want to bring about visions of the Roman church that dispenses grace through the sacraments, but we do want to help the reader to understand that the ordinances are not for bodies of people other than the church. The church should be the center of the ordinances. It is not to say that the pastor must be the only one involved in administering the ordinances either. The church leadership is to be overseeing the dispersion of the ordinances. Any lay person can be involved in the ordinances as long as the leaders have control of that involvement. We were pleased that one of our sons was baptized by a layman in the church. The church leaders had allowed the man to baptize his own children and they decided that he might as well baptize everyone that Sunday. This is perfectly acceptable.

The ordinances are two: The Lord's table and baptism. These topics will be covered later in detail, but at this point let us only mention that baptism is by immersion and that it is not an extension of grace or favor. It is only a sign of the believers' rebirth. The Lord's table is an observance which brings our mind to the death of our Lord on our behalf. These two are to be observed under the authority of the local church, and are not to be a part of individual worship.

e. Local geographical location: The church was started in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost and then spread throughout the known world. The fact that it was linked to geographical locations is easily seen

when we look through the index of our Bible. Paul wrote to the church at Rome, Corinth, Thessalonica etc. James wrote to believers that were scattered, but the emphasis of Scripture is on local assemblies.

We want to move on to the church and its purpose. We have already mentioned that the overall purpose is the evangelism of the lost and the edification of the saved. Beyond these two points there are many things that the church is to do, but this is the central thrust for the church.

As the believer mixes with lost people in their everyday life they will ultimately witness of their Lord and lead someone to the Lord. At that point the new believer should be introduced to the local church where the church will begin to train them in the things of the Lord. The training is to the end that the new believer will be well grounded, but also they will be sent out to do the work of the Lord.

In a real sense the church is an educational institution. In fact - one man's opinion - if the church in this country were doing its job, there would be no need for Bible Institutes, Colleges and Seminaries. The believers would be properly trained in the church, and then they would go out to do the work they were given to do.

The term "church" in the Bible is usually the Greek term "ekklesia" which means called out. The term is used of the children of Israel as they were in the wilderness, and is also used of secular assemblies of people in the book of Acts (Acts 7:38; 19:32; 39). Thus when we use the term church we are obviously talking about called out people and not a building. This is a group of people that is called out of a larger group of people, again showing the "saved" aspect of the church membership (Acts 15:14).

This is probably the most important item - the church is people NOT a building. Often times when we talk of church, the building is the concept that pops into our mind, yet that concept is in error. God is not interested in buildings, but in people. Buildings are not wrong if they are NEEDED AND UTILITARIAN IN NATURE. Many buildings today are products of a person's or group's pride and ambition.

Even more than people, we are speaking of God's people, a very special people. These are people that have great meaning and value to God, thus we ought to bear that in mind when we talk about them! We are indeed God's people, a peculiar people called out to serve Him and Him only.

Some view the church as something new - a new kid on the theological block - so to speak. This is true in that the church's organizational structure is something that is newly revealed in the New Testament however the church is only an extension of the Lord's overall program.

We must realize that God has a kingdom plan in action throughout the ages. His thought was for a kingdom for Himself. This is seen in the Old Testament in all of the prophetic information concerning the kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom will be the culmination of all that God is doing with man. The church is not something that was thought up by the Trinity on the spur of the moment when Christ "goofed and got crucified." The church is not a substitute program. The church is an extension of the program that was in progress. Christ mentions the kingdom in mystery form. I suggest a study of that thought and its relationship to the church. Christ was sent to finish provision for the salvation program, and He will return to finish the kingdom aspect of the overall program of God in the future.

The church is not a title for some new group, or some new movement. The Church is God's called out ones of this age as Israel was in the Old Testament.

Paul mentions that the Gentiles are grafted into the program because the Jewish people have been set aside for a time. We will see more on this when we delve into the Eschatology section of our study. The church is something that was planned before the foundation of the world just as the plan of redemption was planned, just as the plan for Israel was planned.

WHAT THE CHURCH IS NOT:

a. The church is not the Old Testament way reworked or renewed: All Old Testament and New Testament saints are redeemed but: 1.) The sacrificial system ended in Christ. Gal. 3:24-26 tells us that the

law was a schoolmaster to bring us to faith. We are no longer under that Old Testament schoolmaster but under the blood of Jesus Christ. Heb. 5:9-10 tells us that Christ became the author of salvation by His suffering. 2.) The Church Age began with the work of the cross and Christ upon it.

b. The church is not Denominations: Denominations are not mentioned, nor even hinted at, in the Scriptures. What is a denomination? Webster mentions, "a religious organization uniting in a single legal and administrative body a number of local congregations."

Are Baptists a denomination? Some may be considered a denomination, however not all Baptist groups are denominations. The "Southern Baptists" and the "American Baptists" are denominations, however the "Conservative Baptists" and the "Regular Baptists" are associations. The difference between them is the organization behind them. The latter groups are loose associations of INDEPENDENT CHURCHES GOVERNED BY THEMSELVES! Now I might add that the Southern Baptists claim they are independent churches, though at last report they still were required to maintain certain ties to the overall organization which seems to fit Webster's definition.

The denominational churches are governed to a certain extent via the denominational structure. The churches support that structure by agreement of being a part of the denomination.

A denomination may require giving, may set up schools, may help select pastors for churches, may have their own publishing arm, may require churches to follow their curriculum and may manage the local church and what it does.

Are Lutherans a denomination? There are several groups that make up several separate denominations of Lutherans. Are Presbyterians a denomination? Yes they are. There may be more than one in this group as well.

SO THE CHURCH IS NOT, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Christian Science, Catholic, or any other organizational structure.

You might wonder why I take time to cover this topic. Have you ever read the "TRAIL OF BLOOD," a book that describes only certain Baptists as the only real, true believers? They hold to the fact that if you haven't been baptized by one of their men that was baptized by someone that was baptized by someone that was baptized by someone that was baptized - etc. clear back to John The Baptist, then you aren't properly baptized, and the thought often is that you may not really be going to heaven. These are sometimes called Landmark Baptists.

Others aren't quite that strong. I attended two Baptist colleges. At one of them a friend was talking with me and he mentioned the "Baptist distinctives." I asked him what they were, so he listed them for me. They were Biblical principles that all of us would hold to. I said, "Yes, those are good principles but they are Biblical distinctives." "No! They are Baptist distinctives." I said, "Yes, Baptists hold to them, but they are Biblical distinctives!" "NO! THEY ARE BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES!" I said, "How do you like the weather?" We removed ourselves from the subject.

We might also add that the church is not the ecumenical movement. Three Lutheran groups have now merged. Another Lutheran group and the Episcopalians are trying to merge. The Catholics want us all to come back to Holy Mother Church. The Charismatics of all sorts want to get together. This is not the bringing about of the Body of Christ, this is the bringing together of Christians and non-Christians in an unholy mess of doctrine they all say they can live with.

c. The church is not the Millennial Kingdom: The Kingdom is yet future and will be set up by Christ the Lord. Some in the past, and some in this time, believe that we can get the earth back to the pre-fall condition and allow the Lord to come set up His kingdom. NOT SO! The Lord is capable of setting the date of His coming. Indeed, it has been set from the foundation of the world, and nothing we can do on this earth will change that date.

d. The church is not a Sunday School: The Sunday School started in 1780 in Glouster, England by Robert Rakes in a kitchen. It WAS NOT IN 40 AD IN THE UPPER ROOM ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST! Mr. Rakes started the Sunday School to teach poor children to read and write, and he used a Bible to do it. In 1824 the

American Sunday School Union brought the concept of the Sunday School to the church.

In all of the good that Sunday Schools have brought to us we must remember they are not inspired. Many believe there are some problems with Sunday Schools, and I would like to alert you to these possible problems.

(From "EMERGING PATTERNS IN CHURCH EDUCATION" by Kenneth O. Gangel in Christianity Today; July 1973 p 5)

1. "It offers a conscience - salving, though inadequate, alternative for parents who neglect Christian teaching at home." 2. "It has focused too much on children and too little on adults." 3. "It may have so emphasized evangelism that it has neglected nurture." 4. "It too often is used as a substitute for a total church program of nurture."

A number of years ago a friend took a church in Nebraska. There were two separate buildings. The church met in one building and the Sunday School met in the other. He accepted the call to the church and began talking to his board about making some changes in the way the Sunday School was operating. He was promptly informed that the Sunday School was not his business. He was the pastor of the church. The Sunday School had its own board and superintendent that took care of their program. Another friend took a small work in Denver. The group met only for Sunday School. It took him several months to add a ten minute teaching time at the end of the Sunday School activities.

Paul never started with Sunday Schools, nor with kids. He always started with the adults.

e. The church is not Israel: Saucy declares this point, "The New Testament never confuses Israel and the church. As opposed to the church, which is a religious body composed of individuals from all nations, the term Israel retains its reference to that people which came physically from the loins of Abraham." (Taken from: "THE CHURCH IN GOD'S PROGRAM"; Saucy, Robert L.; Copyright 1979, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. p 70) This is a good distinction, yet I believe that it leaves out the proselytes that came to God through Israel in the Old

Testament. These too were from all nations, even though they identified with Israel. They were considered Israelites, even though they did not come from the "loins of Abraham."

Is there a better statement of distinction? Let's try. The church is that group of people who are related to God through belief and faith, since the cross, as opposed to Israel which is that people that were related to God through belief and faith prior to the cross, responding to the promise of God to Abraham. Though similarities may exist, the two are distinct and are separate from one another.

Some would have us believe that the two are the same. Some bring forth Rom. 9:6 as proof that Paul viewed Israel and the church as the same. "Not as though the word of God hath taken no effect. For they are not all Israel, who are of Israel...." If you examine the context it will be clear that this is not showing that some of the people in the church are also Israel - it is showing there is spiritual Israel and physical Israel.

Those who view Israel and the church as the same normally do so to place their followers under the law and the promises of the Old Testament economy.

The two are separate! 1.) The book of Acts portrays men of the church speaking of Israel separately from the church. Acts 2:22 "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:" (See also Acts 3:12; Acts 4:10; Acts 5:21; Acts 5:31; Acts 5:35; Acts 21:28.) 2.) Paul viewed them as separate. He, a man of the church, speaks, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, they might be saved." (Rom. 10:1) He distinguishes between "brethren" and "Israel." In Rom. 11:1 he declares himself, a Christian, to be a part of Israel, making a distinction between the two. Paul in I Cor. 10:32 mentions Jews, Gentiles and the church as separate units. 3.) The fact that the term "Israel" appears only approximately twenty times between the end of Acts and the beginning of Rev. is indication enough that Israel is to be kept separate from the church. 4.) Israel is a nation while the church is a body, an organism, and an organization. The church is never referred to as a nation, yet this is the term used of Israel over and over again in the Old Testament. 5.) God at this time

is dealing with and through the church WHILE Israel has been set aside and is not active with, or for God.

It must be readily admitted that the two are similar. The term "ecclesia" is used of both groups of people. We have seen that the term is applied to Israel in the wilderness in Acts 7:38, while also in Acts the term is used of the church (Acts 14:23). Indeed, the term is related to the church 112 times in the New Testament.

Why is it important to view the two as separate? To mix the two will lead to the promises and ordinances of the Old Testament being applied to the church and the blessings of the church being applied to Israel.

It will lead to misunderstandings in the area of future things. For example, who are the people that will be governed in the Millennium? If Israel and the Church are the same then both will be in the Millennium. If they are different then only Israel will be in the Millennium.

If they are actually the same then Paul was not able to communicate well, for he certainly shows a distinction between the two in his writings.

Results of mixing Israel and the church shows up in the teachings of: 7th day Adventism, British Israelism, Mormonism, and Covenant Theology.

f. The church is not big business: Years ago a religious temple in downtown Denver occupied only a tiny part of two city blocks. Also on the property were several high rise commercial buildings. Two city blocks in downtown Denver - reportedly tax free because it was a part of the temple property. Other cults and isms are noted for their total or part ownership of large corporations.

g. The church is not what many have made it: Bruce Shelley in his "THE CHURCH: GOD'S PEOPLE," mentions a list of some myths of the modern day church meaning. He declares that the church is not just fellowship, not just invisible, not just doctrinal, not even a building, nor denominations, nor is it an influence on society. It is much more than many try to make it in our day and age. It is

something special and unique in all the world, and we keep it to ourselves all too often, not extending invitation to it to those around us.

To recap, the church is not: The Old Testament sacrificial system, A denomination, The Millennial Kingdom, A Sunday School, Israel, Big Business, Fellowship, or Doctrine! By the way, it isn't a building either! As we rid ourselves of the false ideas, maybe we can focus on the facts - what is the church? It is people - specifically God's people.

STUDY SUGGESTIONS:

- 1. List all of the occurrences of the term church and determine which are speaking of the universal church, local church and in some cases you might find that the reference speaks of both aspects of the church.**
- 2. Look at the five points of our definition of the church and find other scriptural passages that prove the definition that we have set forth.**
- 3. Attempt to find other passages which show the church's purpose is edification and evangelism.**

FOR DEEPER STUDY

- 1. Read through the November 1989 issue of Moody Monthly. It is very interesting where some of our traditions came from.**
- 2. See appendix one for a constitution for a church that follows the multiple elder form of government.**
- 3. Request a copy of Radio Bible Class' booklet "WHO QUALIFIES TO BE A CHURCH LEADER?" and read it. Great for ideas! (Radio Bible Class; Grand Rapids, Michigan; 49555-0001)**

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WHAT THE CHURCH IS

Introduction:

We have seen that the Greek word translated church is "ecclesia." It is translated in the following manner: 1.) The "ecclesia" of a self-governing Greek city. Acts 19:32, 35, 39, 41. 2.) The Old Testament "ecclesia," or gathering of national Israel. Acts 7:38. 3.) The New Testament "ecclesia." I Tim 3:15,16.

There are around 112 more references to the New Testament Church, both visible and invisible. The meaning of Church, or the type of called out group, is determined by the context of the passage. "Ecclesia" comes from two terms, "ec" meaning out, and "clessia" meaning called.

In the New Testament usage there seems to be the idea of the people knowing they belong to the group that is called out. This does not require membership, but certainly allows for the possibility.

Membership in our day is a very real need. There is a need to keep the local assembly pure. If you have unsaved in the membership, you have the possibility of those unsaved becoming church leaders. This is not good! "Church" does not necessarily guarantee there are not unsaved present. In many of our mainline denominations entire congregations are probably unsaved. Even within Bible believing churches, we can accidentally allow unsaved into the fellowship. This is never on purpose and is always regrettable.

Let us try to define the term church. What is "church?" What are the minimum requirements to call a group of people a church?

May I suggest a definition? The church is the invisible union of all believers in this present age that manifests itself through local assemblies committed to the edification of the saints and the evangelization of the lost.

A complete study of the term church would be suggested for the student that would like to do further research. We will only list some of the highlights of such a study for your present consideration.

- 1. The church is Christ. Col 1:24**
- 2. The church is a feeding place for believers. Acts 20:28**
- 3. The church is showing God's wisdom. Eph. 3:10**
- 4. The church followed the apostle's doctrine. Acts 2:42**
- 5. The church is set apart to God. I Cor. 1:2**
- 6. The church will be raised and glorified. I Cor. 15:52**
- 7. The church attests to, and serves Christ. I Pet 1:15**
- 8. The church is an assembly of people. Acts 7:38; Matt. 16:18**
- 9. The church seems to be involved in worship.**
- 10. The church is catholic/universal. Col 1:6; Rev 5:9; Eph. 2:14-24**
- 11. The church is subject to Christ. Eph. 5:24**
- 12. The church prayed. Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5; I Tim. 2:8**
- 13. The church has the ministry of reconciliation. II Cor. 5:19**
- 14. The church had leaders. Acts 14:23; 20:17; I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5ff**
- 15. The church was ministering or giving. Acts 11:29,30**
- 16. The church is the fullness of Christ. Eph. 1:23**
- 17. The church sang. Eph. 5:19**
- 18. The church baptized new believers. Acts**
- 19. The church was gifted. I Cor. 4:17; 12:28,29; Eph. 4:11-16; Acts 1:26; Rom. 12:7; I Tim. 4:11; 6:2**
- 20. The church had all things common - voluntary. Acts 1-6**
- 21. The church sent out missionaries. Acts 11:13; 13:1 ff**
- 22. The church is of Christ. Matt 16:18**
- 23. The church is of the living God. I Tim 3:15**
- 24. The church is the holy temple of Lord. Eph. 2:20**
- 25. The church is a fellowship with those of like mind. I Pet 2:9**
- 26. The church is the Bride of Christ. Eph. 5:25**
- 27. The church is the body of Christ. Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:12**
- 28. The church is the dispenser of the mysteries of God. I Cor. 4:1**
- 29. The church has a head - Christ. Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18,24**
- 30. The church is believers. I Cor. 1:2**
- 31. The church is God's elect. Rom. 8:33**
- 32. The church observed the Lord's table. I Cor. 11**

So, "The church is the invisible union of all believers in this present age which manifests itself through local assemblies committed to the

edification of the saints and the evangelization of the lost." These local churches are involved in many ministries.

THE CHURCHES BEGINNINGS

Just when did the church begin? This is a question that has been debated by many. Some suggest the day of Pentecost, others go further back to the sending of the disciples in Matt 10:1, 7-10. Some suggest that John the Baptist started the church, while others suggest that it was when Christ breathed on the apostles in John 20:21,22. The covenant theologian would view the church as the same as Israel and as such would not see a beginning of the church - only the beginning of the covenant with Abraham.

Hyper-dispensationalists would place it later than Pentecost while differing on just when it began. Some place it at Acts 10:44,45 when Cornelius was converted. This dictates that only Gentiles are in the church. Some indicate Acts 13:2,3 at Antioch, and some even go beyond the book of Acts for the beginning of the church.

The most widely held view in fundamental circles today would probably be the day of Pentecost view. (Acts 1:4; 2:41)

Let us consider some facts. The Lord saw the church as future in Matthew 16:18 which certainly places it after John the Baptist. The resurrection and ascension were essential to the founding of the church (Eph. 1:19-23). We see in Eph. 4:7-12 that the spiritual gifts were also linked to the ascension, thus we must assume that the beginning of the church was after the ascension. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was yet future in Acts 1:5 thus indicating that the church was yet future there as well. The baptism of the Spirit seems to be linked to the beginning of the church, for it is at that point that the believer enters the body of Christ (Acts 2; 11:15-16; cf. I Cor. 12:13).

In answer to the Hyper-dispensationalist we must refer to the above arguments and ask for logic in their thinking. Christ has made provision for salvation and is seated with the Father - a perfect time to take the next step toward the completion of the Father's plan of the ages, the beginning of the kingdom in mystery form, the church. If Gentiles were required for the beginning of the church why didn't some of the writers of Scripture mention it? The fact that the

ministry of the Spirit to the Gentiles was the same as that to the Jews would indicate there was no need to wait for them. (Acts 2; cf. 11:15,16)

The fact that the Lord told the believers to wait in Jerusalem indicates that He had something very special in mind before they continued their work.

The only reason to place the start of the church post Pentecost is so you can eliminate the need for baptism and the Lord's table as church ordinances in this day and age.

NEW TESTAMENT PICTURES OF THE CHURCH

In the New Testament, we have pictures, or figures of the church that are of interest to us:

a. The Body of Christ: The Church is pictured as the body of Christ many times in the Bible. Christ is pictured as the head of that unified body as well. (I Cor. 12:12, 14, 18, 21, 27, 28; Eph. 1:22,23; 3:6; 4:4; 4:12,16; 5:23,30; Col. 2:19-25; 1:18-24; Rom. 12:4; Eph. 5:23,24; Gal. 3:28).

b. A building: The Church is pictured as a building and we are part of that building. (Eph. 2:19-21; I Pet. 2:11; I Cor. 3:9-17; II Cor. 6:16; I Pet. 2:5-9; Eph. 2:20-22; I Tim. 3:15)

c. Bride of Christ: We are also going to be the bride of Christ in the end. We are being prepared and He will one day come for His bride. (Eph. 5:25-27; II Cor. 11:2,3; Rev 19:7)

d. The Flock: We are His flock. He has placed undershepherds over us to feed and guide. The idea of the shepherd and flock portrays a beautiful picture of His care over us. (Jn 10; I Pet 5)

Other pictures include Branches: Jn. 15; Kingdom of priests: I Pet. 2, Rom. 12:1, Heb. 13:15,16; New Creation: I Co. 15:45, Rom. 5:19; Co-heirs: Heb. 1:2, Rom. 8:17; Harvest: I Co. 15:23; Servants: Col 4:1, I Cor. 7:22

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Salvation followed by baptism, is seen in Acts 2:41 as an integrated part of being added to the Church. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Acts 2:47 is presented at times, to show that baptism is not a requirement for Church membership. "Praising god, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." This text only records additions to the body and is not meant to be a process for membership.

Spirit baptism is the mode of entrance into the universal body thus it is logical that water baptism would be the mode of entrance into the local Church. (I Cor. 12:13) The texts in Acts dealing with the topic usually see baptism as preceding the adding of a person to the body.

A true conversion in the book of Acts immediately made the believer want to state they were separating themselves from Judaism, and they were identifying with the Messiah that had come.

There are no other requirements listed for Church membership. There are many other items that people require, but the Scripturalness of requirements other than salvation and baptism should be inspected very carefully.

Some question whether the idea of Church membership is valid. To these it is submitted that even if you do not have a membership or listing, you should have some sort of system whereby you assure that the majority of your Church is Christian. If you don't then you will have unsaved people in leadership. If they become a majority in the body, they can control your Church organization as well as buildings and all that you might attempt to do.

It is Biblical, to most, to have Church membership, and it is logical even if you reject the Biblicalness of the idea.

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

The organism, or universal Church, is shown in Eph. 2:19 where it is stated, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens but you are

fellow - citizens with the saints, and are of God's household." We are a part of a household made up of all believers. One of the pictures that we looked at previously was the idea of the body of Christ. In that figure we can see the idea of the body, or Church, being a living organism. (I Cor. 12:12; Eph. 1:22-23)

The Universal Church is seen in Scripture as the entire family of God - all those that truly believe. Entrance is gained via the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.

Rather than spend a long time on this subject let it suffice to just list some characteristics of the universal Church, and the reference where the idea is found.

Its membership is diverse, but we have a common dependency. I Cor. 12:12-31

The Church is seen as God's dwelling place and temple. Eph. 2:21-22; II Cor. 6:16

It is also seen as God's flock. I Peter 5:2-4

It is obvious that Christ is vitally involved in the Church since He is the Head. It is also clear that the Church is His (Mt. 16:18). It is Christ that taught it's first leaders (John 14-16 and the gospels). It is Christ that sent the Holy Spirit to empower it (Acts 2:33; Jo. 16:7). It is His ascension that set the stage for His headship over the Church (Eph. 1:20-23). It is His gifts that edify the Church (Eph. 4:8-11). It is His work that will prepare the Church (Eph. 5:26-27). He is preparing the Church for the rapture as the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25-32; I Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 19:6-9). Finally as we have seen, it is His body (Eph. 1:22-23).

THE LOCAL CHURCH

The local Church is that body of people in a local area that have organized for fellowship, edification and evangelism. This local concept is seen in several of the introductions of Paul's books to the believers at specific locations. This concept is also seen in the calling of the elders of Ephesus to meet with Paul in Acts 20:17. Many of the doctrines that we follow in the Church today are drawn from the

books that Paul wrote to local Churches in local areas. The organization of the Church is seen in many verses where the officers are mentioned. I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5 ff; Acts 14:23.

II. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

1. Edification of the saints: Ephesians is a key book to this idea of the edification, building up, or maturation of the saints which is one of the main purposes of the Church.

Eph. 4:11-16 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"

12 "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"

14 "That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"

15 "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, [even] Christ:"

16 "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Let us list some characteristics of the Church from this text:

Certain men are gifted, certain men are given to the Church, edification, body concept, unity of the faith as a goal, knowing Christ as a goal, perfect man as a goal, fulness of Christ in the people as a goal, maturity as a goal, solid in doctrine as a goal, speaking truth, speaking in love, growing to be like Christ, and the body is to be FITLY joined together.

NOW, if we were to work on those items only in many Churches, we would have a full time job for many years!

It seems that Paul is depicting a cycle that is never ending. That cycle begins with the Church leadership training the Church members to do the work of the Lord. The members in turn as they are doing the work of the Lord lead unsaved people to their Savior, and introduce them into the Church where the Church leadership trains the new members to do the work of the Lord, etc. (see also II Tim. 2:2). This is a Biblical system of training, and education, yet many Churches would rather function on the basis of the Pastor can do it all, while we soak up all of his good messages.

The early Church functioned as Paul describes it and reached the known world in one generation. It must stir your imagination to envision a Church in the U.S.A. that began functioning as they ought. That is the one and only way that we will ever reach the world for Christ!

2. Evangelization of the lost: As we have already seen, edification will ultimately lead to the evangelism that is the second purpose of the Church. This is pictured for us by Paul in I Thess. 1:8 which states, "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing." (See also Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:18-20)

Some suggest other things that should be a part of the Church, but these actually fall into one of the purposes that we have been discussing.

Let us just list some of these other items:

Show love for the Lord. Rev. 2:4, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

Incite one another to love and good works. Heb. 10:24, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works,"

Care for the needy, do good works, and many others:

preaching	praying	singleness of heart
helping	witnessing	sharing
teaching	counseling	sending

testifying	teaching	baptizing	
organizing	servicing		fellowship
study	worship	singing	
giving	praising	testifying	
sharing		helping	praying
study			

Another good study that we won't delve into, is to read the book of Acts and list characteristics of the Church. Some items of interest from the book of Acts concerning the Church:

They obeyed the great commission (1:8)
 They were Christians (1:14)
 They were organized (1:15-26)
 They were empowered (2:1-14)
 They were preaching (2:15 ff)
 They were baptizing (2:41)
 They were fruitful (2:41)
 They were living rightly in all of their activities (2:42-46)
 They were powerful (2:43)
 They were sharing (2:44,45)
 They were praising (2:47)
 They were persecuted (4:1-4; 5:17-28; 8:1-3)
 They were bold (4:5-12)
 They were united (4:32)
 They were sacrificial (4:32)
 They were holy and pure (5:1-11)
 They were dedicated unto death (7)
 They were forgiving (7:60)
 They were spreading the Gospel (8:4 due to their scattering)

They reached the known world in their own time! Today you have over half the world to reach in your generation. My generation cannot do the task! My generation has for all practical purposes failed to reach our own generation. That is a very sobering thought if you can allow it to sink in!

Take a moment to draw a picture in your mind. At the top is God the Father, our caretaker. It is His will that we follow, and it is Him that we glorify. (Matt. 6:25-34; 12:50; John 14:13) A little lower and to the left you have a block marked God the Holy Spirit. God gave the

Spirit for direction, comfort and power. To the lower right of God we have God, the Son. He is our savior, and is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23).

Below the Father, we have a long rectangle labeled the Church that reaches down to a picture of the earth. The Church is the link between the trinity and the world. Without that link there is no way that the World can know of the salvation that God has provided.

**GOD
THE
FATHER**

**GOD
THE
HOLY SPIRIT**

**GOD
THE
SON**

**C
H
U
R
C
H**

WORLD

If your picture is complete you have a cross connecting God with the world, which is quite appropriate. I would take liberty to use a quote that I have heard many times over the years, The Church is not Church unless "ur" in it. The Church cannot do the complete job that God has given it to do unless every believer is active in the Church. The individual is key to the evangelization of the world! God has chosen man to be the communicator of His truth (II Cor. 5:20).

Christ commissioned the apostles - and us - as believers to go to the world. (Matt 28:18-20)

A number of years ago I came across some statistics concerning missions. (Ruth Johnson in "THE YEARS BETWEEN" I believe it was a tract)

**Of 50 missionary commitments
38 never reach Bible school leaving 12
4 drop out of Bible school leaving 8
4 drop out when a field opens leaving 4
1 drops out before leaving, leaving 3
3 reach the field
1 will drop out during the first term
1 never returns for the second term
1 continues in missionary work.**

Of the one that continues we must draw our mission directors and home personal.

Shelley in his book mentions, That the Church lacks zeal. he goes on to mention that many misunderstand the message. You can listen to many preachers of our day and realize that this is true. The Gospel message has so many additions to it that the lost person is confused by the confetti. He mentions, "Christianity without a mission, like fire that does not burn, is a contradiction in terms." (Shelley, "THE CHURCH: GOD'S PEOPLE"; p 113)

More to the point may be this - you call yourself a Christian. Are you a contradiction in terms?

Our reason for living is to glorify God, and our purpose as a Church is to evangelize the lost so they might be trained to do the work of the Lord.

III. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

BASIC TYPES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT THAT ARE USED TODAY

There have been several types of church government developed over the years. These forms of government have some verses in the Bible that seem to back them up, but these systems normally overlook the plain teaching of the Bible and fail to deal with all the texts.

We will just introduce the reader to these systems of government and allow them to evaluate these on their own in light of the coming study on church government.

It is assumed that if the Bible does teach one form of government then that would be the system that the Lord would bless the most. Do not mistake this for a mass call for change of church government, but it is a challenge to consider this study and see just what the Bible does teach on the subject. If you find yourself in a church that has a government that contradicts what you see, don't leave because you now have "the revelation." Consider what might be done to bring about change in your particular church. If you are in church leadership, don't call for total, immediate change. We will consider some further cautions later in the study.

1. THE EPISCOPAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This form of government is seen in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church. Some sources list the Roman Catholic Church however I would class it as separate.

This system can be diagrammed as seen below.

BISHOP

ELDERS

DEACONS

PEOPLE

Apostolic succession is the teaching which says that the apostles passed on their power and authority to others who passed on that power and authority to others, etc. until the successors of today. The Roman Church holds to this thought and this fact may be why some list them in this category. Episcopalian high Church people also tend toward this belief system. The Landmark Baptists in the Independent Baptist movement hold to a succession back past the apostles to John the Baptist.

The Episcopalian system started in the second century. They have a college of Bishops who are the superior clergy. They have pastors that are inferior clergy and the people only obey what comes down from the top. The denomination owns all property and can control the congregation via their investment in that property. This opposes the thought that what we give to the Lord is the Lord's. If a congregation feel led to build a building, then that building cannot belong to the organization of Churches, but it is God's.

The low Church people view the bishop as nice but not necessary. This is not uncommon in Church history. The people of the land and the working class often reject the authorities that attempt to place themselves over others.

2. THE FEDERAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This system is found primarily in the Presbyterian movement. Calvin developed this form from his study of the scripture.

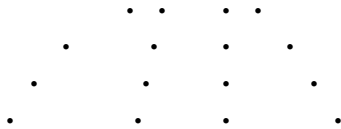
The session is composed of the pastor and elders of a local Church. The presbytery, made up of representatives of the Churches, rule a given district of Churches. The Synod owns and rules a larger district of Churches. The General Assembly is over all Churches. The denomination owns the property.

The people can have control over their Church through their representatives to the presbytery. They also wield some control over the denomination via their representatives.

The Bible teaches there was leadership. The federalist assumes that the apostles have a counterpart in our own day and age, which

translates into their hierarchy. This is true in all of the systems that have a superstructure of organization.

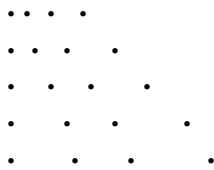
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



SYNOD SYNOD SYNOD SYNOD



PRESBYTERY PRESBYTERY



SESSION SESSION . .

SESSION SESSION

3. THE CONGREGATIONAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This system is usually used by Baptists, Evangelical Free, Disciples of Christ, and some Bible and independent Churches. (The Conservative Baptist Association is going toward the eldership rule form which we will see later.)

The Congregationalists make no distinction between elders and deacons. Indeed most have only deacons. If they see the position of elder it is usually the pastor and he being a single elder unless there is need of extra outside staff members which would also become elders. They hold to Christ Being the head of the Church, as well as the priesthood of every believer.

They hold that no group of men should have authority over the local assembly which translates into a rejection of denominations and the previous forms of government.

The independent assembly owns and controls their own property.

The pastor is ordained and administers the ordinances within the local Church. The deacons are to see to the welfare of the Church.

The congregation elects the officers and votes on major items of business. As the Church grows in size this voting usually is curtailed to more major expenditures/changes to save on the time involved in large lengthy discussions.

We will give some of the items of proof which they submit in support of for their system The scripture views the Church as responsible for things I Co. 1:10; Phil. 1:27; The fact that the whole Church is pictured as helping select officers Acts 6:3,5; 15:2,30; II Co. 8:19;

The fact that the whole Church is involved in discipline Mt 18:17; I Co. 5; II Th. 3:14ff; The pastor is the single elder Rev 2-3. ("angel" There is much discussion as to the meaning of the term angel in the letters to the Churches and there is little proof that it is the SINGULAR PASTOR of the Church.); elder is singular and deacons is plural I Tim. 3:8-13 (However, we must point out that Phil 1:1 mentions both in the plural! We might suggest a look at the number of plural appearances of elder as opposed to the singular references to the same term in appendix two.)

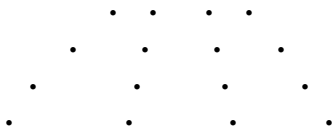
4. THE PAPAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This is the Roman Catholic system.

They have Cardinals, bishops, and Priests which have differing authorities as you descend down to the priest, local leaders and finally to the congregation. The Roman Church owns and controls all properties.

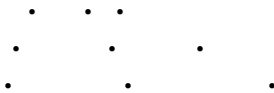
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5. THE NATIONAL CHURCH FORM OF GOVERNMENT: The Church of England is the official Church of the land. This is true of the Lutherans in Scandinavia as well. The state has a Church and the head of the state is also the head of the Church. Leaders are appointed by an agency of the state. It has been the norm in much of history that these Churches are dead, ritualistic Churches that minister to a very few. The masses enter the Church only for infant baptism, their wedding and then their funeral.

6. THE NO GOVERNMENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT: Some believe they run with only the Lord as their government, yet if they have any planning or program at all they have government of some sort. Some go as far as to reject the idea of membership, constitutions, and doctrinal statements. Instead of these "forms" they allow anyone in regular attendance to vote on all issues and claim that the Bible is their doctrinal statement and constitution.

It has been my observation over the years that these Churches often produce a lot of believers that are very alive for their Lord, yet the Churches usually do not continue in existence for long. As they get bigger and grow, organization usually comes to some extent. Those Churches that do not grow often disband, scattering their people into traditional Churches where they often inspire some of the dead Christians to get involved.

7. THE ELDER RULE FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This is a newer system that is closer to the Biblical form, but it has a few difficulties that are becoming evident. The system teaches that the elders are the paid staff of the Church and they run the Church. Their term of office is for life if they decide to stay.

This allows for much control of the people by one or a few men who have their Bible training.

The fallacy of this system is that in the Bible the lay people were the Church and the elders were lay people, not seminarians. The idea of a congregation forming a Church and setting up a building and then calling someone that institutes this type of government is not pleasant for the congregation. Indeed, there have been many Churches split over the issue in recent days.

ELDER

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DEACONS

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CONGREGATION

This form of government is similar to what you will be seeing in this study. The difference being that the elders are lay men with the option of having a paid teaching elder that is called from outside the Church. This is not to say that the teaching elder cannot come from the ranks of the lay people however.

8. THE ELDER FORM OF GOVERNMENT: This type of government is something that is growing in popularity though there are few congregations operating under such a system. This form of government has some advantages which will become evident as we go through our study.

The system will be shown in brief at this point and then it will be developed as we continue.

The key to the system is that the elders are over the deacons and both boards are over the congregation. The congregation does have control over the boards. They can communicate with them, they are involved in the choosing of the leaders, they are involved in the financial end of the system, in that they are the final say on large expenditures.

There is an emphasis on the qualifications of the leadership. They are to fulfill the Biblical qualifications before they are appointed to a position. They are also chosen from men who "desire" the office.

This dictates that the Church is being led by "spiritual" leaders as opposed to leaders that may or may not want to be in the position and may or may not be spiritual.

The elders are basically the spiritual leaders of the Church and maintain general oversight of the assembly. The deacons are in charge of the physical aspects of the congregation and its properties. The system must be based on qualified, spiritual leaders to operate properly.

**CHRIST
THE
HEAD**

**ELDER ELDER ELDER ELDER ELDER
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**DEACON DEACON DEACON DEACON DEACON
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CONGREGATION

Within this structure the "pastor" or teaching elder is one of the elder board. He may or may not be the chairman of that board. You will notice that under Christ you have the entire congregation and this is the crux of the system. All believers in touch with their God and in tune with one another to function as a body.

Before we continue, let us look at some things that seem to be required in the Bible for the Church, and the different groups involved.

Here is a series of things that the scripture shows concerning Church government. It may not be an exhaustive list, but it will give several items which must be incorporated into a Church constitution to make it as close to Scriptural as possible.

CONGREGATION:

1. The congregation is involved in the choosing of Church leaders:

Acts 6:3-6. The leadership asked them to select out qualified men to be set aside to serve. This is specifically the first deacons. The apostles then took those set forth - prayed and laid on their hands.

We have no indication of how the elders were selected in the New Testament times. Paul appointed elders in the Churches that he planted. Since we have no process in Scripture for elders, it would seem logical that we should use a method consistent with the selection of deacons. The qualifications are set forth very clearly in the New Testament for these leaders with the key being, the elders desire, which we will see later.

2. The congregation was involved in Church discipline: I Cor. 5:1-8 They were also involved in the man's restoration in II Cor. 2:6ff.

3. The congregation was told to obey the elders. Heb. 13:7, 17

"Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life:" 13:7

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you." 13:17

Some today are adding the idea of the Old Testament "Lord's anointed" to these two texts and teach that the layperson is not to interfere with what God is doing through His appointed men - pastors.

Let us observe some things that are presented here.

a. Obey and submit. This is the context of the word they have been giving forth. There is a responsibility for the congregation to listen to the word and to follow it. The last part of verse 17 shows that the elders are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. This is illustrated for us in Ezekiel where the priests are rebuked for misleading instead of feeding the people.

b. The "remember" of verse 7 probably is tied to the sharing of verse 15 which probably is monetary gifts to the ones that minister the word.

You might observe that "do good" is equal to sharing so you might remember money isn't all that counts.

c. The congregation is to consider the elders' manner of life as an example.

d. The term "them" in both verses shows plural, not singular elders. There are to be plural elders in a Church.

4. The congregation is to discipline elders if there is sin. I Tim. 5:19,20

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SCRIPTURE AND LOGIC CONTINUED

There are also some logical things in which the congregation should also be involved.

1. Large expenditures or major changes in direction of the Church.

These are logical in the fact that if they all oppose the major expenditure and don't give to it how can the leadership hope to accomplish it? If they are opposed to the change, again there will be no support.

The idea of the priesthood of the believer is very active in this area. If the congregation is opposed to an item that the boards have determined to do, then there is one body or the other that is not really tuned into the head of the Church - Christ.

2. Since every believer is a priest before God then it is logical that congregational input to the leadership should have some power of direction unless it is clearly against Scripture.

The leadership should find direction for the Church by proper use of the Scriptures. If the congregation is in opposition then it is up to the leadership to show from the Scriptures why they are correct and the congregation is wrong.

ELDERS:

The elders seem to be the spiritual side of Church leadership.

1. They should first of all **DESIRE** the office of elder: I Tim. 3:1, mentions, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

If there is no real desire, how can there be a real drive to do the job as it should be done? As I observe human beings, I see the person who desires to do something usually is successful. It is also observable that if there is no desire there is hardly ever success.

Why do we place men in places of leadership when they don't want to be in those positions?

2. It is a good work to be desired: I Tim. 3:1 Some might feel that if a person goes after a position in the Church that he is seeking status and position. Not so! God set the standard through Paul and God says that He desires leaders that desire their work!

3. Some of the elders teach: Heb. 13:7; I Pet. 5:1-4. Not all need to be teaching but all should be "apt to teach." The idea of Eph. 4 is that the Church leaders are training the people to do the work of the Lord and some of those leaders are teachers.

4. Some are paid for their ministry: I Tim. 5:17,18. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the grain; and, The laborer is worthy of his reward."

This ties the elder to the rulers of Heb. 13:7,17 by the way.

This is not to say that he must be paid. It says that he should be given honor. The verse also mentions eating as part of the thought.

In many of our smaller Churches around the country the people have little money to share with their pastor, but they do have produce and meat from their farms and ranches. Many pastors know just how helpful these things are when the salary is small, and this is a perfectly permissible part of "honoring" an elder. This isn't to say that a mechanic couldn't do something in his line or a TV man in his. There are situations where a congregation cannot pay and this is all right. The elder will serve on a voluntary basis or leave. Many pastors today work full time to serve their congregations. Indeed, this is more to the scriptural end of things. The FULL TIME paid pastor is a relatively new thing. The elder of Paul's time was one that did it as a sidelight to his normal work. It may be that we should get back to this sort of standard. It would give the teaching elders more freedom to step on toes. A paid pastor often views his security of job along with his toe stepping and as a result uses foam rubber shoes. (see I Cor. 9:7 also)

The elder is not to be in the position for the money. I Pet. 5:2. I fear many today are in this very situation of seeking money, and I believe they will suffer lose when the Lord returns to reward His people. I Pet. 5:4.

5. There are more than one: I Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7,17; Acts 20:17.

Some set forth the Revelation messages to the 7 Churches as addressed to the pastors of the Churches as proof there is only one elder. Rev. 1:20, "..The seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches...." and 2:1, "Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus...." and the other Churches' introductions are to the angel of the Church.

The first problem is that very few scholars are sure what the angels are. Are they angels, are they representatives, are they pastors, are they? We don't know for sure. It is just as possible that it is the teaching elder from each Church. We can draw nothing about numbers of elders from these texts.

6. The elders are to direct the Church:

By oversight: Acts 20:28.

By rule: Heb. 13:7.

By example: Heb. 13:7; I Pet. 5:3.

By shepherding: I Pet. 5:1-4 "oversight"

By feeding: I Pet. 5:2 (directing is not in the context, however the proper feeding from the word will bring about leading and directing.)

7. They are not to be as "lords" over the congregation: I Pet. 5:3 In short they are not to be dictators, and they are not to think to highly of themselves. There might be a side to this thought for the congregation as well. The congregation should not think to highly of their leaders either. Not to say they shouldn't look up to them, but to hold them high may encourage the leader to raise his own thoughts of himself to high.

8. They are held accountable for their people as a shepherd: Heb. 13:17.

Any man taking the position of elder should consider this item of business for some time before taking on responsibility. When a man takes on a position of elder he also takes on the responsibility of the office for the people. This should never be done quickly.

9. They are to be examples: Heb. 13:7 It should be obvious they should be "good" examples! It is shocking to me that some Churches now are asking that prospective pastors give permission for the Church to get a credit report on the prospect. This tells me that those Churches have had one or more poor examples in their past. It also shows a basic mistrust of all pastors - brothers in Christ - which is inappropriate.

10. They are to feed the sheep: Acts 20:28 Now to feed sheep the shepherd must find some food. Many pastors are preaching sermons that have absolutely no nutritional value what so ever.

11. They are to take heed for the sheep: Acts 20:28 There is an element of watching for their safety. This may require warning them from time to time. This might be done from the pulpit of possibly in some cases personally. The warning must come if there is danger.

12. They are selected from the congregation: Acts 14:22-23 This is where Paul returned to the Churches that he had started and ordained elders. Some say there were probably Jews well trained in Judaism in the congregations and that these are the ones that were ordained. I would tend to agree however they were lay people in the Church. Today we have many lay people that are quite well prepared to lead in Bible studies and are capable of leadership. If a person has been in a Sunday school class regularly for many years he has all of the training in the Bible that he needs. He might need some teaching courses to help him understand the "how to" of teaching, but even this should be in place if he has been awake in the past.

13. They were ordained: Acts 14:22,23 There seems to be an approval system of some sort in the ordination process for Paul exhorted Timothy to lay hands quickly on no man. I Tim. 5:22

Scofield note 2 on page 1306 sums up the elder very nicely. Read it if you can get a copy. (Scofield, C.I., "THE NEW SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE"; New York: Oxford University Press, 1967)

He is clear that there was a plurality of elders, and that they were to rule, teach, guard the Word, oversee the church, etc.

We have seen that the elders are to care for the flock and seem to be concentrating on the spiritual side of things. We need now to move on to the office of deacon and its responsibility.

DEACONS:

The deacons seem to be the physical side of Church leadership.

1. They were designated originally to serve tables or the idea of distribution to the needs of the people Acts 6:1ff. They may have had responsibility for money and the purchase of food etc.

2. Stephen, one of the first deacons is later stoned for the sermon that he preached before the Jews (Acts 7). Preaching deacons are not wrong. Indeed, in many Churches the deacons do the ministry at the rescue missions in cities. If they have the ability, they should be given the opportunity. We will see more concerning the spiritual gifts later, but we might mention at this point that the elders and deacons do not have all the gifts. There may well be a teacher that is not a part of the Church leadership, and that teacher should be teaching. God gifts the local assembly with the gifts that are needed for the work that He has for the GROUP to do.

3. Epaphras was a praying giant of sorts Col. 1:7; 4:12. He is called a servant which is the term for deacon. History tells us that he was a deacon in his Church. He was a messenger as well, so did work for the Church.

It should be remembered they are responsible for maintaining the physical aspects of the Church ministry, but this is not to say that the congregation and elders shouldn't be involved in "cleanup day" if at all possible. This would be part of the elders example. Indeed, the thought in our current mentality is that if there is someone specified for a job then heaven forbid that I get involved. For example, if a Church has a janitor the people automatically can't clean up a mess - that is the janitors job! Not so! All believers should get involved in any way they can.

While teaching at a Bible Institute, I was honored to know a man that had a unique concept for living and serving. He felt that if he saw a job that needed doing, it was his job to do. He practiced this principle, and you never knew what you would find him doing next. Anything from planting flowers to vacuuming the floor.

More could be said of Deacons, however most governments recognize this office. The only difference would be they should not have the heavy spiritual leadership they have in most Church government systems.

In keeping with what has been given previously there are many things that each group is to do.

Logically speaking there are some other things that the groups should do for the operating of the Church.

1. The elders are to give general direction to the Church however, within the confines of the congregations dictates.

Example: If the congregation is determined to be evangelistic, then if the elders decide that an evangelistic campaign is needed, it would be the congregations place to do all they can to assist in the work. If the evangelist that the elders have hired is a rank liberal then the congregation should say no and let the elder board know they are all for the campaign but with a good evangelist.

2. The elders should oversee the deacon board and it's activities. Not to dictate what they do but to make suggestion of direction and to keep tabs on their activities, making sure they are following the desires of the congregation.

3. The Deacons should assist the elders in carrying out their desires for the Church. If the elders plan the evangelistic campaign then the deacons will be responsible for housing, feeding, and paying the evangelist, as well as many other details.

4. The Deacons should be able to have input into the elder board concerning the direction of the Church and be able to share what they hear from the congregation.

5. The congregation should have input to both boards concerning needs and desires. This should be available on an informal basis with the members of the boards or possibly through written notes to the chairmen of the boards. A congregational meeting from time to time for exchange of information should be used to open communications among all three groups.

6. The deacons should have a certain latitude in spending for the upkeep of grounds etc. Large expenditures should be submitted to the elder board for presentation to the congregation.

This would indicate a need for monthly meetings of elders and deacons for mutual business and information.

A safeguard between boards might be to have a representative of each board exchanged to the other board to be a non-voting member and each reporting to his own board of the activities of the other. This would be a good check and balance to the operating of the boards.

7. There is an overall need of SPIRITUAL - TRUSTWORTHY leaders as well as a SPIRITUAL, TRUSTING CONGREGATION!

IV. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Elder (or bishop) We have included a complete Scriptural listing of the terms elder, elders, deacon, and deacons in Appendix two for your convenience.

This term has five Greek words which show the different aspects of the office.

1. "presbuteros" or elder: This term is used in reference to the Old Testament elders that were in place in the Jewish form of religion during Christ's time. Matt. 26:59; Mark 11:27.

It is used to show an "older son" Lu. 15:25; of officers of the Church - elders Acts 14:23; 16:4; in reference to elders in the heavenly scene Rev. 4:4; 5:14; and of older women I Ti 5:1. In light of the Old Testament concept, it may well relate to age in years as well as in spirituality.

2. "episkopos" or bishop (Used five times in the New Testament): Acts 20:28 "the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers"; Phil. 1:1 shows the office with deacons; I Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:7 shows the listing of qualifications for the bishop; I Pet. 2:25 pictures Christ the shepherd and bishop or overseer of our soul.

These two terms ("presbuteros" and "episkopos") are used of the same office. Titus 1:5 elder and 1:7 bishop. Some submit that bishop pictures the functioning of the office and the term elder is the title of the position. The elder then oversees or bishops the group of believers.

They also ruled I Tim. 5:17; taught the truth Tit 1:9; and took care of financial things Acts 11:29,30. This shows that the elders have some control of the financial end of the Church. Since they seem to be the general oversight of the body then they probably should have ultimate say concerning money.

3. "poimeen" which literally means to pasture the sheep: It is used of a sheep type shepherd Matt. 9:36; 25:32; of the pastor teacher in Eph. 4:11; and of Christ the shepherd of our soul I Pet 2:25.

4. "kerux" a preacher to a congregation: I Tim 2:7 shows that Paul was a preacher; II Tim. 1:11 indicates that a preacher may not be a teacher; II Pet 2:5 tells us that Noah was a preacher.

5. "didaskalos" teacher: Rom. 2:20; I Cor. 12:2; Eph. 4:11; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5

We now need to consider the question, "HOW MANY ELDERS?"

Since the early Church met in homes some believe that the plurality of elders was in each house Church. Each assembly had plural elders. Others hold that the plural elders are to be viewed as the elders of several Churches within a city, each assembly only having one elder. Thus when the plural is used the author is speaking collectively of all of the singular elders from the individual Churches in a specific location. (If there were ten house Churches at Jerusalem, then elders would mean the ten pastors of those ten Churches.)

Rev 2-3 would be cited to show this and they would hold that the angels of the Churches were the elders.

The text which shows Paul returning to the Churches which he started deals with elders in the plural and in the time frame indicated it would seem unlikely that he started more than one Church in each town thus indicating that each assembly had more than one elder. Indeed Acts 14:23 states, "And when they had ordained elders in every Church...." Another text that seems clear there were plural elders is James 5 where it speaks of calling the elders (plural) of the Church (singular).

B. Deacon is the Greek term "diakonos." It is translated servant 20 times and minister 7 times. The usage seems to indicate a concentration on the temporal, secular and social care of the Church Acts 6:1-6.

It was a specific office rather than just people who were serving for we see in Phil 1:1 they are linked with elders, "with the bishops and deacons:"

Acts 6:1-6 shows the first deacons and the selection process while I Tim 3:8ff lists their qualifications.

C. Deaconesses: This is a controversial topic of discussion if you would like to start a good argument in some circles. Some say Titus 3:11 speaks of a 3rd office, that of a deaconess. It seems better, however, to the unity of the text to call these wives of deacons to me. Verses 1-7 speak of bishops, verses 8-10 speak of deacons, and verses 12-13 speaks of deacons. Why break into a list of qualifications for one office to insert qualifications for another and then revert to the first office?

The only other indication that it was an office is Romans 16:1 where Phoebe is called a "servant" and this is the word "diakonos." This need not prove an office, for Paul may just have been telling the reader that she was a real servant.

We don't really have any solid proof that it was an office or that it was not an office. Let it suffice to say, find your own feelings and act accordingly. If you have an office for deaconess then have them be

qualified in a similar manner to the deacons. If you do not feel comfortable holding to an office of deaconess then don't have one.

May I suggest, however that you have women that do the work of a servant in your Church. You don't have to call them deaconess but allow women that desire to serve the Church to do so. The local Church would be hard pressed to function if it did not have some good old servants that love to do for the Church!

LEADERSHIP CONSIDERED

Heb. 13:7 "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life:" Heb. 13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you."

Are we bound to the New Testament principles of organization?

IT'S CULTURE YOU KNOW!

Does it matter if we are not following this form of government?

Churches have been working for centuries in all different forms of government which seem to work adequately.

Whether God specifically blesses a Church that is following a scriptural form of Government or not would not be provable, though It has been observed that some that shift to the Biblical form of government do blossom.

It would seem logical however, if God has specified a certain system then He would bless those that follow it. It would seem that we would want to be as close the New Testament principle as possible.

Possibly some practical applications of the duties of the offices and congregation would be of help in understanding the outworking of this system.

The elders would give general oversight which would include setting goals, standards and desires for the Church. They would be responsible for seeing to it that the Church is being built up and educated properly. They would be there for helping the congregation with spiritual problems and questions. They should make up a good portion of the teaching staff in the Church. This includes not only the youth but the Sunday School as well. I can't envision a better Sunday School staff than the elder board of a Church. They are the spiritually mature part of your Church so why not use them to edify the saints?

The deacons on the other hand, would be the overseers of the building, grounds and the congregations needs. The congregational needs should include financial, physical and mental. If there is a problem in the way the Church looks, then the deacons should care for it. The deacons are usually given a fund of money they can use for the beneficent needs of the congregation. They would organize and supervise work days, and see to it that the building and grounds are kept. They would gather and care for the collections of the Church, and see to the proper use of those funds, under the eye of the elder board.

The congregation can just sit back and let the officers do all the work. Correct? probably true in many Churches, but not correct. The congregation should be involved in prayer for the congregation, they should assist the officers in any way they can, and they should be ministering to one another. They are the witnessing arm of the Church and should be bringing new converts into the Church.

WARNINGS

1. Do not - I, repeat do not go out and try to change the first Church you come to, into an elder form of government!

2. Think about the things that we have spoken of in this study. Chew on them. Put them on the shelf awhile - then think and chew some more. As an old timer once told me, "Chew and spit." Look this information over and consider it and refine it and then when you are sure that you are on Biblical ground begin to act on the conviction that the Lord has set in your mind and heart.

3. Study this out for yourself and be sure that what has been set forth is correct.

4. Pray loads before doing anything more than think and study.

5. If the Lord would seem to move you toward change in your Church, DO NOT - I, REPEAT DO NOT go to your board and say we are going to change the Church government. They will ask you to find another Church.

6. If you are a pastor and want to begin moving toward change, pick a book of the Bible that will allow you to step off into Church government at times in your lessons and sermons. Acts would probably be good. Just teach what you have found scripture to teach. As time progresses you will probably see some in the Church that will start tracking with you. Let this be their decision to change. Let them suggest a good study on the subject. If the people don't pick up on it step lightly and move forward. Quick change is NOT the answer! There have been Church splits because men have gone in and instituted change before the people were ready for it.

We need to move onto the important part of our study of officers and examine their qualifications and qualities. There are Biblical standards that the officers were to meet and we should be asking the leaders of our Churches today to have those standards in place in their lives.

We will look first at the Biblical qualifications, and then we will look at one man in the Bible that gives a few of the qualities that Church leaders should have. Both qualifications and qualities are important.

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A. QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

As we approach our study of the qualifications for Church leaders we should remind ourselves of two texts. I Timothy 3:1-14 and Titus 1:6-9. Please take time to read these texts before you proceed.

We will look at the Timothy qualifications first and then we will look at the Titus standards.

Vs. 1. "This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

Q. So if we are being so Biblical in our Churches, why don't we have bishops? The office of a bishop is a good work. (overseer New American Standard Bible same as the elder of the Church.) This is the Greek word "episkopos." It has the idea of taking the lead and care of the sheep.

In New Testament times the Churches had elders Plural. Usually, one was in overall charge. As I view the Scriptures, the elder is the highest office of Church leadership. The pastor is an elder if you have a hired pastor. The spiritual leadership of the Church is in the elders.

Some Churches call the pastor elder, and the deacons are the board of the Church. Some have the elder as pastor, the deacons as spiritual leaders under the elder, and a trustee board to care for the material items of the Church.

As we discuss elders I am in my mind speaking of the pastor and board. The teaching elder or pastor should be an integrated part of the elder board and the deacons should be separate from them. The deacon board then is the part of Church leadership that cares for the material end of things.

Paul mentions the desire of a good work in one verse and uses six verses to show the spiritual qualifications for the work.

As you think of this verse just how would you describe the man who "desires the office of bishop?" What does the term desire communicate to you?

The term desire seems to have the idea of really exerting effort toward something that you want or want to do. Something that you work for, or something for which you will give of yourself.

It would seem that this thought would eliminate most Church government ideas where the men are nominated from the floor, or nominations in any manner. The desire would indicate to me that the man really wants to do this ministry and lets others know of that desire. It would require that those in charge be knowledgeable of this desire as well. As they see the desire then they should evaluate the possibilities of this man taking on the position.

Evaluation should be made on the basis of what we will be seeing. The qualifications seem to require more than just a "yes" when asked to take the position. The evaluation should include the man that has the desire. He should be honest and open as to his qualifications in all of these areas before he looks to seek the position. He should also be open to the input of the leadership as to the needs of his life. They may see some failings that he needs to work on.

This idea is shown very nicely in relation to the workmen of the tabernacle in Ex. 36:2, "And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:" God moved the men to minister.

There are fifteen to seventeen qualifications depending on the translation of the Bible you use.

Vs. 2 "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;"

Just a side note before we begin the list, we might submit that all of the terms in this listing are masculine. The term overseer and all the adjectives are in the masculine. This would be a strong indication that women are not in view when it comes to the office of elder.

This is becoming more and more important in our day and age. There are many Churches moving toward the use of women in leadership. I have observed a number of women as chairperson of pulpit committees as well as on boards of Churches.

1. blameless: "above reproach" according to the New American Standard Bible. (This will be abbreviated with "NASB" from this point forward.)

Literally it is "not to be laid hold of" - the type of life that no one can lay charge against or gossip about. This is nearly impossible because the gossiping person will always be about their business. This idea of blameless would mean that the man lives a life that leaves little to gossip about. Many pastors are beset by nasty rumors. A 50 year old bald, overweight, and not very good looking pastor resigned his Church few years back to start a new Church elsewhere. The rumor was that he left because of a girlfriend up in the sand hills. A part of this sort of situation is for the congregation to see to it that the gossips are stopped as soon as possible.

Blameless should be not only in the Church but with the lost as well. In seeking leaders this may require talking with neighbors and co-workers to find out how the man is viewed by the lost people that he associates with. This can be done by mail or in person. It should be a good indicator of the persons true spiritual walk.

Some have suggested that this means that the person must have had a blameless life from childhood. I asked one of these people if that meant that a converted drunk could not become an elder. He replied that this would be true. To those I submit Gen. 5:21-22 which tells that Enoch did not walk with God until he had his first son. This man was translated because of his walk with the Lord. "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:" Surely a converted drunk can walk with God as well.

He should have a very good testimony in the community. Someone that is respected. Someone that isn't in trouble or behind on his bills.

2. husband of one wife: This is literally a "one woman man." There have been several interpretations set forth over the years for this phrase:

a. Married to the Church (Roman Catholic).

b. Prohibition of polygamy. This was held till 325 A.D. and is very much a part of the thought of the text.

c. Prohibition of unmarried overseers. There is little evidence that this is the case, although having a family and the congregation being able to view his control of it would be of great help in evaluation.

This is a serious consideration in many situations, but not necessary in all situations.

I Tim. 4:3 mentions that some of the false teachers were suggesting celibacy as something to be desired. "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Paul mentions that these are doctrines of devils.

d. Prohibition of divorced overseers. There is some discussion on this thought, though I think most conservative people hold to this being a prohibition of the divorcee due to the fact that he has not ruled his house well if he has failed in his marriage.

e. Prohibition of a widowed deacon remarrying. (Paul says marriage is okay after the loss of a spouse however, so this position would not fit.)

f. One other possibility has been taught in recent years. "Not a loose type man," or "a one woman at a time man," which of course allows for divorce and remarriage of elders. This is a recent addition to the menu of excuses to skirt Scripture and allow people the freedom to do as they please rather than as the Lord directs.

A "one woman man" is the idea of this phrase. That is one for life at a time. If his first mate dies and he remarries, he would be eligible.

A man that has been divorced has not had a properly functioning family and is not eligible. Some suggest that a divorcee that was remarried after he was saved would be eligible. This would depend on how you view the Lord's teaching on divorce and remarriage. He seems to leave the impression that those that remarry are involved in adultery. Since adultery is intimate relations outside of the bounds of marriage it would seem to be a continuing thing. It doesn't seem logical that a Church would want a man in the position of elder, which was in continuing adultery.

3. vigilant seems to have the idea of being self controlled. Someone that is not controlled by outside influences. The term is also used in I Tim. 3:11 (sober) and Titus 2:2 (sober). The elder should be someone that is on the serious side about what he is doing. He should be in proper control at all times. One that is of this nature will be open to see problems arising, to see trouble as well as see good things coming and good things to do.

The American Standard Version adds orderly - as opposed to disorderly. I have seen some Church leaders that were about as messy as messy could get in their offices. A messy office often reveals a messy mind. When in Bible College I needed to talk to the president of the school so knocked on the door. I heard a lot of shuffling and groaning from inside the office. Finally the door opened part way. I could see through the door that the floor, shelves, and desk were covered with little piles of paper. I told the president that I needed to speak with him. He asked me to wait for just a minute. Some time passed and finally the door opened just enough for me to get into the office. What I hadn't seen through the crack was that the rest of the office was also covered with little piles of paper. The delay in allowing me in was due to the need to clear a path to a chair at the other end of the office. We were seated at opposite ends of the office surrounded by paper. He apologized and explained that he was cleaning his desk off. He had not filed papers for some time and he was trying to finish the task. He was in need of some organizational skills.

By way of comment we might mention that women can be a witness just by keeping their houses orderly. The home atmosphere reflects the home attitude.

The idea is that this elder should be orderly in life rather than a person who is known for chaos.

4. sober is "prudent" in the NASB and depicts someone that is fully rational or well balanced. This word also is translated discreet. Being careful how your mind runs seems to be the thought. ("sophron" = Titus 1:8, sober; Titus 2:2, temperate)

An elder with a messed up thought pattern will be leaving himself and his Church open to problems. If he is constantly thinking of money or women, there will be an improper balance in most of what he does. He should be stable in mind. He is not easily swayed by error or false doctrine.

5. of good behavior or "respectable" as the NASB translates it. An elder that can't keep his hands off the women is taboo. We were in a Church where one of the men was always hugging, patting women on the back and generally being touchy. Some of the women felt uncomfortable with the way he was. Some of the husbands also felt uncomfortable. There was nothing wrong with the man or his behavior, yet the actions detracted from the congregations view of him.

He must have a proper lifestyle before his fellow believers and the world or community.

6. given to hospitality or willing to share their home with people.

In the New Testament there was a great need for this in the Church. Visiting Christians would not want to stay in taverns and inns with all the brawling and drinking, so they would turn to the believers of the community for housing. There also seems to have been itinerant preachers that needed a place to stay. (III John 5-7)

I was told of a couple that was a member of a small Church in the midwest that in seven years since the pastor had come to town they had not been in his home, though they had entertained the pastor and family in their own home several times.

Some pastors on the West Coast will not even offer to house and feed missionaries that are coming for meetings.

The elders home should be open as much as possible to Church members, visitors and the unsaved as well.

One pastor of a Church where we had visited a time or two came running out after Church to catch us before we drove away and invited us to dinner on a certain night. We were excited until we arrived and found that it was a demonstration dinner for a new cook ware. We had to sit through the sales pitch, and endure the atmosphere which we would not have chosen. This was not hospitality.

7. apt to teach "able to teach" according to the NASB. This text does not teach that an elder should be teaching, however it would be a good idea. An elder should be willing and wanting to teach within his assembly, if there is time in his schedule. This is not only in Sunday School, but in Bible studies, the pulpit, etc.

This is the only skill in the list and it should be noted that preaching is not required. This qualification not only portrays an ability but it also includes desire. If a person desires the office, then they should be known for their ability to teach before hand. If a person cannot teach, don't write them off, train them!

Some in recent day try to redefine this to mean teachable. The thought is not in the text, though the idea is not a bad one for the elder! Anyone in leadership should be open to the idea of learning from others. If the elder is closed to new teaching, then he will not be open to being corrected if he should have problems.

Vs. 3 "Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;"

8. Not given to wine or "not addicted to wine" NASB.

The thought is not long alongside wine. He should refrain from alcoholic beverages. Drinking is not acceptable to the Lord, the Church or the world.

We have always taken a strong view toward drink of any kind. This is partly due to the fact that I was very close to alcoholism as a young man. I also see drinking as a very poor testimony to anyone that might know of it. Even within my own home, I have no desire to even have alcohol in the house. I would trust that this would be your view as well.

I spoke with a pastor in the midwest that had confronted a member whose house some teenagers had stolen liquor from, about his involvement with alcohol. The teens were in an accident because of the drink. The attitude of the member was, "Pastor, you get lost! What I do in my own home is my business and not yours!"

9. No striker or "pugnacious" NASB.

He is not to be given to acts of physical violence. This term is derived from a word meaning to flatten. Not taken to the fists to settle disputes. He should be able to settle things peaceably and quietly.

I was in a Church service one evening when the pastor finished his service with, "Does anyone have anything to say or add?" One of the women of the Church challenged him slightly on one of his points. She did not push the subject but one of the board members did. He pushed it until he was on his feet and he and the pastor were arguing, somewhat heatedly. They did not come to blows over it, but the appearance was not much better than blows!

In our society there is the thought that the elder should not be a striker with words. Words can be just as devastating as blows from a fist. The elder should control his temper and actions as well as his tongue.

10. "but gentle" NASB adds this term but it is not in the KJV. It seems to have the idea of being kind toward others.

These two (no striker/but gentle) hint that the outward demeanor or appearance at all times should be on the meek side, and not of the aggressive nature. The elder should have his demeanor under control at all times. This requires that he be walking with the Lord at all times which will normally require a daily - early morning quiet time,

and some periodic adjustments throughout the day, to his spiritual life.

11. not greedy of filthy lucre or "free from the love of money" as the NASB translates it.

The Church should watch for their pastor. They need not make him rich, yet they should watch for his welfare if they are going to have a full time pastor. The pastor should also look to the welfare of their congregation. If they see that the Church is struggling, then maybe a part time job would be the answer. Don't let money control your life because it will ultimately control your Church as well. Greedy has the idea of really desiring the money. Spending time trying to figure out ways of getting money.

The term filthy lucre is up for some discussion. Just what does it mean? Is it dirty money, or is it the idea that the greed for money is filthy, or is all money filthy? The thought of money being filthy has some real possibilities, because it tends to pollute so many people. Actually the term filthy is left out of most translations. Even the New King James leaves it out. This would indicate that a strong desire for money is all that is meant. This seems to be even stronger in that any desire that is above normal is wrong. The elder ought not be in the ministry for money nor indeed, be in love with money. A well balanced budget will help keep this problem away from the pastor.

The pastor that is willing to work outside the Church is probably one that desires to shepherd.

I recently heard of a pastor that took a Church and for several years kept hitting on the board for raises. Several a year, until the board had to ask the man to leave.

Someone spoke of a Church in the midwest which had two pastors receiving \$77,000 a year total. The Church was growing but the Church did not want to build at the moment. The pastors refused to do two services on Sunday morning because they wanted their way. This is not logical and it is putting the Church in a bind if they decide to go ahead and build before they feel they are able.

12. patient is in the King James but not the NASB. It seems to indicate the idea of being able to wait for things to come to pass. Wait for the Lord in all things. Don't get in a hurry. Don't be extravagant or radical in anything (Except God and His program). He should show patience with all people including the membership! This means the nasties, this means the meanies, this means the gimmies, this means the sickies, this means the problemies, this means the normalies. Again this is going to take the quiet time and adjustments of the spiritual life that we mentioned earlier.

By the way these things aren't hard, for the Holy Spirit automatically brings many of these about when we are controlled by Him. The fruit of the Spirit are as follows: (Gal 5:22-23) "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

13. not a brawler or "uncontentious" according to the NASB.

Don't go looking for arguments. You'll find enough without looking. This probably extends to the thought that he is willing to give up his rights in a problem. This is not easy for us in our self centered, my rights society, but the Lord asks this of His Church leaders and we should ask the same of our Church leaders.

14. not covetous which seems to include all things. This means money, things, other Churches, others attendance, etc. Being content with what God has given you and not your neighbor. God is quite capable of giving you what He wants you to have.

Vs. 4 "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"

15. One that ruleth well his own house or someone that controls his house and family well. He achieves obedience of his children in this way. Stands as head - runs it as head. Having a chain of authority with him at the top. The man should be able to control his children. If his children aren't saved and turn out bad it is not a disqualification in this area, unless he has neglected the family spiritual training. He should be able, however to control the children. Their salvation is up to God, and their life's decisions are theirs.

One pastor that I met had one good son and one poor son. The poor one was rebellious to a point - didn't care for Church - long stringy hair - very rough type. Didn't turn out a pride and joy BUT, he was under subjection. One look from his father and foolishness or wrongdoing was stopped. He was always in Church. He seems later on to have turned out okay. He bothered some people, but they were not seeing the whole story - only the outward trouble. Before you condemn a pastor for a bad teen see if he has him in subjection. This is the requirement - not that all kids turn out as super saints. The result of a good pastor is not 100% spiritual on fire Christian children.

The father can only teach, guide and exhort. He is to stand before the family as its leader and guide. (Ruleth is the Greek word "proisteemi" - Strong's number 4291) and is seen in Rom. 12:8 as ruleth; I Thess. 5:12 as "are over"; I Tim. 3:12 and Titus 3:8,14 where it appears as "to maintain." Subjection is the term "hupotagee" (Strong's number 5292) and is seen in II Cor. 9:13 as submission to the Gospel; Gal. 2:5; I Tim. 2:11 as women learning in subjection.)

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QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERS CONTINUED

The thought of "children" is not necessarily that of a small child. The term is used of young to old. (Matt. 9:1-2, man; Matt. 2:18; 3:9, children under two; Rom. 8:16, adults are children of God; Col 3:20, children obey your parents; I Ti 1:2, 18, Philemon 10, Onesimus.)

Vs. 5 "(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)" This shows the why of verse four.

The term house may imply, as well as controlling the family as the context speaks of, but also the material things. Some Christians today are deadbeats. This ought not to be so.

Vs. 6 "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

16. Not a novice or not a new believer. This should be evident, yet Paul seems to feel that it is important.

The indications are that this new believer when given authority would be lifted up with pride. Indeed, the problem with young men that are given high positions is pride quite often. The text is not limited to age, but to maturity in the Lord. An older man that is immature could well fall into pride also.

Paul usually appointed elders on his return trip through towns, thus it would seem that this spiritual maturity was with reference to the maturity of those around the elder. He might not have to be very mature in Christ if most of the people were new converts and very immature.

The elder should be mature and knowledgeable enough in the word to "teach" those he would shepherd. Many automatically view a young person as not mature enough to pastor a Church. This may or may not be so. I have seen some young men straight out of college that have more sense, wisdom and maturity than many older men who I have seen in the pastorate. Judge the man on his maturity and not on

his age. This is what Paul tells Timothy in 4:12 where he says, "Let no man despise thy youth...."

The thought of "lifted up" seems to be related to raise smoke or to blind with pride as smoke blinds those that are close by.

I think that I can truthfully say that I have met very few pastors that come across as being proud. Some may be underneath, but on the surface I see very few. I do see many arrogant men in pastorates. Some thing they are better than they are, but when it comes to the idea of being proud of their position, I think most know they are there because of God's desire and know that pride is inappropriate.

It would be interesting to know why so many take this qualification so seriously when they fail in other areas.

Vs. 7 "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

17. good report to non Christians (my paraphrase). We had a pastor many years ago that didn't spend much time around my father, yet my Dad held the man with a very high regard. I met a doctor from that town many years after both of us had moved away and the doctor asked me of the pastors whereabouts. He wanted to see him after many many years. That pastor had a good report with the nonbelievers of that town.

Other pastors (many, I fear) in business dealings are very blunt, bold and blustering. They expect super deals and super service. These do not have good report with non Christians. I was told of a pastor in a small town where business people hated to see come into their business establishments due to his caustic behavior.

Lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. To be the man that does not really have the good report with the world is to be in the middle of the snare of the devil. There will be little that the person can do in the community or even the Church.

We recently heard of a man that pastored in a small town where the people had the rule of no soft drinks in the school auditorium - even during sporting events. He thought that was a dumb rule and entered

the auditorium with a coke. The public was not impressed with his "freedom to drink coke!" The man was not able to minister to the town folks and it left a black mark against the Church that hired him.

I would like to break here for a comment or two about the elders wife. The deacon's wife is mentioned in the coming text and has some qualifications laid out for her. It struck me as to why the elder's wife did not have qualifications?

I must admit that from time to time I waver in my thinking as to whether there was an office for deaconess. This lack of qualifications for elders wives would indicate that the thought of the text is that wives of elders and deacons have no qualifications, and the text speaks of another office. This is quite possible.

There are five qualifications in Titus that are not here and I would like to cover them briefly.

a. "not self-willed" which indicates a man that is willing to give in a conflict. He is willing to bow to what is right. This is not only with men, but must be a part of the man's spiritual life. He must be willing to bend for the Lord.

b. "not soon angry" indicates that anger may be around, but it takes an awful lot to bring it to the surface.

Patience must be long and when it is worn out there may be anger, but even if there is anger it is controlled and it does not lash out. It is anger that can be beneficial in a compulsion to do what is needed to be done in a proper manner.

I recall in a board meeting watching for an hour, or so, as the men involved, wandered around not knowing where they were going. I finally in frustration began talking and evidently the tone of my voice carried with it a hint of anger. I was not angry - just very frustrated at the waste of so many men's time. I gave direction to the meeting though the chairman would not.

c. "a lover of good men" shows that the elder should be an enjoyer of those that walk with the Lord. This means to love even when there are some faults around! Many pastors miss this one because they

can't handle someone else in the limelight. The elder should gather around himself some good men for training and fellowship.

d. "just" means just what it says. Just is the God we serve, and just must be the elder or elders that we serve. Just in all of your dealings be they with saved, lost, nasty, cheaters, etc.

e. "holy" is the idea of set apart for God's use. The man of God must be set aside for the Lord's use and must have a life fitting that thought. I can't imagine trying to attend a Church where the pastor was known to be in sin. It is illogical for any pastor to feel that he can continue on in his office and be living in sin.

There is one other phrase in Titus, one that is of importance. Verse 9 states, "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught...."

This means that the Church determines if what he holds is proper. Not only what he holds, but what he has been taught. There is a difference. A man might hold what you hold, but have been taught other things that might crop up in his later life and ministry.

A pastor in the Midwest had been taught in a school that held other than proper doctrine. He seemed straight as possible when he was hired as pastor. He was influenced by some other pastors that he knew and as he pastored and studied some of his wrong doctrinal teaching began to make sense to him and it filtered into his preaching and over a few years he had led the entire Church from a position of fundamental, dispensational Christianity to a nondispensational position and out of the fellowship of Churches that the Church had been in.

Don't just check what he believes, but check what he has been taught. If he comes from a questionable seminary, then the questionable may well surface someday. Be very careful!

Vs. 8. "Likewise [must] the deacons [be] grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;"

"Likewise" would indicate that the deacons will have qualifications just as the elders had. These are required and not optional.

The deacons have to do with the material side of the Church, but can be involved in spiritual as bold witnesses. One of the first deacons was Stephen and we know that he was soon preaching and giving his life for the Lord.

Within the material ministry there can be a spiritual ministry as well.

Can you think of a way that you could minister spiritually within the context of material ministry? a. Working with someone on a building allows for interpersonal relationships and a time when the deacon could well get into witnessing, counseling or just encouraging. When the pipes break in the winter and someone is struggling to get them fixed, an encouraging voice could be just what the worker needs. b. Sharing of funds or help from the Church with poor or needy will be a prime opportunity to share the thoughts of the Lord in encouragement or witness. c. In asking for help from members of the Church you are allowing others to serve their Lord. It may well be the start of their desire to go on into Church leadership.

1. Grave: Grave seems to indicate they are mature and act like it. It relates to the fact that his life brings about the respect of the people. This is a positive term followed by negative terms. The negative may qualify what is meant by the positive term. This does not mean that he must be void of a sense of humor, but that he controls his sense of humor very carefully.

2. Not double tongued: Telling two different stories would be a similar idea. This includes, I think, saying you'll do something and then not doing it. In short the person would have to be classified a liar and this is not consistent with good leadership. How could you ever trust what the man said?

There is in our day the idea that telling only a part of the truth is equal to telling the truth. When a person leaves out part of the information to lead another to think something other than the truth, then we have what should be called a lie. Many today give only the information they want you to have - that is not being truthful.

3. Not given to much wine: This seems to be the thought of addicted to wine. This in its context was a call, not to abstinence, but to moderation. Wine was a common beverage at the time, but to indulge

overly was definitely wrong. In our own day the problem of alcoholism is rampant and the need to drink wine for liquids in the body is not true. We have good clean water available and there is no need to drink wine.

Raymond in his book mentions, "If an individual by drinking wine either causes others to err through his example or abets a social evil which causes others to succumb to its temptations, then in the interests of Christian love he ought to forego the temporary pleasures of drinking in the interests of heavenly treasures." (Raymond, "THE TEACHING OF THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE USE OF WINE AND STRONG DRINK"; New York: Columbia University Press, 1927 p 88)

We are all "free" to drink now and then, but we are not free to do so because in our day and age we need to limit our Christian liberty in this area so that we are not a stumbling block for others.

4. Not greedy of filthy lucre: This indicates that the deacon should be in the office because of a call and/or a desire not because of money. When I told my father I was going to be a preacher he said, "Well, I guess there is money in that!"

Vs. 9 "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."

5. Holding mystery of the faith in a pure conscience: I Cor. 2:7-10 indicates this is those things revealed to the Church age saints. (hidden before) In a pure conscience - how could you honestly preach if your conscience wasn't clear about what you believed? There are times when situations arise that force the minister of God to chose between what his conscience tells him and what the world or the Church asks them to do.

It is very difficult to decide due to the fact that when you go with your conscience, those around you will very seldom understand what you do. They may even become verbal in their disagreement with you. Your conscience must be God's conscience and then you know that your decision is correct.

Vs. 10 "And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [found] blameless."

6. They should be proved or tested: "ALSO" indicates that the bishops are also to be proved. This is done in the local assembly and not by a group of pastors called in from here and there to examine a young man to see if he's worthy. The thought of ordination is not in this text. The elder and the deacon are to be people from the assembly and as they live and work in the local Church the Church leadership and people will know the type of person they are. Acts 13:1-3 shows this concept in action. "Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

No examination can guarantee how a man will build a Church. A man I knew that was a part of God's calling me into the ministry could have passed any test I could have given him. He was a good pastor and good preacher, he was an encouragement to my life, he was a Dallas student, and all that knew him felt that he was good pastoral material. A short time later he fell into liberalism. Not that he had bad teaching, but he began reading wrong teaching and began believing the things that he was reading.

7. Let them be deacons because they are blameless: Again the idea of blameless. The testimony of Church leaders is critical to the Church as well as to the Churches witness. Anyone that cannot live up to the standard set should excuse himself from his duties immediately.

Vs. 11 "Even so [must their] wives [be] grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."

Enough has been said as to the deaconess/wife controversy. The fact that the information is inserted at this point in the context would indicate that these are women that are involved in the ongoing ministry of the Church. If you have women involved in the ministry that do not come up to this standard, then they should be asked to remove themselves from the ministry they are involved in.

"not slanderers": Literally "not devils" which should indicate the thought that a slanderer is working for the god of this world and not the God of the believer! I think that we all know what a gossip can do to a person or a Church. They can ruin many years of good work in a single mouth full. A pastor we knew was accused by one of the women in the Church of making obscene phone calls. She had no proof and there were very few that believed her, but within a few months that man's ministry was ruined in the town and he was forced to move on for the Church's sake.

"soberminded": Again the thought of controlled mind and manner would seem fitting. The mind of someone controlled by alcohol would be the contrast. The idea of temperate or moderate in things would be involved also I would think.

"faithful in all things": In her marriage, her Church work, her mothers role, and everything! She should be faithfully doing the things that she is involved with, and doing a good job at it. If she can't do the good job in all areas of home life, then she probably shouldn't be involved in the Church, for her home will suffer.

Vs. 12 "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."

We are now back to the deacon's qualifications again.

8. Husband of one wife, ruling children and houses well: These are the same as for bishop which we have covered.

Vs. 13 "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

9. Great boldness: This good standing is obviously in God's eyes, then the Churches and families eyes but there is a certain standing before the community that is enjoyable for the deacon and beneficial to the Church itself.

In fact a deacon doing his job appropriately will give a good standing to the God that he serves. Oft times in obituaries the man's community and Church activities are included. Some European

mortuaries used to include a detailed report of the man's activities in life.

More importantly is the "great boldness" that comes with serving. As we serve we gain confidence in what we are doing, in the fact the Lord can use us and we become more confident to do more and more things for the Lord. If you have good standing in the Church and community, you will have confidence and boldness.

Vs. 14. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

These verses show the reason for this letter being written. Paul is writing to tell Timothy how to conduct himself and Church business.

I would like to ask a couple of questions that might bring the reader to draw some conclusions to our study. The questions will have some possible answers included.

Why are so many pastors leaving their Churches and missionaries leaving their fields today?

1. They know they miss the mark set here. (often not entirely their own fault. Many times they have never been forced to look at the listing and evaluate themselves before the Lord as to their qualification.)

2. Some cannot live on the salary. This may be due to their expensive taste, or it may be to the small salary. Some Churches feel that their pastor is a servant and he should suffer for Jesus. So, they help him suffer. Most Churches today are doing quite well for their pastors if not to much. Some do all they can and the pastor works on the side. This is not the best, but it works well if needed.

3. Many are grossly dejected because of the coldness of Christians concerning Christ's work, and the non-Christians toward the gospel.

Why are the pastors kids always some of the worst kids? (Or are they just viewed as the worst?)

- a. They are always under a microscope.**
- b. The other children are always more perfect than the pastor's kids.**
- c. It is not unnatural for a child to stand against authority, even in their parents. This must be treated for what it is so they learn that it is not correct.**
- d. The father quite often neglects his own household. This is why it is good to have a board, and a pastor that will respond to one another. If the board sees a problem coming, they can advise the pastor.**
- e. The wife may also be overburdened with Church activities to the point that she doesn't take proper care of the children. The pastor should be watching this and correct it if need be. With a list like this maybe you should be praying that your pastor have these requirements in place, and equally important, that he stay on the straight and narrow.**

We see here in I Tim. 3 that the Church is organized and has leaders. This is a stiff standard to live up to. I personally know of only one Church that requires their elders and deacons to consider their qualification before accepting office. There are probably more, but I know of only one that has it as an integrated part of their constitution.

They take several months to go through a qualifying process which includes:

- 1. Letters to neighbors and fellow workers as to their spiritual life.**
- 2. Talks with the spouses by the existing board.**
- 3. A time of consideration of each qualification. This is a study of the word, a time of prayer and a talk with the board, then they move on to the next qualification. This usually takes a week or so per qualification.**
- 4. A time for the congregation to respond with negative and positive comments about the person.**

5. A time of congregational prayer.

6. A final talk with the board.

If a person does not qualify they are asked to work on the areas in which they are lacking and try the process the next year. At the time we left that Church there had been no one that took office the first time through. Each found areas they felt inadequate in. It is easy to say, "yes, I qualify for this," but it is another to consider it seriously before the Lord and your fellow man!

Is there a different standard for the pastor and the average Christian? Is this a standard for only the elders and deacons? I would submit that this is the standard for every born again believer. Each and every one of us should have this as part of our goal for our spiritual life. The term goal is the difference. The list is a goal for most believers, however the list is a requirement for the elders and deacons of the Church. These things should be in place when they take office.

Most of these terms used as qualifications for leadership appear elsewhere in scripture as goals for every believer. We won't go into a detailed study of these, but will list the terms and some references for the reader to consider.

Elders:

blameless: I Tim. 5:7

husband of one wife: Rom. 7:22

temperate: Titus 2:2, I Tim. 3:11, I Pet. 5:8

soberminded: Tit 2:2, Titus 2:5, I Tim 2:9

given to hospitality: I Pet. 4:9

apt to teach: not used of all Christians

not given to wine: This should be obviously one for all believers even though the Scripture does not use the specific term in relation to

all believers.

- no striker:** Used of the elder only, but the principle applies to all. I Pet. 3:11 we're told to seek peace - turn the other cheek. Etc.
- not greedy/lucre:** Heb. 13:5, I Tim. 6:10
- patient:** Phil. 4:5
- not a brawler:** Tit. 3:2
- not covetous:** Heb. 13:5
- one that ruleth house:** Eph. 6:1-4, The Proverbs, "rules" entails husband-wife relationship Eph. 5:23
- not a novice:** only usage of this term however all Christians are called to maturity by Paul, I Cor. 3:3, II Pet 3:18, Gal. 6:1 speaks of spiritual Christians
- good report:** II Thess. 1:10 Paul and others had a good testimony which helped convince Thessalonians. Rom. 12:18 live peaceably with all men.

Deacons

- grave:** Proverbs calls us to honesty, Phil. 4:8 calls all believers to think on things honest, Titus 2:2 calls old men to be grave, II Cor. 13:7 is not the same word, but calls for honesty
- not double tongued:** only usage of the term, John 8:44 may relate.
- blameless:** I Cor. 1:8

When you call a pastor consider these biblical qualifications not other qualifications such as good with youth - good preacher (not required of pastor teacher) - good illustrator - good looking - good dresser.

The Biblical qualifications should be in the pastor so that he can be an example to the other Christians so they can be maturing toward this list.

06050

B. QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP

Qualification may not mean quality

We can see some of the qualities that should be a part of church leadership by taking a few moments to look at Epaphras. He appears very few times in the Scripture, yet there are many qualities that can be seen in these references. (Col. 1:3-8; 4:12,13; Philemon 23. Another reference that might give meaning to Epaphras is Acts 20:28.)

I would like to give a short introduction to this study to set the stage for the thoughts we need to have. Let's say that you want to buy a car. Let's say that you have enough money to buy any car that you want. Let's say that you are setting out to buy that car of your dreams. Let's say you are standing before the car salesman and you are about to tell him just what you want him to order. Let's do that for a moment and let ourselves be worldly for a moment. Yes, I'm telling you to be worldly for a moment. ONLY A MOMENT!

What kind of car is it? What color is it? The salesman has a list of all the possible options -- what are you going have him put on the car? What radio will you have? On one of the news magazines they showed cars with stereos in them that cost more than the car. What engine will you get? What color will you order?

Now that the dreaming is over let's think for a moment. If you had the money, if you had the desire, if you were committed to having this car, would you accept delivery of a Maroon Chevette? NO!

If you were to set down a list of qualifications and desires for your church leadership, would you settle for something less than you ordered?

You say no, but I believe that many churches today are accepting a standard that is much lower than they desire!! Either they are accepting less than they want, or else their desires are far from Biblical.

The Word gives a great number of QUALIFICATIONS for church leadership and we all hear of these from time to time taught from Timothy and Titus, however the word also sets forth some Godly men as examples of some of the QUALITIES that these men should have.

In this study I would like to explore some of these QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP with you. I would like to look for a few moments at Epaphras. NO IT IS NOT A SKIN RASH!

Epaphras was a man of God that the Holy Spirit moved Paul to include in the Biblical record only so very briefly. He is mentioned only three times - only five verses deal with Epaphras yet we can see within these few verses a real man of God.

INDEED, WE WILL SEE A NUMBER OF LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

Colossians is a book written by Paul during a stay in Rome under Roman guard. It was written about the same time as Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians. We want to look at the first few verses.

In the passage we see that Epaphras was a soul winner (vs. 5). The indications are that he had given these people the Gospel. He may have started the Church. Some think that he may have heard Paul when Paul was at Ephesus in Acts 19:10.

Not only was he a soul winner, but he was a teacher or discipler (vs. 5-7). We see here a pair of qualities which need to be used as a path to maturity for new believers.

Many of the evangelistic organizations today suffer in this area. They lead the person to Christ but never bother to teach them anything of the Christian life nor do they bother to lead or direct them to a sound church. In my own life, the man that led me to the Lord did not attempt to disciple me and as a result, I went into the Navy and became a typical sailor. I often have wondered how my life might have been different had I been taught some of the basics of the faith.

We see that he was also a faithful Minister (vs 7). One who held the body of believers as important - always there to help - to minister to needs - not far off or unapproachable.

He was a servant (vs. 7). This man was a servant of Christ. "A servant of Jesus Christ is one who has been bought with a price and is therefore owned by his Master, on whom he is completely dependent, to whom he owes undivided allegiance and to whom he ministers with gladness of heart, in newness of spirit, and in the enjoyment of perfect freedom, receiving from him a glorious reward." (William Hendriksen, "EXPOSITION OF COLOSSIANS AND PHILEMON"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1964, P 191)

This man was a servant of Christ "ON OUR BEHALF" Some translations read "your" but the concept is the same. He served Christ to THEIR benefit. He wasn't in it for what he could get or be. We met a man in Oregon that was planting a church. He was making his living pumping gas. He worked at the gas station and worked with the church for eight years. The church was his life and all that he did was to further the church. He was in it so that he could benefit those he ministered to. In this case Epaphras was ministering to Paul in prison so he was benefiting Paul.

We have four qualities so far (soul winner, teacher/discipler, faithful minister and servant). You might ask, "what is the difference between qualifications and qualities?" Qualification has the idea that the person has the abilities that make him appropriate for the job at hand. Qualified is the idea, while quality has the idea of the type of person that is in view. What he is like with people, how he relates to problems, or the nature of the person. Good qualifications relate to the ability to come to a standard, but qualities relate to the quality of person that is under consideration. Let me give you a couple of examples. We had a maroon Chevette once. It had the qualifications to be a car but its quality was questionable. It had four wheels, a motor, a body, seats etc. but the dealer had it more in the first 90 days that we did. There is you see a difference. It qualified as a car, yet it was not a quality car. (To be fair to the Chevrolet Co., We put 180,000 miles on our Chevette before it was totalled by a big Caddy that suffered NO damage.)

Let me illustrate the distinction that I am making in another way. While in the service I was the only experienced electronic technician on the ship. Indeed the only tech. One day we received fourteen men just out of electronics school. Our ship was only allowed five or six men, so I decided that I would have it made with this many men under me. Not so! These men were qualified as technicians -- they had passed all the tests at school indeed some of them had very high grades in their classes. However, the quality of workmanship was very poor --- in fact within a month the ship was a total mess electronically. We went into the repair yards for a few weeks and it took me every spare moment to get all of the problems cleared up. QUALIFIED? YES - QUALITY? NO, NOT FOR MANY MONTHS!

Epaphras seems to have been boastful of his church (vs. 8 "also declared unto us your love in the Spirit"). He had been speaking to Paul of his church and its GOOD POINTS! We were in a small church in central Oregon a few years ago that we have spoken to many of our friends about. It was a church that had an over abundance of talented, excited, dedicated people. I could mention the fact they met in an upstairs, that it was too small, or the fact they didn't have a piano but I didn't. I always tried to emphasize the positive, for it was a very uplifting experience to have been in the church. The positive was what was on Epaphras' mind. Indeed, if you read the rest of the book you will find that the church had problems which Paul addressed. Epaphras was excited about his church. He was telling others of his church.

Our church people today need to get hold of this one! Dwell on the positive. Do you tell others of your church? Are you making declarations about the great people there, or do you dwell on the problems?

Let's turn now for a moment to Col. 4:12-13. We see that Epaphras was a local boy ("one of your number"). Why haven't we taken this idea to heart in our Churches today? When we need someone to work with the youth we so often look outside our own assembly. A Church in the midwest took one of their own as their youth man. Why not? They are used to the pastor, they fit right into the fellowship, and the kids know them already. They are already accepted in the community. You know their life, their doctrine, as well as their faults!

The New Testament Church operated for the most part on people from their own group. All Church leaders came from within, not from without. Not only for youth workers but why not for pastors or elders as your Church government dictates? Train the men of your Church so that when the pastor moves on you have a home grown replacement on line. Send him to college if you need to. Some would complain that when he is trained he might go someplace else - so what you've trained a man to serve God. Train another! You don't need to finance him totally, but help as you can.

One Church in Oregon that we've been to has laymen that are so trained by their pastor they can, and do go out to fill the pulpits of Churches without pastors. Their pastor is committed to training his people to do the work of the Lord as Ephesians 4 tells us to do!

Epaphras was committed to Christ (Bondslave - "servant of Christ"). He had placed himself at his Lord's disposal for his Lords use. When I think of servants of God that were sold out I always think of Stephen in Acts 6:24. He was a deacon, but he soon preached to the Jews and finally died at their hands in Chapter Seven. He was sold out to serve Christ.

Paul seems quite impressed with this man. Phil. 23 "Epaphras my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus"; Col. 1:7 "minister of Christ," "dear fellow servant"; Col. 4:12 "Servant of Christ."

I fear that commitment is a passing thing in our society and in our Churches. I have in recent months heard of several men turning down Churches because of financial deficiencies in the Churches pay package. Finances should be involved in deciding if God is calling you to a Church, but it should not be the deciding factor. Someone in chapel while I was at Frontier School of the Bible mentioned a man that was leaving his Church because he wasn't making enough. His salary was \$48,000 a year.

Epaphras was thoughtful. He knew that Paul was writing to them so he ask him to greet them for him. This shows a certain amount of feeling toward the people. Epaphras must have liked the people and felt that he wanted to greet them. God is interested in men that are interested in their people - TRULY INTERESTED!!

He was a prayerful man. Paul didn't need to mention this in his letter, but he was impressed enough with Epaphras' prayers, to encourage the people on with the fact that someone was praying for them. One of the encouragements we've had over the years is knowing that so many are praying for us! We used to send out more than 200 letters to enlist the prayers of the saints when we were missionaries - we needed it!

Paul, to the best of my knowledge mentions no one else as a prayer. He was impressed! By the way can you imagine going to prayer in a prayer meeting with this man and Paul present?

Let's look at his prayer life for just a moment or two.

CONSISTENT: "always" - specific choice to do it on a regular basis. Luke 18:1 "Men ought always to pray and not to faint"!

SPECIFIC: "for you." I ran across something in a Theological Journal awhile back. "A story is told about an old pastor who every Saturday afternoon could be seen leaving his study and entering the Church building by the back door, and about sundown he would be seen going home. Someone's curiosity was aroused enough to follow one day and watch through a window. It was in the days when the family pew was an institution of the Church. The old pastor was seen to kneel at each pew and pray for every member of the family that was to occupy it on the Lord's day. WHAT A PRAYER LIST! He called each member by name as he poured out his heart to God for his flock. His was a ministry of power and his people reflected the grace of God on them. Blessed is that Church which has such a praying Shepherd." (from Bibliotheca Sacra; P 60; Jan-Mar 1979, Dallas Seminary) We need people committed to pray for the people they minister to!

I ran across a quote from Charles Haddon Spurgeon that relates well at this point. "The minister who does not earnestly pray over his work must surely be a vain and conceited man. he acts as if he thought himself sufficient of himself and therefore need not appeal to God. Yet what a baseless pride to conceive that our preaching can ever be in itself so powerful that it can turn men from their sins and bring them to God without the working of the Holy Ghost."

I was at a Church in the northwest where the pastor was preaching on commitment and in his invitation he mentioned that he had prayed for each one in his congregation before the service.

I had spoken in a small town Church in the midwest and the pastor insisted on filling my gas tank. He filled the tank and we talked for awhile at the station. We said goodbye and he started walking toward his house. I told him I'd take him home. He said, "No, I'd rather walk." I insisted - he said, "No I'd rather walk - I know the people along the way home and I like to pray for them as I walk by their house. Some of them are lost and I want to pray for them."

That is the type of men we need in our pulpits today!

SINCERE: "striving" This word comes from the athletic arena - it is used of the athletes intense effort in reaching for the prize. It is used of the "agony" of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane (Luke 22:44) just before his arrest.

I watched the iron man triathlon a few years ago and they showed a woman that was near the finish line. She couldn't control her legs and couldn't walk so she ended up on her hands and knees crawling across the finish line - that is agony! This term "strive" is the term from which we gain our English word "agonize." It was more than just a five minute quite time. He was agonizing over these people!

PURPOSEFUL: "that ye may stand" It has been said, that if the Church is ever going to be victorious it will have to learn to advance on it's knees. PRAYER IS NEEDED TODAY TO SAY THE LEAST!

We see that Epaphras had a concern. He was very concerned with their need of maturing.

He was sincere. Paul knew that this man was on the level -- he wasn't just putting on a front to impress the folks. Some Christians I meet today - Church leaders - are so caught up in their airs they don't listen to the answers you give to their questions. This is quite evident when you answer the same questions twice in your first conversation. I recently overheard a conversation between a leader and a not so regular attender. The leader would ask a question and in the middle of the answer the leader would be interrupted and then when he

returned to listening to the man he would ask another question. The man had not finished his first answer. This went on for about four cycles and finally the man walked away. The leader was not at all interested in the man - only in pretending to be interested.

We had a missionary over for dinner. He would ask a question and as you paused between sentences of your answer he would ask another question on another topic. A couple of times I went back and finished an answer then answered the next question in the hope of his picking up on what he was doing. He didn't.

Some today feel a lull in the conversation is a mortal sin. Personally quiet is not all that bad at times indeed sometimes it is appropriate.

I recently heard of "Leather Man" in the eastern part of our country. He was a man of the past. He was a man that never talked to anyone. He wore a heavy leather outfit and would not take help from anyone. He would eat from time to time when people offered. He had no known past and lived in caves in the wilderness. He never was known to speak yet people, both children and adults would walk out to his camp and just sit with him by the hour. SILENCE IS GOLDEN AT TIMES!

In Alaska one of the Indian tribes enjoy just sitting around in a circle in silence. They enjoy one another without talking.

I sense also there is one more quality in this man. He was MISSIONS MINDED. He was on the forefront of missions. He was working with Paul and seemingly involved in Church planting.

I fear many today fail to see past the end of their own lives when they look at the harvest fields. Few today are directing and leading their Churches toward missions. Many are stunting their Churches growth and prosperity by stunting missions.

Missions is to be a vital part of all our lives. If you aren't praying for, and supporting missions then you aren't in the mainstream of God's program - you are on the outskirts and many Churches there are on the outskirts!

Epaphras was a man of many qualities! The book of Philemon (vs 23) tells us that he was a prisoner with Paul in Rome, so we can see that he was committed to his Lord - all the way.

As I review his qualities the two that stand out most are the qualities of prayer and concern for his people. He was concerned about the people in his Church as well as the people in nearby Churches. The other Churches mentioned are Laodicea and Hierapolis. These two cities and Colosse formed a triangle. They were only a few miles apart. (about 12) He had probably met these people - maybe had taught them indeed, may have started the Churches.

In Colossians 1:7 the term for deacon (minister) is used of Epaphras. He evidently was a deacon at his Church. History and tradition indicates that he went on to become an elder there at Colosse and later was martyred there.

I'm told that his name means "lovely" a shortened form of Epaphroditus meaning "handsome or charming." A fitting name for such a man of God.

SOUNDS LIKE THE KIND OF GUY THAT YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE AROUND YOUR CHURCH! RIGHT?

So many Church leaders today are qualified yet I wonder how many of them are of this quality. This was a layman and he had these qualities! One of the first elder qualifications is "if a man desire the office." Many Church leaders are not there because they DESIRE the office.

We do not have prayer warriors in many of our pulpits today. We do not have concerned men in many of our pastorates today.

When I told my father that I was going to become a minister he said, "Well I guess there's good money in that." At the time I thought yes, in the liberal denominations but not in the fundamental circles. Today I feel that it is coming into fundamental circles. I fear that the ministry is becoming an occupation to many young men. Not a bond slaves life of service for his Lord with his Lord's people, but a job and career.

Peter gives a proper picture of an elder in I Pet. 5:1-4. You should read it sometime.

Epaphras had many qualities. Indeed these qualities should be aspired to by all believers, but they ought to be resident in all of our Church leadership! In the years to come I trust that you will look for men of prayer, men of concern, men of service, men of Christ, men who are desirous of being a shepherd.

Recently I saw an interview of a shepherd here in the western U.S. They ask him of his life and he described the small wagon that he lived in month after month and the danger that he faced to protect the sheep. He spoke of the long months of crying over the loneliness before he finally got used to it. They ask him why he was a shepherd. His reply was this, "The sheep needed to be cared for and I chose to be a shepherd."

We need men in our pulpits and our board rooms that have chosen to be shepherds -- men who desire to care for the sheep. May your future shepherds be so dedicated. May your future shepherds be so concerned.

Christ is pictured as a shepherd in the New Testament. May our shepherds be like our heavenly shepherd!

We must take our application one step further before we close. If you were to compare YOUR life to that of Epaphras how would YOU compare? Paul chose the term "SERVANT" for Epaphras, if Paul were writing about you today could he use the term "servant" of you?

Can you in your own mind say, "My life is a God-used life."? If you can't say "Yes" then you need to spend time getting to know your Master and seeing what He wants you to do.

06100

V. ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

What are Ordinances? Orders that are an annoyance? Orders? Religious rite?

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary mentions, "1 a: an authoritative decree or direction: ORDER b: a law set forth by a governmental authority; specif: a municipal regulation 2: something ordained or decreed by fate or a deity 3: a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony....." (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

We won't take time to look at the term in scripture because as near as I can tell the term is not used in conjunction with any of the ordinances that we accept, nor any that are suggested. The idea of the term is similar to the accepted definition today. An item which is legally required to fulfill your position as a citizen or member of an organization.

Some might suggest the word "sacrament" as a synonym. This is not acceptable in that the term sacrament usually conveys the thought that grace is being transmitted to the person involved in the ordinance. This comes to us from the Roman Catholic Church where baptism, communion, marriage, etc. are all sacraments and they all confer grace upon the participant.

An ordinance never has grace linked to it in the idea of the Protestant Church. Grace is not offered, extended, nor received. The person at the same time should never be involved in an ordinance if they think that grace is involved for they do not understand the ordinance properly.

Ordinance is something that is prescribed as a part of the normal local church life. The universal Church is to be a part of those ordinances, yet the universal Church cannot participate in fully in the ordinances.

Most feel there were two ordinances provided to the Church and they are baptism and the Lord's table.

Samuel Fisk in the article "IS FOOT WASHING FOR TODAY? in the Baptist Bulletin Oct. 76, (Regular Baptist Press, Shaumburg, IL) lists some items we might consider as we think about Church ordinances.

- 1. He mentions that an ordinance must be a command of Christ.**
- 2. Mr. Fisk mentioned that the ordinance must be directly related to truth in the gospel and closely related to the believer's salvation.**
- 3. An ordinance must be something that was given for the Church universal, not just individual believers.**
- 4. An ordinance should also be something that was practiced by the New Testament church.**
- 5. An ordinance should be something that was for not only the early church, but was something that was meant for the ongoing, growing Church.**

These seem good, but may have been arrived at by looking at the two accepted ordinances and determining what an ordinance is based on what is observed in the two.

There are other suggested ordinances that we might take a look at before we move on to baptism and the Lord's table.

FASTING:

Fasting is considered an ordinance by some Plymouth brethren and a few Baptists.

We will not take time to look at references, but let us list some of the things that we know about fasting.

- 1. Some suggest it is used as a reminder to pray for a specific item. The hunger will remind you.**

2. Others feel that the time usually spent eating should be given to prayer.
3. It is usually linked to prayer in the Scripture. However, the term can be used simply of "no food." (Mk 8:3)
4. The disciples and the followers of John fasted.
5. It gives proof of the sincerity of the individual that is praying.
6. Fasting is used heavily in the Old Testament in relation to remorse or contrition. It seems to be used that way in Acts 9:9 when Saul was waiting for the Gospel after the road to Damascus. Otherwise, the New Testament does not necessarily have that connotation.
7. Christ fasted for forty days and nights.
8. Fasting is not an item that is commanded nor is it one that is prescribed for the Church. The indications are, however that fasting is not wrong and indeed it is for the Church age if an individual would desire to become involved in it. (Acts 13:1ff mentions the Church leaders fasted before they sent Saul and Barnabus out; Acts 14:23 mentions that Paul fasted after he had ordained elders in the Churches; Acts 27:33 seems to be the context of not being able to eat rather than a religious fasting - Paul is speaking to the sailors of the ship that had been shipwrecked; I Co. 7:5 indicates that fasting is for this age, in that he mentions married couples involved in fasting and praying; II Cor. 6:5 tells us that it was one of Paul's practices, though some may indicate that this was referring to Acts 27:33 and the shipwreck.)

From my vast acquired knowledge and experience, I will mention a few other points.

1. There are missionaries that fast once a week, and it is a time of prayer for special needs.
2. I know of no pastor that fasts, yet I might add I don't know that many missionaries that do. I will also add, that fasting is not the type of thing that a person advertizes. It may very well be something they desire to be special between themselves and their Lord.

3. Fasting, by those that I have talked to, never leaves a person hungry as such. They might notice their stomach is feeling differently, but it is not hunger. Usually people mention they never miss the meal, but tremendously enjoy the fellowship with the Lord.

I would encourage you to consider fasting as something special, usually for a certain item of concern in prayer. I might illustrate by telling of what one day of fasting resulted in for one couple. A missionary couple was placed before a large Church as an item for prayer and fasting. The congregation gave their lunch time over to prayer, and committed themselves to pray as the Lord brought the item before them.

The next day the missionary was able to schedule a meeting with a man that he had been trying to meet with for two years. The couple was informed they had been given a large sum of money to be divided monthly over a number of months. The couple was informed that their Church had decided to meet concerning supporting them.

Fasting may not always produce such nice results, but you may be assured any special time given to the Lord will be a blessing.

Revival is linked to fasting at times in history. Jonathan Edwards for example fasted three days before he preached his great sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," which moved many people to repentance and salvation.

Though I do not see that fasting is an ordinance, it is plain that it is for today as the believer is led. It is an item which has not gained wide usage in most circles to my knowledge, though it probably should.

FOOT WASHING:

John 13:4-17 is the text to consider.

"He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe [them] with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and

Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also [my] hands and [my] head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash [his] feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for [so] I am. If I then, [your] Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Why do we not practice this act of foot washing?

If we accept the thoughts of Mr. Fisk, then we see that the foot washing is outside the qualifications set forth. In verse 7 the Lord told them they didn't understand what He was doing. If this was to be an ordinance it would seem that the disciples would have explained the item more fully at a later date if it were to be an ordinance or even common practice among the apostles. None of the Scripture writers mention the explanation of all this.

Some suggest I Tim. 5:10 as a possible foot washing text. It however seems to be related to good works and if this is the case then many other New Testament "good works" would become ordinances, especially those listed in the passages immediate context. (See the underlined phrases.)

10 "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."

Christ was not instituting an ordinance when He washed the apostles feet, but rather he was setting an example and showing them that humility was needed in their future thinking.

In short this means that Christ led the perfectly humble life and in his coming He had lowered Himself. The idea of washing the feet instead of the whole body depicts the thought of cleansing of sin not the whole process of salvation again.

The Timothy text, by the way mentions that a widow washed the feet of the "saints" a general term. The foot washers normally practice the rite in separated groups - men with men and women with women. If they were going to use it as a proof text, they would have to have the women wash everyone's feet.

The statement of the Lord, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." in John 13 may prove to be a problem, in that if foot washing is to be done and we don't do it then we are lost to hell. That would place a higher importance upon foot washing than any ordinance. There is no "work" that we can refrain from that will cost us our salvation. This would indicate that this is indeed, not an ordinance. There is no indication in all of the New Testament that the foot washing was to be carried on in the future.

In my own reading, I have not found any indication that any major group of history practiced it as an ordinance. Indeed, the early Church did not seem to practice it. So, might we say that foot washing is not an ordinance?

May we say that foot washing is not to be done in any form in our day? No, for there is nothing wrong with it if the person wants to use it as a sign of humility and service, yet it seems that the time and effort might be better spent in the actual serving to the good of someone. We do not really need to wash feet in our society as they did in the Lord's era.

"After bowing, greeting, and kissing, the eastern guest is offered water for washing his feet. Wearing of sandals would naturally necessitate foot washing, but it is often done when shoes have been worn. a servant will assist the guest by pouring the water upon his feet over a copper basin, rubbing the feet with his hands, and wiping

them with a napkin." (Taken from: "MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF BIBLE LANDS"; Wright, Fred H.; Copyright 1953, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission.)

There may be some societies in the world that it might well be appropriate, but not as an ordinance.

There is no reason to involve ones self in foot washing, because the Lord had in mind the idea of serving one another.

The serving can be done in many ways other than washing a persons feet.

There are some that might view the anointing of oil as an ordinance also however there is no evidence for such an idea.

06150

THE LORD'S TABLE

When teaching the Lord's table I usually have a class discuss the elements, the sequence of elements and the frequency. Normally there is little discussion on what the elements are or the sequence, however the frequency stirs some discussion. I then read the following text.

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; For I say unto you, I will not any more eat of it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves; For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Luke 22:14-20

You should notice that the cup was first and that two cups were mentioned. RELAX! We haven't been doing it wrong. The Lord's Supper was part of the Passover meal that had multiple cups. We base our observance on I Corinthians 11.

Now as to the frequency question, we should remember that the last supper where the Lord instituted the observance took place at Passover a YEARLY observance. In light of this and "as often as ye eat this" should we not celebrate the Lord's table only once per year? Furthermore, this occurred after 6 pm on the 13th of Nisan which is April 13th after 6 pm. This is specifically when the Lord's table should be observed.

NO! "as often as ye eat this" comes from I Cor. 11:26 and this is what Paul told us to do. This has nothing to do with how often - only that when we do it, it is to be a remembrance.

Paul does not mention the Passover nor does he mention the second cup. Indeed, this seems to be the Lord laying out for us through Paul

the procedure for the observance. There is no need to observe the Passover any more so the idea of "as often as ye eat" would indicate more the idea of every time you eat bread and wine rather than yearly.

COMMUNION

Communion has been defined in many ways among which are the idea of fellowship, friendship, comradery, agreement or having things in common.

Scripturally communion is the term "koinonia" and has the idea of fellowship rather than the observance that Christ set forth.

Indeed, the term communion or "koinonia" is translated fellowship and is placed as separate from the breaking of bread which most feel is the observance of the Lord's table in Acts 2:42, "and fellowship, and in breaking of bread."

The Lord's table certainly should have communion or fellowship between those involved, but specifically the better term for the observance would probably be the Lord's table. There is only one passage that mentions communion and the Lord's table together, and it is somewhat doubtful as to what communion relates to, the observance as much as the fellowship.

THE LORD'S TABLE

There are four main passages that relate to the rite. There are three in the Gospels that relate to the beginning of the observation, while the Corinthians passage relates to the specifics of it. (Mark 14; Matt. 26; Luke 22; I Cor. 11:23-26)

From Paul, we learn that the bread symbolizes Christ's body, the wine His blood and the elements remembered are a proclamation of His death. The command to observe "until He comes" is significant because He is coming again. The Gospels relate this coming to the setting up of His kingdom.

The Greek terms body, blood, cup, and bread carry no special significance. They are words that are normally translated as they

appear here. The word translated remembrance has the connotation of remember again.

The text of Heb. 10:3 shows the yearly sacrifice for Israel was so that they could have a clear conscience. It also was "A REMEMBRANCE AGAIN MADE OF SINS EVERY YEAR." In I Cor. 11 it is THE REMEMBRANCE AGAIN OF THE TAKING CARE OF THAT SIN!

There are a number of views held concerning the observance of The Lord's Table. We will look briefly at these.

Roman Catholic

Transubstantiation: This teaches that the elements of the Lord's table (bread and wine) are, through the words that the priest repeats, changed into the literal body and blood of Christ and are offered before God anew. The left over host or wafer is kept in a box on the altar, and it cannot be desecrated, for it is the actual body of Christ. They offer Christ anew each time the mass is held in every cathedral and church in the world.

They must, by their thinking, view this as one of the sources of grace and indeed they do. Each time they receive the host they also accept grace. It is very prevalent in their writing that without the priest to make these changes in the bread and wine there would be no salvation available to the people. It is of great interest to me that some of these same people have accepted the outward trappings of the charismatic movement, and are now seeking to draw that movement into fellowship with them. The Charismatic Catholic is a contradiction in true terms. They have just added tongues to Holy Mother Church and hope that they will fool some with their terminology.

I would like to include a cute short story from an Irish viewpoint concerning this topic. The author is unknown, but I received it from Gospel Outreach; PO 7078; Philadelphia, PA; 19149.

A ROMAN MIRACLE (?)

"A pretty maid, a Protestant, was to a Catholic wed;

To love all Bible Truths and tales, quite early she'd been bred.
It sorely grieved her husband's heart that she would not comply
And join the Mother Church of Rome and heretics deny.

"So day by day he flattered her, but still she saw no good
Would ever come from bowing down to idols made of wood;
The mass, the host, the miracles, were made but to deceive;
And transubstantiation, too, she'd never dare believe.

"He went to see his clergyman and told him his sad tale
'My wife's an unbeliever, sir, you can perhaps prevail;
For all your Romish miracles my wife has strong aversion,
To really work a miracle may lead to her conversion.'

"The priest went with the gentleman - he thought to gain a prize.
He said, 'I will convert her, sir, and open both her eyes.'
So when they came into the house, the husband loudly cried,
'The priest has come to dine with us!' 'He's welcome,; she replied.

"And when, at last, the meal was o'er, the priest at once began
To teach his hostess all about the sinful state of man;
The greatness of our Savior's love, which Christians can't deny
To give Himself a sacrifice and for our sins to die.

"I will return tomorrow, lass, prepare some bread and wine;
The sacramental miracle will stop your soul's decline.'
'I'll bake the bread,' the lady said. 'You may,' he did reply.
'And when you've seen this miracle, convinced you'll be, say I.'

"The priest did come accordingly, the bread and wine did bless.
The lady asked, 'Sir, is it changed?' The priest answered, 'Yes,
It's changed from common bread and wine to truly flesh and blood;
Begorra, lass, this power of mine has changed it into God!'

"So having blessed the bread and wine, to eat they did prepare;
The lady said unto the priest, 'I warn you to take care,
For half an ounce of arsenic was mixed right in the batter,
But since you have its nature changed, it cannot really matter.'

"The priest was struck real dumb -- he looked as pale as death.
The bread and wine fell from his hands and he did gasp for breath.

**'Bring me my horse!' the priest cried, 'This is a cursed home!'
The lady replied, 'Begone, tis you who shares the curse of Rome.'**

**"The husband too, he sat surprised, and not a word did say
At length he spoke, 'My dear,' said he, 'The priest has run away;
To gulp such mummery and tripe, I'm not, for sure, quite able;
I'll go with you and will renounce this Roman Catholic Fable.'"**

Lutheran

Consubstantiation: In years past this was the thought that as the bread and wine descended into your stomach it became the actual body and blood of Christ. This is a bit more believable than the Roman view. This has changed, I have been told, to a system of belief that the elements are bread and wine, however as you receive them you receive the body and blood of Christ which is in and around the elements.

The original Lutheran, Martin Luther, believed that grace was transmitted through the elements. This is natural because he was coming out of the Roman church and would not have been able to change all of his false teaching over night. From a Short Exposition of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism P 26 "...that in the sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us...." This is based on Mat. 26:28 "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Since remission of sins comes from the blood of Christ - to say there is forgiveness in communion is to say that the wine IS the blood of Christ.

They speak of the "real presence" of Christ in the elements.

Traditional:

These people believe that the elements are as they were when Christ used them - symbolic of the body and blood. There is no change of elements nor benefit in the taking of the elements.

It is only a remembrance of the Lord's death on the cross for our sins. There is no grace or benefit forthcoming from the elements nor from the observance itself.

HOW OFTEN

The Christian church I attended as a child held the communion service every Sunday as an integrated part of the worship service. While speaking of the past I might observe from my childhood and adulthood, a marked difference in the observance and the people participating. In my unsaved childhood days, I observed a very marked reverence toward the observance. The older men of the church served the elements after two of the men had a devotional and prayer. There was lots of goofing off in my area during church, but when the communion service was in progress the order of the day was no fooling around, no reading, no gum chewing and nothing else. You were to sit quietly and do nothing. I KNEW there was something special about this observance though I did not know what it was.

The majority of churches that I have attended over the years have observed it once a month.

We were in a church in Parkersberg, PA years ago and they were trying to get back to the "Biblical standard" of the Lord's Supper. The following is a part of the paragraph explaining this desire in the bulletin. "We will have the Lord's Supper the first Sunday of each month." Now you know - it is every first Sunday! Others hold the communion every three months.

Who is correct and why are they correct? The Bible says "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread...." DAILY might be suggested. At Troas, they did it on the first day of the week for sure but maybe more - we aren't told. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," Acts 20:7 (We assume that break bread is related to the Lord's table.)

We don't have a command of scripture that states, thou shalt - but we do have the idea that it was at a meal. The idea of daily may have no justification in history, yet think about it. Every time you break bread, you remember the Lord's death. I have to wonder just how much of an impact that would have on the believer's daily life.

So, before you draw conclusions you need to consider: What is communion? Why do we do it? How do we do it - what is the

formula? Who is to be involved? Should we call it communion? Are we doing it right? Do we need both elements? Do we need either element?

Another question of some minor significance to people in the U.S. but of importance to the Swedish. Can you do communion over the TV? They have had some serious theological discussion on the subject.

If you are going to be a missionary there are other questions for you to struggle with. For example should you use orange juice and crackers as for the Lord's table as they do in some of the tropical areas of the world, or should you maintain the grape juice and cracker standard? (Actually this is not correct if you are going to be specific. The New Testament people used wine and unleavened bread.)

Should we use unleavened bread instead of the usual fish food? After all, the bread of Passover is unleavened.

Should we use wine? There is a growing debate about this in our country at this time in our history. Some are beginning to think that we should and others abhor the possibility.

Can you have the Lord's table with someone in a hospital, care home or laid up at home? Can you have the Lord's table at camps, Bible studies and Bible colleges. These questions have some ramifications if we hold to the observance being an ordinance of the church. That would indicate that the local church is the one that is to be involved and no other organization.

IN BRIEF

Lord's supper is an observance commemorating the Lord's death on the cross. It is a remembrance of His suffering for our sin.

1. Instituted by: Christ Himself.

2. Occasion: Christ wanted to celebrate the Passover with the disciples Mark 14:14-16. a. As a Jew He would want to keep the Passover. b. As Christ He would want to keep the Passover as part of His perfect life. c. As Jesus, a man, He would want to be with His

disciples before His death Luke 22:15. "And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer"

The Passover was depicting Israel's firstborn being saved, while the cross was where provision for the salvation of mankind was made. A lamb was slain and eaten as a sacrifice of thanksgiving in the Passover. In the Church Age a Lamb was slain and we eat the bread that symbolizes His flesh as the sacrifice for which we offer thanksgiving.

3. Elements: a. Bread - unleavened from the Passover meal. b. Wine - fermented if you believe the wine they drank everyday was fermented, or non-fermented if you believe the wine they drank everyday was non-fermented. (We won't try to answer that one. Do consider however Paul's use of the thought of controlled by wine in Ephesians five when he talks about being filled with the Spirit. Control by wine demands fermentation.)

4. Participants: a. In the Gospels it was Christ and the eleven disciples. (Judas had gone - John 13:30) b. In the book of Acts it was all Christians. c. In I Cor. it was the believers at Corinth. (I Cor. 1:1,2) d. Today it should be those that have reason to remember what the Lord did - believers.

5. Setting: In the Gospels it was the Passover MEAL and in the book of Acts it is tied with a MEAL and in I Cor. 11 it is tied with a MEAL.

The question which arises: Is it permissible to have the observance as a part of a meal? Why or why not? I have been told of churches that place the Lord's table as an integrated part of a potluck dinner and having it work quite well.

6. Time: In the Gospels it is in the evening. Other than the Gospels, I don't believe there is any indication in the New Testament as to the time of day.

7. Reasons for: a. Remember His death. b. Remember His death till HE COMES. c. The death remembered till He comes indicates as well the resurrection!

8. In History: a. 125-135 AD The Didache (teaching of the apostles) states, "On every Lord's day - His special day - come together and break bread and give thanks, first confessing your sins so your sacrifice may be pure."

b. Unger mentions, "In the earliest notices of the Lord's Supper a simple and almost literal imitation of the meal as instituted by Christ is prevalent." This would indicate similar to the Passover meal. (Unger, Merrill F.; "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Chicago: Moody Press, 1957; P 666)

c. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia and Matthew Henry hold to similar thought - that of a meal with the observance as an integral part of the meal.

d. Vincent, in his word studies, makes a lengthy comment that is worth mentioning. "The emphasis is on Lord's." "...supper, represents the principal meal of the day, answering to the late dinner. The Eucharist proper was originally celebrated as a private expression of devotion, and in connection with a common, daily meal, an agape or love-feast. In the apostolic period it was celebrated daily. The communion-meal of the first and second centuries exhibited this character in being a feast of contribution, to which each brought his own provision." (Vincent, M.R.; "WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT"; Mac Dill AFB, Florida, Mac Donald Publishing, (no copyright) PP 787-788)

9. Historical setting: Jesus, a Jew with Jewish disciples, desired to celebrate the Jewish Passover. The only thing in the Lord's mind was based on the Old Testament. The Passover feast was a sacrifice of thanks for their first born having been spared. (Ex. 12:27)

He wanted to incorporate a new concept into His disciples' thinking. He was introducing the new covenant which was about to be sealed by His blood. New elements or old elements with meaning added is the question. It seems that He used the old elements of the meal (the wine and the bread) and gave them new significance. (Heb. 9:15 mentions the new covenant.)

IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT CHRIST WAS DYING ON THE CROSS AS THE JEWS WERE KILLING THEIR PASSOVER LAMBS.

We would be remiss not to suggest a possible application of all this to our personal lives. We have spoken of sacrifice in this study however it is concerning the lamb of the Old Testament and the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. Ought we not talk of the sacrifice that Christ calls us to make? Rom. 12:1,2 mentions that we should present ourselves a living sacrifice, Phil 2:17 mentions that the faith of those we lead to the Lord are sacrifices (soul winning), Heb. 13:15 mentions that prayer is a sacrifice and Phil 4:18 states that giving is a sacrifice. We enjoy and remember his for us but do we sacrifice for Him?

We are to remember His death till he comes **HOWEVER THAT INCLUDES HIS DEATH, BURIAL, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION!** At times we may want to dwell on the somber side of the remembrance, and other times we may want to dwell on the joyful side of the remembrance. The Passover was thanksgiving. Christ Himself placed the observance within that general context for our benefit. We should remember, but also be thankful for what He has done on our behalf.

In my adulthood I have seen all sorts of variations of methodology used in an attempt to make the time more meaningful for the participants. In general, I would guess "TRADITION" is a term that describes it in many churches. Ritual is a close second to tradition.

I would submit one further observation and suggest that the most meaningful Lord's Table observances were in a church years ago when the pastor centered the entire service, including his message, around some aspect of the Lord's Table. This was very meaningful to all the people.

Don't be afraid to make the observance of the Lord's table meaningful. Take an entire service and center it around the observance. Try your church board sometime when you get brave, and see if they would go with having it as a part or ending to a congregation meal.

**I would suggest you read a poem by Helen Steiner Rice entitled
"MAN CANNOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE."**

06200

BAPTISM

Christ commanded baptism in Matt 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them...." It is to be the normal course of action as we are going. Baptism should be an integrated part of what we do in our ministry.

Every believer is to be baptized. Not there is danger of losing salvation, but there cannot be a proper walk with the Lord unless the believer has been obedient to the Lord in baptism.

Matt 10:32-33 mentions, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." How much we want to build here I'm not sure. The thought of refusing to identify oneself with Christ seems very serious however.

Since baptism is an outward sign of an inward change, it would be natural for the believer to want to be baptized. On the other hand, if there is no desire to give this sign, then one is left to wonder if there is an inward change.

Can we say that a person that is knowledgeable of baptism and is not baptized, is living in sin? Yes. What is the sin? The sin is disobedience, since the command is to be baptized.

The natural reaction when a person was saved in the New Testament, was to be baptized. It should be the natural thing in our own generation as well. If anyone reading this is not baptized, then I would encourage you to take that step of obedience as soon as you can.

BAPTISM DEFINED

Webster tells us, "Christian sacrament marked by ritual use of water and admitting the recipient to the Christian community...a non-Christian rite using water for ritual purification...." (Webster,

**Merriam; "WEBSTER'S NINTH NEW COLLEGIATE
DICTIONARY"; Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc., 1986)**

In general the term relates to the act in which a person is ritually sprinkled, immersed or poured upon for identification, purification or regeneration.

A little more to the point, from a fundamental view it is, the public testimony by which a new believer identifies with the universal and local church. It is an act which signifies his salvation experience.

"Baptize" is a transliteration of the Greek term "baptizo." All Greek words used of baptism in the New Testament come from this term. It means whelmed or covered wholly with fluid. It is used in Mark 7:4 and Lu 11:38 as a purification of the Pharisees. They dipped their utensils. Dipping into water is hard to change into "sprinkle" or "pour upon" to most theologians. The question of immersion versus sprinkle or pour is based on personal desire rather than a study of the Scripture. Scripture seems to teach immersion.

**There are some questions concerning Baptism? Who is baptized?
Who baptizes? What mode is used?**

The who is, all knowledgeable believers. The ones baptizing are the representatives of the church. This may be the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the janitor if he is spiritual. Anyone that is spiritual may be appointed to the task of baptizing by the church leaders.

Someone once asked me in a class, "Is it wrong for a woman to baptize?" I hadn't thought of it before. I don't know that it would matter whether a man or woman baptizes. The thought of a woman baptizing women has some possibilities tied to it. I suspect that through history the men have done the work due to the fact that if a small woman attempted to baptize a large man there might be some difficulty. There may also be a feeling that the church leadership should do the ministry of baptizing.

In looking at the book of Acts, we see that hundreds of people were being baptized. In such a situation it would seem that to accomplish such a massive operation might call for both men and women to have

been involved. In considering the question, I can think of no scripture that would prohibit women from baptizing.

MODE

We want to look at the different modes of baptism so we can properly understand them.

SPRINKLING or ASPERSION:

Normally this is done over a basin of some sort and the head is sprinkled lightly as the baptismal formula is repeated.

The Roman Catholic Church practices this mode and the Evangelical Free, Methodists, and United Brethren in Christ allow it in their churches.

POURING or AFFUSION:

Again as in sprinkling a basin is used to catch the water and a pitcher is used to pour water upon the top of the head as the formula is repeated. Methodists, Evangelical Free, and the United Brethren in Christ allow for this mode in their churches.

IMMERSION:

Within immersion there are several variations. The idea in all of these is that the person baptized must go completely under the water, in order to properly signify the aspect of death and resurrection.

Among the methods are these: Some dip the person under three times in quick succession and one member of the trinity is mentioned each time the person is dipped. Some dip the person and use the formula as above only they take the person under water front wards rather than the usual backwards of most churches.

Many groups use immersion: Baptists, Independents, Brethren, Christian, Church of God, 7th Day Adventist, and Mennonite. There may be others as well.

In some communist countries where it is illegal to baptize the candidate is blindfolded and they use bathtubs. This way the one baptized cannot tell the police who baptized them.

Immersion examined.

1. The term used, "baptizo," has a primary meaning of immerse.

2. There are two prepositions which are used of baptism and they indicate the idea of immersion rather than pouring or sprinkling - "Into" and "out of."

3. Rom. 6:1-4 shows baptism as a picture of death to the old way and resurrection to the new. Immersion best pictures this. (In death you are buried and in resurrection you are raised.)

Some including myself question that this speaks of water baptism, however it indicates spirit baptism. It is a complete thing for the believer, thus since there is a close similarity between spirit and water baptism - immersion may be indicated.

4. The early church when baptizing could have used immersion. There is no logical reason for this not to have been the case. There is no idea of pouring or sprinkling hinted at in the accounts.

5. The Greek language has words for pour and sprinkle but they are not used of baptism.

6. John the Baptist went where there was much water to baptize. It would be illogical to go into the country side and use muddy river water when good clean water was available in the city. (Jo 3:23; II Ki 5:12ff shows the Jordan to be very dirty; Mark 1:15 shows that the Jordan River was used.)

7. The Ethiopian Eunuch and Phillip came up out of the water after the baptism. Coming up out of would indicate they were down in the water.

"And when they were come up out of the water...." Acts 8:39. For that matter if they were pouring why would it take two men to get a pitcher of water?

8. Christ is mentioned as coming up out of the water. Why would the Lord and John the Baptist get your feet and legs wet if they were going to pour or sprinkle? Matt 3:6

9. Matt 3:11, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

We have three baptisms mentioned here; one by water - John's, one by spirit - Holy Spirit, and one by fire - judgment. The final two would involve complete immersions (spirit involves the whole person and also judgment would involve the whole person), thus it would seem that the water baptism would also be a complete immersion as well.

10. Immersion was the order of the early church. The first indication from the church fathers of baptism other than immersion is that of pouring in the case of people that were sick and could not be immersed. This was called clinical baptism. The people, so baptized, were viewed as inferior. There is a possibility there was an element of baptismal regeneration in their thinking. Cyprian quoted an Old Testament verse that mentioned a sprinkling for purification.

Cyprian (A.D. 200-257) seems to be one of the first to introduce sprinkling.

The early Anabaptists were known to have sprinkled and poured in the early days. This was probably due to the fact they were just out of the Roman Cath. church. The fact some of them were in Switzerland in the middle of the winter affected their methodology a bit also.

INFANT BAPTISM

There are a number of groups that practice infant baptism. This is viewed as an entrance into the church body and regeneration is definitely in their minds. We need to look at this topic for a moment. Others desire infant baptism for much less spiritual reasons. I recently heard of a young mother that wanted her baby baptized because she had heard that baptismal certificates were acceptable if you lost the child's birth certificate.

The suggested proof of infant baptism:

1. The rite of circumcision is introductory to the old covenant, so the rite of baptism is the introductory rite to the new covenant.

Since Circumcision is done on infants, then so should baptism.

2. The scriptures show that entire households were baptized. Acts 16:33. The assumption is there were children and infants in the households.

3. The New Testament shows that whole households can be saved if one parent is, thus we should baptize all members. I Cor. 7:14.

4. Since baptism saves, we must baptize immediately so the child will not slip into hell if it should die.

5. Matt. 28:19-20 tells us to baptize all nations. That includes babies and senior citizens.

Infant baptism refuted:

1. There are no New Testament references of babies being baptized. If it were important to them for salvation, the writers of Scripture would have told us about it.

2. The New Testament shows that baptism follows, repentance, believing, or accepting or some combination of these. An infant can do none of these things. (Acts 2:38-39 stipulates repentance before baptism)

3. The early church fathers rejected this thought. From the Didache we read, "Before the baptism, moreover, the one who baptizes and the one being baptized must fast, and others who can. And you must tell the one being baptized to fast for one or two days beforehand." (125-135) You cannot tell an infant something, and infants do not fast.

4. Let us consider the baptizing of households. We have no indication that infants were present or indeed if there were, they were baptized.

In one of the household texts is Acts 16 and in verse 32 we see, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." They spoke. If they were speaking then all that heard must have heard! That would mean understanding minds and not infant minds.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia raises a question that is probably tongue in cheek, yet very appropriate. They ask if we are going to press the thought of "household," if we should suggest that dogs and cats need to be baptized.

I Cor 16:15 mentions the house of Stephanas as serving God. Infants cannot serve. If the household idea is to be carried forth there is a problem in using this text.

5. Baptism is not related to salvation other than a picture. Mark 16:16 shows that disbelief is that which causes damnation.

Jo 1:12 mentions receive - you cannot do that as an infant.

Acts 10:47 shows they had the Holy Spirit before they were baptized. If baptism is needed before regeneration, then how could they have been indwelt by the Holy Spirit?

6. In the case of likening circumcision to baptism, we have a slight problem. If this is true then we should only baptize men, for only men were circumcised in the Old Testament. Indeed Gen. 17:12 mentions that it is to be done on the eighth day or older.

7. Matt 28:13-20 mentions discipling and teaching. This also is impossible with an infant.

8. Eph. 2:8-9 Mentions that salvation is of grace, and that works are not involved. Baptism is a work - something that man does and it can have nothing to do with salvation.

The whole thought of infant baptism is tied up in the thought of baptismal regeneration, the idea that baptism is an integrated part of regeneration. I would submit two more points to refute the idea of baptismal regeneration.

1. Paul mentions that he baptized few (I Cor. 1:17). If this is the case, and if it were the case that salvation was part of baptism, then wasn't Paul very remiss with his evangelism? If baptism is required for regeneration then Paul would have baptized those that he talked to.

2. A very clear proof that baptism is not a part of salvation is seen in the thief on the cross. The Lord told him he would be in paradise, yet the thief had not had the opportunity to be baptized.

I was in a class where a man from the Christian church was invited for a visit. We asked him about the thief on the cross and he said this was a special case. No other explanation was forth coming.

Some might wonder why people believe that baptism is part of salvation? Might I suggest a few possible reasons? a. The "tower of Babel syndrome." (Attempting to reach God by their own accomplishments.) They think there must be something they can do to help in the process of salvation. b. The "I'd rather do it myself syndrome." They haven't trusted Christ to take care of all there is to do. c. The "that's the way it's always been done syndrome." That is what they have been taught and that is the way it's been and that's the way it's going to be no matter what you say, and no matter what the Scriptures say.

My employers wife once asked me just before their grandchild was going to be baptized if I thought infants should be baptized. I told her that I did not think that the Scriptures taught that concept. I sat down that night and put down some references for her and took them in the next day. She did not listen to a thing, and felt that it was right and proper to have their grandchild baptized.

Baptism, to some, brings some benefit to the one that is baptized. The Roman Church sees the rite of baptism as a means of accepting grace and it is part of their salvation. "The sacrament of Baptism confers grace." (Morrow, Louis LaRavoire; "MY CATHOLIC FAITH"; Kenosha, WI: My Mission House, 1955, P 252)

Some Lutherans feel that baptism is part of their being saved. I'd like to quote from a Lutheran in Makoti, North Dakota. "Baptism is not merely a symbol. It is the means God uses: (1) to forgive sin, (2) to save us, (3) to create spiritual life through the giving of the Holy

Spirit, thus beginning of formal membership in the church, (5) [not sure where 4 went - it was missing] to adopt us into His family wherein we become legal heirs of His Kingdom, and (6) to make us partners in Christ's death and resurrection.'" (from a church bulletin)

In considering baptism another question might come up. Is there any reason for an unsaved person to want to be baptized? In my childhood I was not well taught in the Bible though I was in Sunday School and church every Sunday. I had no idea what baptism was all about. The church I was taken to as a child, believed in baptismal regeneration. About ten or so my mother pushed me physically into the aisle to go forward for baptism. I returned to my seat though a few weeks later did ask to be baptized. I was taken into the church and all was proper even if I didn't know what it was about.

Others might be baptized because of popularity, or for an increase in stature in the community, however the scripture speaks to the thought of unsaved people being baptized. a. Matt 3:7-9 John The Baptist condemned some for wanting baptism when they were unrepentant. b. It is a picture of the death burial and resurrection, so why would any unsaved person want to identify with it? c. It is an identification with Christ and His church - why would a lost person be interested. It is only an empty work if they should be baptized. It would have no meaning to the world, nor to them.

Another question. Is there any reason why a person would, or should be rebaptized? Yes. This was what the anabaptists were all about. They were catholics that had been sprinkled or poured upon as infants. When they had understanding of salvation they were rebaptized as believers. This is also seen in the case of the disciples of John the Baptist in Acts 19:1-7. This by the way shows there was a difference between the baptism of John the Baptist and Christian baptism.

If a person was baptized before they were saved then the proper step would be for rebaptism. This was the case in my own life. When I was saved there came a time when I knew that my baptism had no meaning to me or anyone else, so took steps to be baptized again in the church where I was saved.

OCCASION OF BAPTISM: When should a person be baptized, after they are saved? Some Baptists desire and push for immediately. Some independents tell their converts whenever, and they do it as they feel they want to. The sad part of this approach is that some never do. Most independents feel that it is to be done as soon as the believer fully understands it. This may be awhile or it may be immediately.

Recommendations:

1. Never baptize without talking with the person concerning their salvation, the purpose and intent of baptism, and the ramifications or responsibilities of being baptized.

2. Never push, but do encourage them - teach them the how and why soon after their conversion. For many years there was no real strong significance to baptism in this country, but more and more it is a real testimony of leaving an old life and beginning a new one. In other countries it is very significant and may be the act that solidifies your conversion to the world. In Ireland that is the last thing that the catholics will allow. They may allow going to the Bible Church, even maybe being saved, but the baptism is the BREAK with Holy Mother Church and the believer is in for ostracism from friends and relatives.

We have not discussed the baptismal formula that the Lord specified. Matt 28:19 "...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" Just what is the implication of this formula? To the Jew they were making a commitment to a belief in Christ as the Messiah and a public recognition of his deity. God THE FATHER, God THE SON - the Messiah come, and God THE HOLY SPIRIT.

There is a difference between the baptisms that are mentioned in the New Testament. We will not go into detail on these aspects of our topic. There is a short listing of thoughts in Appendix five at the end of the book for further study.

In brief: Baptism shows the inward death of our sin nature and the creation of our new nature. It also shows our belief in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. These three are also pictured by the mode of immersion.

As in other topics we would like to apply the truth that has just been studied. The obvious application is to the believer that has not been baptized. The ordinance is something that comes under the thought of obedience. If a believer understands baptism properly and does not move toward being baptized, then they are involved in the sin of disobedience. May we encourage anyone in this position to consider moving toward a complete obedience to their Lord's command?

A side application might be that, as teachers of the Word, we should see to it that new believers understand the major doctrines of the faith and call them to obedience.

We trust the reader now has a complete understanding of the ordinances so that we can move on to the final portions of our study.

VI. THE PHYSIQUE OF THE CHURCH

"Physique" is defined by Webster as "bodily makeup," thus we want to discuss the body makeup of the church. Just how are we arranged? We have discussed the leadership and many of the things that the believers in a local church are to do, but just how does God view the family that He has assembled? He views us as a body. We want to discuss the body of Christ for a time.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Who is Head of the church? The pastor? The board? Mrs. Stuffed Pocketbook? Mrs. All-wise? The answer lies in the word itself - Head.

Psalm eight speaks of the dominion of the Lord before He was incarnate. Ephesians one mentions that He has dominion or Headship over the church.

Eph. 1:22,23 "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

Christ is the head and the church is the body. Let's think about this a moment. What implications are there in this short phrase?

What does the head do?

1. It controls the body. What happens if this control is removed? Ever see a chicken just after its head is removed? As a child I used to go to my aunt's place with my mom. Mom used to make me get clear over to the corner of the yard, then my aunt would chop a chicken's head off in the middle of the yard. the body of the chicken would take off flopping and rolling and flapping around for some time. Ever see a church after its head is removed? A man can remain conscious for a short interval of time after his head is separated from his body, but not for long. A body without a head cannot function.

2. The head contains some important equipment which some church members seem to think are located in the body.

a. The eyes. Christ alone is all seeing. He can see far into the future and make plans. If He sees a chuckhole in the road He can guide the church around it quite well. He doesn't need a busybody telling the church what to do.

b. The brain. Christ alone is all knowing. He does not need the unceasing wisdom of the rich elder that has built a fortune, or the sage pastor that has built a kingdom for himself. He doesn't even need the all-knowing teen that knows the church is being run all wrong. He - Christ can control the body!

c. The nose. He can smell out trouble and alert the pastor or elders to it without the self - appointed gossip helping.

d. The ears. He hears enough gossip without us. God has one that is in the business of reporting our errors to the Lord. A poem by Martha Snell Nicholson entitled My Advocate relates to this point.

e. The tongue. You might try a long detailed study of James 3 concerning the tongue? Our tongues are not really necessary except in witnessing and praising Him.

3. The head tells the body what to do and where to go. How far do we let this go? To what extent do we let Christ lead in the church? It would seem from Matt. 10:30 that Christ wants to lead in all areas of our life, "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

A woman in Denver needed a pair of shoes. She found two pair that might work. she really liked and wanted the expensive pair and the cheaper pair were almost ugly. She told the Lord to help her know which pair to buy. She allowed Him to choose. She tried both pair on. The cheap pair did not fit at all. The pair she liked fit perfectly.

We as individuals and as a church are His Body. A close relationship. He is interested in every part of our personal life and our church life. We should learn to take even small things to Him for a decision.

4. The head in the case of the church is the life giver. As the physical body dies without the head, so dies the church without Christ.

How do we treat this head of ours?

Ephesians tells us that God has raised Him, but I wonder if we don't often lower Him. We try to humanize Him and bring Him down to our level.

God placed Christ at His right hand, but many churches put Him beside Rock and Roll music in the sanctuary in the name of evangelism.

God placed all things under His feet, but we tread upon Him - we say we serve Him yet seldom do anything for His work.

He seems to have little power over His church in America today.

God made Him Head of the Church, but for the most part He is more like a headstone in front of a grave full of bones.

A rewrite of Ephesians 1:20-23 might show what man has done to Christ today. "When they lowered him to the depths of humanism--and set him under their feet in every earthly place--and hath placed him as dust, under foot, and gave him to be head over the church which is his dried bones, the emptiness of him that once filled the universe."

Let's consider some verses in Ephesians 1:15-23.

15. "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what [is] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set [him] at his own right hand in the heavenly [places], Far above all principality, and

power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all [things] under his feet, and gave him [to be] the head over all [things] to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Let's consider that phrase, "All things under His feet."

1. All things are subject to Him; the earth, the heavens, all mankind (not outwardly toward Him but He is in control), and the Devil. All the universe is subject to Him, yet He allows the believer to decide his own subservience to his Lord - the one that has the position and power to command subservience.

2. Matt. 28:18 says all power was given to Him.

a. He has the power to provide for us. No matter what our financial position. He is in the business of supplying. (Matt 6:33)

b. He has the power to protect us from danger, from sin, from the Devil.

c. He has the power to prove us. That problem you had last week may have been a test.

d. He has the power to perpetuate Himself through us. By our witnessing, His power can bring people to Himself. Notice: His power.

Another phrase to consider, "Head over all things to the Church."

The key word is "all" - Every area! There is no area of your life that Christ is not over. Not an area that He isn't interested in. In the church the matter is the same. There is nothing in the operation of the church that Christ should not be over!

"Which is His body." As a local assembly with Him as Head are we a 90 lb. weakling or a Charles Atlas? For the younger generation let me explain what a 90 lb. weakling is. When I was a child there was an ad that used to be on all the magazines and comic books. A scrawny guy with a beautiful girl was lying on the beach. A huge muscle man came

along and kicked sand into the 90 lb weaklings face and took his girl away from him. Somewhere in the ad was a picture of an even bigger muscle man with the earth on his back. This of naturally was Charles Atlas, the man that was selling the course on muscle building.

With Christ's power we're Charles Atlas - ready to hold the world on our back. Without His power we're a 90 lb. weakling.

"The fullness of him that filleth all in all." The church is the fullness of Christ. Do you really believe that? Think about the church as a whole today. If this is the fullness of Christ, then Christ is a pauper and beggar. We have failed to show forth the fullness of Christ. Imagine - we can show forth the fullness of the one that filleth everything.

"filleth all in all." This phrase has the idea of cram. This is the only usage in the New Testament of this word. Many years ago at work we used to have one trash can in the shop. It was a long way out to where we dumped it. We prolonged the inevitable by pushing it down by hand until we can't push it down any more, then we would use our feet to stomp it down a little more, and then we would stack it so high that it fell on the floor. Then sometimes we would find a box to sit by the trash can which we would cram as full as we possibly could by pushing and stomping.

Christ fills all in all like we used to fill that trash can. He crams every corner and overflows all there is.

That's my Lord! I trust that the church today can sometime visualize what they could do if they applied this text. How do we get ahead in our churches today? Make Christ the one in charge.

What application do we find in this doctrine of the headship of Christ?

Concerning the local church: 1. He should be consulted on all decisions being made. This is done by the prayers of teachers, elders, pastors, and all Christians in that church. 2. He should be preeminent in all things. Everything should be geared to furthering His gospel and His glory. 3. We should seek to build up the body to make it strong, as well as bigger, for Him. The body will one day be His bride.

Concerning the Church invisible: 1. Many will be surprised to see who is in the body. Many of those we disagree with doctrinally will be there. This is not to say that we should be associated with them. Some, I think, will be as members with a disease. They will become holy through Christ's transforming power at the rapture. 2. You can disagree with other churches if they don't give Christ this place of Head in their group or church.

Concerning the believer: 1. This doctrine could also be entitled the Lordship of Christ. Christ is Head - He is Lord. There is one distinction. He's officially Head, but only Lord as we allow Him that position. This is true for the church as well. Allowing Christ Lordship is simply allowing Christ to have control of our life, and to have access to every area of life; be that area your innermost secret, or innermost problem, be that area your dating, be that area your job, be it anything.

Christ is Head officially - now let's let Him be Head in practice. Let us as individuals and churches begin to allow Him to make the decisions.

We need to consider this picture that is used to describe us. We are told that we are the body of Christ. Consider that picture for a moment or two. First, there are several bones in the body of Christ. these bones are also found in each one of us. How well the body gets along depends on how much these bones are used. 1. Knee bone - How much prayer is offered on the bended knee? 2. The backbone - how many great laborers do our churches have. 3. Wishbone - This is often put to use instead of the knee and backbone. ("Oh, I wish the church would grow.") 4. The most used bone in the church today should be the least used - the jawbone. It has its good use - when it's operating for the Lord. 5. Finger bone - It points to everyone's faults. 6. Rib bone - Rib the pastor till he can't take it anymore. 7. Shoulder bone - It does the work.

Some churches I've seen remind me of my own body at times. My mouth runs before my mind is engaged. Sometimes I feel like I'm hooked up backwards; my nose runs and my feet smell.

We sometimes begin to think we're pretty important, but remember as you sit there you are worth \$.90 chemically. You're pretty much worthless, unless you are energized atomically, then you become worth millions per pound because you could produce 11 million kilowatts per pound of flesh.

Spiritually we're worthless without the Holy Spirit, but with Him we are priceless to God.

What kind of a body are we for Christ? The next text has specific reference to the local assembly as does Ephesians four, but by application we could see truths for the invisible church as well.

Take a few moments to read this text, I Cor. 12:12-27. Some facts from the text:

V. 12) One body, many members

V. 13) All are placed in the body via the Holy Spirit. This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This takes place at salvation!

V. 15) If a member, out of disgust, declares himself not of the body, he still is in the body, like it or not.

V. 17) There is a diversity of types. The body isn't just an eye. The body isn't just an ear. It's a complete body, arms hands, legs, feet etc.

V. 18) God placed us where He wanted us. This includes what we are. He chose what member you are and placed you in the body where He wants you.

This passage has direct application to every one of us today! How? 1. We should carefully find out what local assembly He wants us working in. 2. After we know where we are to be, we should find out what we should be doing. This means more than just sitting idle while the hand scratches your foot. Every member of a healthy body functions. What are you supposed to be doing? 3. God placed! Not man! We are not to judge another member's place or ability. God thinks his ability is what He wants in that place. You may feel I am a rotten teacher. Maybe I am. Maybe I don't have interesting studies.

Maybe I am bald. Maybe I don't have a sense of humor. Maybe I tick you off with all of my detail. But - you did not place me in this position. At this time god wants me here no matter what I'm like. Tomorrow He may want me in some other position. This can be done in a number of ways. Don't judge God's placement of members.

Vs. 21-22) One member can't do without the other if it is going to function properly.

Every job in the church is important to the smooth functioning of the body. Imagine if your left knee joint was rendered inoperative. Just how well would your back feel after hobbling along with a stiff knee? EVERY job is important to the body.

V. 23) We should try to honor these less important members. This is done by giving credit where credit is due and giving a thank you and pat on the back once in awhile.

V. 24) God gives honor to these less important parts, by spiritual blessing, by joy in serving, by rewards later.

A missionary friend once told a church that he'd help with their Vacation Bible School. He didn't get to speak in that church. He served them as a less important member. On his next furlough the church opened a day of services to him and support followed.

V. 25) This honor is done so there is no division in the body.

All members should care for one another. If there isn't a mutual caring, then someone's spiritual life is not in a proper relation to God!

There is a phrase in the Scripture that is very indicative of what we are talking about. "One another." The Bible mentions many things that we are to do for and to "one another." I would suggest a study of these passages for your further enrichment. It will take awhile, yet the benefit will be well worth it. The listing of these passages is in Appendix six.

V. 26) There should be common suffering and rejoicing: How do you feel when your tooth aches? Do you feel great all over? No! How do you feel when it's fixed. Great - all over. So we might surmise that if

one member of the church body is off center then the whole body is slightly askew.

Some of the members have certain spiritual gifts to train, while all of us have a gift or more for the enrichment of the whole. Let's look at Ephesians 4:11-16 and see how this relates to the body of Christ. Vs. 11) Some gifts given for a purpose. Vs. 12) We see there is a reason in this verse: For the perfecting of the saints. (complete as a machine, ready to go.) In short, the purpose is to teach every Christian so that he is ready and able to go for God. Be it witnessing or whatever.

The pastor is to be helping complete the others in the church. At the same time there may be others in the church that can help in completing the pastor. This is not open season on telling your pastor what and how to do his work, but there may be opportunity for you to assist him in his ministry in a way that he learns.

The result of this mutual completing is a church that is growing maturity wise as well as number wise. It is a process by which a church can begin to function as a unit and not an octopus with many tentacles flailing the water.

Let's recap:

We - every one of us - is a member of a local assembly.

It does not matter if you hold membership or not. If you are attending a gathering you are in essence a part of that body. You - every one of you - have a spiritual gift. God placed you in your local church at this time because of your gift. It is needed to do what God wants done at this point in time.

These gifts are varied. You may have more than one! You may have the gift of giving, of helps, of pastor-teacher, of evangelist, of governments (oversight), of ministry (material, deacons), of exhorter (paraclete), of ruler (elder), or of mercy.

No matter what your gift you should be sharing that gift with the other believers. If you aren't sharing that gift, you are hindering and impeding the health of the body. What is worse - you are hindering and impeding the work of God.

It's easy to sit back and relax while others do all the work, but when you see it in its true light it's the fact that you are hindering and holding up God's work. Are you ready to admit to that?

There is another warning that might be drawn from this thought. The church leadership which does not allow all of the people to minister is throwing up a roadblock to God's work as well. Every gift is present for a purpose and should be used in the assembly.

God can work around you. He can do this in two ways: 1) by shifting your load to someone else, or 2) by bringing other people into the assembly to take your work.

Is someone else doing work in your assembly that you should be doing?

Not only should we be using our gifts in the local church, but we also have other responsibilities.

Every organization has rules and regulations - no matter how loose the organization. Every organization has members. Those members have set responsibilities. Even in the hippy groups of the 60's there were certain responsibilities. The hippy dress was to be different than the straights. They wore patches and rags so they could be different. My question is this - if they were so different why did they all look alike when they dressed differently? At any rate, they had certain responsibilities to the group.

This holds true concerning the members of the body of Christ. We will be looking at these responsibilities for a moment.

A. The first responsibility is to mature. Even though there are many immature Christians that have been saved for twenty-five years, our prime interest is in maturing and learning in our new life. This can be done in many ways. 1. Regular attendance at services. Not just the am, pm, & Wednesday, but all that are available. Many churches have training hours and different age group fellowships. 2. Daily prayer is needed to keep the channels of communication open. All the sermons, lessons, and devotions in the world will be useless unless you are on your knees asking God to apply them to you! 3. Regular

personal Bible study. A very good place to begin here is to read through the Bible so you know what's there. Then get into detailed studies. Mix your ways of studying up so that you don't become bored.

B. You are responsible to honor other members of the body. 1. This does not allow for talking behind someone's back. This does not allow for backbiting. Our pastor years ago preached on the armor of God. He explained carefully how the front of the body was well protected, but there is no protection in the rear. He explained that the Christian soldier was always to be going forward. He also mentioned that it should have included protection from the rear. He told us that he had had more trouble from the rear, from Christians, than he had had from the front.

He didn't say it, but what has happened in today's church is this -the Devil has infiltrated the Lord's ranks by getting Christians to sin. 2. This includes a mutual trust between members. All members are Christians and as such should be honest. If you have any proof of wrongdoing, go to the person in question. If you have only suspicions, be quiet. If God has placed a person in a place of leadership then it is your duty to keep his or her reputation, not tear it down.

C. You are responsible to support the body. 1. This can be in the form of help. Helping in the ministry. All are to be working. Every member. It is wrong to push all responsibilities onto one member. Remember your spiritual gift is to be used to support the body. 2. Spiritual support between members is needed. A mutual encouraging of one another. a. This can be on a one to one basis. b. This can be in informal fellowship. c. This can be during testimony times.

D. You are responsible to build up the body. 1. By personal witness. The early church was built by Christians witnessing, winning and bringing people into church. 2. As you talk to others about your church don't dwell on the dim side, like how little room there is or about how boring the Sunday School class is, but emphasize the positive.

E. You are responsible to keep your attitudes straight. 1. Personal attitudes in a church are very important to smooth operation. 2. Don't get hurt when a vote goes against what you wanted. 3. Don't get upset if someone gets a job you wanted. Volunteer!!

F. It is your responsibility to mind your own business. Our world is changing drastically. Everyone is out to mind everyone else's business. 1. It used to be that how you raised your children was your business, but it seems everyone has to get into the show. A man shared with us once that he had taken a child out for several applications of the board of education on the seat of learning. Still the child gave trouble so he got up again and every person in the church turned and stared. To which the pastor said, "Now you people never mind - that child needs that." 2. It is proper and courteous to allow others to have a different opinion and leave it at that. Today, especially on spiritual things, if you have a difference of opinion you are treated like the scum of the earth. Many times when you take a stand on something you believe in, you are radical and stupid. This oft times is worst from Christians.

G. It is your responsibility to be content with what you have and with where you are in the body. I Tim. 6:8 "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." I Tim. 6:6 "But godliness with contentment is great gain;"

I. You are responsible to apply what you hear and learn from Scripture to yourself and no one else. When you hear something don't say, "Oh boy, does so and so need that." Say, "Does that relate to me?" Let the Holy Spirit work on everyone else. He can do it if you let Him. He is God, and conviction is one of His ministries to the believer.

J. You are responsible to keep your family in proper order so they are an honor and asset to the body. 1. The man has a set responsibility in the family (Eph. 5:22-25). We've been studying Christ's headship. The husband is the head of the family. I see no reason given in Scripture whereby this relationship can be changed. 2. Children are to obey their parents. Col. 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is wellpleasing unto the Lord." Also see Eph. 6:1-3. Note obey and honor are two things for us to do. Another good study for insight is the term "honor" and the term "obey."

As a teenager I was very cautious of honoring my father. He was the county treasurer - above reproach. Never did wrong. One night I went sliding around a corner and sped off only to be followed by a

flashing red light. The first thought in my mind was not of the money or embarrassment to me, but of what my father would say and secondly what his friends and acquaintances would say. In court I was thinking about my name being in the paper and the dishonor it would mean to him. As children - not only kids and young people, but everyone that has living parents - it is your duty to honor your parents. Keep their esteem and worth in view in all that you do.

K. You are responsible to help keep unity in the assembly. A group of people bound together by a shared goal will be united behind that goal and the effort to obtain that goal. If you find you are at odds with the group, check to see if you are spiritually (sin-wise) prepared to make your decision, then make your decision on a Scriptural basis. Don't decide on what you think, but on what God says. If you are at odds you might try prayer.

If all of us keep our end of these responsibilities we can expect a smooth running church that will be quite honoring to God. If we begin to slip in these areas we can expect strife, hurt feelings, and trouble.

We've been talking about the body of Christ and the responsibilities of the members. Our study now should turn to how the members can be responsive. Really the only way! Take a moment and read through II Timothy 2:14-26

How do your religious conversations go with other people? Are they argumentative? Are they calm or heated? Are they based solely on Scripture or upon what someone thinks or feels? Are they profitable?

If they are heated or argumentative or based on thought, feeling or philosophy, then they are unprofitable and will subvert the hearers. Possibly an illustration of this concept would be good. Many years ago I was working on an F.M. radio. I was trying to align or adjust it in a certain manner. My boss said, "You can't do it that way." I said, "You're crazy - I'm doing it." A lengthy argument ensued which became heated. At last my boss, an electronic engineer conceded that I, only a technician, was right. What were the last four words about a heated argument? Will subvert the hearers. I had convinced a friend of mine, also. The problem came when I found I couldn't align the radio in that manner. Thinking back I found where I was wrong.

The point? A heated argument subverted my friends and my boss's thinking. I then had to not only tell them I had argued them into falsehood, but that I was sorry for the whole mess.

This happens many times in religious discussions. The same is true when we draw conclusions from discussions based on philosophy or someone's thoughts and beliefs.

Paul says - subverting is the result.

Vs. 15 "Study to show thyself approved...." Someone has asked the question: If you were arrested and tried for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you? Think about it. If you took your case before God right now and said, "Lord, I've studied in the Word in the following areas and I've spent this many hours a week studying your Word," would He say, "Here is your reward faithful servant." Or would He say, "You're a slothful servant. You will have no reward." Would He put His stamp of approval on you?

"...a workman...." This assumes that you are working for Him. Are you?

"...that needeth not be ashamed...." Have you ever witnessed to someone, or been in a discussion concerning religion and found you can't answer questions put to you - or you feel you were a miserable witness? If so this is your problem. You are ashamed. Why? Because you aren't an approved workman. Why? Because you haven't studied diligently.

This does not require length in study, but diligence to the study you have.

"...rightly dividing the word of truth...." Another area where embarrassment enters in when someone catches you teaching something wrong from the Word. Again this usually comes from poor study.

Vs. 16 "...stay away from babblings...." Another way to explain the discussions of v 14. If you are subverted and continue, you will be increasing your ungodliness. If you are a teacher and teach others, you are multiplying your ungodliness.

Paul goes on to give information concerning false teaching and the importance of being very careful in our acceptance of things taught. I have told classes and congregations all my life to check up on what their pastor tells them and to check up on what I tell them. Indeed, that is a good warning to the reader. There may be things in this volume that are false. Not because I am desirous of misleading you but there are ways in which falsehood can creep in.

We trust that this look into the body aspect of the church has been helpful and that the reader will continue to do further study on the subject as time permits.

VII. SPIRITUAL GIFTS

There has been so much written about spiritual gifts that it doesn't seem logical to go into great detail in this section. I would like to just share some information that might be of use to the reader.

Miscellaneous information and thoughts concerning Spiritual gifts.

1. Gifts are not synonymous with natural talents. The gift may however be a supernatural enhancement of a natural talent. An example is a case of a man in Nebraska that was asked to paint a large Vacation Bible School banner for the church. He was somewhat of a sign painter, however made many mistakes and goofs in his work. He was very reluctant to take on this banner. The pastor encouraged him to do it. The man set out to do the banner and did not run into any difficulties and it came out quite nicely.

Many can teach as we see in the public schools however only the gifted can teach spiritual things in a powerful life changing way.

2. Gifts are not ministries. The Lord gifts for the ministries for which he has called you. He will not give you the gift of pastor if you are never going to do any pastoring. He prepares you for whatever He desires for you to do.

3. Gifts are not offices. Those holding offices will have gifts and their gifts may well relate to their office, yet it is not an office as such. The gift of pastor teacher is not the office, though the man holding that office should have the gift of pastor and the gift of teacher. (See appendix eight for more detail on this.)

4. Gifts are not spiritual maturity or fruit of the Spirit.

5. Everyone has one. (Eph. 4:7 "unto everone of us is given grace"; Rom. 12:6-8.) The gift or gifts are given by the Holy Spirit for the building up of the church. Each believer has a gift, whether he knows what it is or not. In some cases a person will not know their gift for some time after salvation.

6. They will differ from person to person (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:11.) Everyone in a church will not have the same gift, though there may be several that have the same one. For example there will normally be several gifted teachers for the training of the saints. In a large church there may be more than one "pastor-teacher" for the ministry of the saints.

7. Gifts are for the common good of the body (I Cor. 12:7, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit." The profit will be to the person, yet to the body as well. The whole purpose of the gifts is to benefit the body of Christ. Christ set the church into motion for a purpose and these gifts are to aid and assist in the body's completion of that task.

8. The gifts are given through the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 12:7) Ephesians four declares that Christ gifted some, but He did it through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is assumed that Christ specifies the gift and the Holy Spirit empowers or gifts accordingly.

9. The purpose is the edification and growth of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12-14.) If everyone has a gift and the gifts are for building up of the body then it follows that if some of the people are not ministering in the church, that the church is not growing properly.

10. We are to know about them. (I Cor. 12:1, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." This is not to say that a believer should set aside all he is doing to seek and find his gift. The believer is to look at the Word and know of the gifts and then as they walk with the Lord their gift will be revealed to them. There was a time in the 70's in which the church in general seemed to be stuck on gifts. All the new books were on the gifts, all the sermons were on the gifts, and the concentration of believers was diverted to the gifts rather than other things of ministry. This was not all bad, for the spiritual gifts prior to that time were very subdued in the church, however it tended to sidetrack people.

11. The gifts can be abused as is evidenced in the book of I Corinthians where Paul comments on the proper/improper use of the gift of tongues.

12. Most feel that you can have more than one gift. They quote I Pet 4:10 "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." I am not sure what they are seeing in this verse. The NASB mentions a "special" gift which might possibly indicate a special as well as a not so special gift.

There are some the teach a primary/secondary gift line of thinking. They feel there is a primary gift in which the believer actually does most of their ministering, and then one or more secondary gifts which assist them in their overall ministry. For example the pastor may have primary gifts of pastor and teacher while also the secondary gift of helps which he uses in ministering to sick and shut-ins. Though there seems little Scripture to base this on, observation over the years seems to indicate it.

13. If you know what your gift is then you should function in that area of your church. If you are not functioning with your gift then you are in sin. The gift was given for use.

14. Most believe that the gifts are given for life. If you are given the gift of pastor, then you will die a pastor gifted person. You may not be able to function as before, but your mind set will function around that gift that you have been given. If you have the gift of giving and you find yourself one day on a very limited Social Security income - you still have the gift of giving and you will probably be a real giver even though it is limited.

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR GIFT

The normal question from the person that does not know what his gift is, centers on how to find what their gift is. Let's consider that for a few moments.

1. Know what the gifts are, what they mean, and the action that each is able to perform.

2. Go to work and find out what area you seem to flourish in. The old adage "God can't steer a parked car." is very appropriate. Get busy in several different areas and see if you function well in them. This

may take some time so don't be discouraged. (Stephen is seen as a deacon but is soon preaching. Phillip as well.)

3. Consider what part you would like to have in the local church. The desire will be found resident if the gift is there. If you really like to teach then teaching may be your gift.

4. Dedicate yourself to the Lord and to serving Him the best way you can (Rom. 12:1-5). Be controlled by the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead you.

5. Try to develop the gift you think that you might have and see if the gift is there or if it is just a talent.

6. Wait and see if others view you as having the gift as well.

7. Do not worry if you do not know or find your gift. You can function in the church without knowing.

8. Take a test and know what your gift is. I have passed out tests and have seen tests which are billed as "Indicators" of your gift. I have seen people take these tests and "KNOW" what their spiritual gifts are. NOT SO! These tests usually are accurate in indicating what a gift might be. In people that know their gifts and have taken the tests, the tests seem fairly accurate. Be careful however not to base your knowledge of a gift on a test. Allow the Lord to lead you to what your gift is.

I would like to give some listings of the gifts in different groupings for your personal study and reference. These are to be found in appendix seven.

THE GIFTS EXAMINED BRIEFLY

PROPHECY: This gift is quite often listed in the sign gift area due to the revelatory nature of it in the New Testament. "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." (I Cor. 14:3) Some feel that prophecy rightly belongs in the ministry gift area due to this verse. In truth it would seem that possibly the gift of prophecy had a redefinition in the New Testament times. In the Acts the gift has the idea of forthtelling with the future

involved as in the Old Testament prophets. While this verse (I Cor. 14:3) sounds very much like a gift that belongs in the Ephesians four category.

Some see different aspects of the gift in the New Testament. There is the prophetic aspect of revealing God's message to man, there is the forthtelling of God's message as in what we view as preaching. I'm not sure there is enough evidence to justify either side of the case. The important item is this, if you see the gift of prophecy in place today, be sure that you explain what you mean by that gift, and not allow people to believe there is prophecy of the New Testament revelation type going on today!

FAITH: This gift seems to be the God given faith to see something that God wants done and to go forward planning and praying toward that end. This would probably be in view in the book of James. "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up;" James 5:15

This might be the little old lady that **KNOWS THAT GOD IS GOING TO SEND SOMEONE INTO THE MINISTRY FROM HER CHURCH.** A professor of mine at Western Bible College in Denver, CO shared that he had been a secular school teacher for some time, and the Lord began leading him into the ministry. He had a masters in education and he was planning to go on now to seminary. His pastor asked him to share this in church, so he did. After the service a little old lady came up to him and was shaking here skinny finger in his face and she said, "I've been praying for years that God would raise up someone from our church to go into the ministry, and for the last three years, I've been praying that it would be you!" The moral of my story? Watch out for those little old ladies, or you may become a missionary or who knows what!

WORD OF WISDOM: This is usually seen as a sign gift, and rightly so, however there may be a sense in which you should watch the wisdom that comes your way as you walk through life. I personally believe that the gift of wisdom is a sign gift, yet I have seen some very wise men who God has placed in my path. Don't discount wisdom when it walks up to you and says hello. Learn from it!

It seems to be the ability to take the facts and consider all information and wisely choose the course of action to be taken. You may run into this fellow when you begin trying to figure out what the Lord wants you to do with your life. You may give him all your assets and fears, and he will work through your fears and help you to an understanding of what you can do and encourage you toward that end. Not all people are as wise as they profess, so be very careful, of those that you take advice from. If you don't have confidence in them, if you don't see evidence of wisdom in that life then don't ask them advice.

WORD OF KNOWLEDGE: The ability to search the scriptures, systematize and communicate the knowledge received. Again this is usually viewed as a sign gift and should be. There is the idea of it in our own day also however. Hopefully this is what we have in the books that we are reading. The men of God of our day and past days are looking at the word, looking at the language, and looking to other areas of research and are setting down information that we might be able to use in our own lives.

HEALING: The miraculous bringing about of cures to all manner of diseases. Another sign gift. This is seen as the complete and immediate cure of the malady. This is seen in several accounts of the healing in the Book of Acts. It is significant to note that the apostle Paul healed many in the book of Acts, yet in later life he could not heal himself or others mentioned in the epistles. This is proof that he no longer had the gift of healing.

We might make comment also that God is able to do as He pleases in response to our prayers, and based on this it should be noted that He does heal at His choice and discretion. This healing is done directly and not through a faith healer or some other third party.

MIRACLES: The supernatural intervention of someone with the laws of nature to bring about some work via a command or prayer. Again this is a sign gift that is no longer in existence. The fact that God works in miraculous ways in this day is not disputed. He, as we have said, can do as He pleases, and does intervene at times in wonderful ways.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS: The ability to discern the difference between a spirit of truth and a spirit of error. Though I believe that the gift has passed away, I would encourage you to develop your impressions and feelings toward people and what they teach. As you go along you may feel, with no cause there is something wrong. Go carefully and see if your feelings or impulses are correct.

I have noticed many times that we will meet someone in a secular setting and I will tell my wife that I would bet the person is a charismatic. I have been quite accurate. We arrived for a deputation meeting in Oregon and about fifteen minutes into the Sunday School lesson, I leaned to my wife and said that I thought there was something very wrong in the church. She said that she felt the same thing. Within a couple of weeks someone told us that the church had gone charismatic.

TONGUES: The supernatural ability to speak in a previously not known tongue or language. This is definitely one of the sign gifts and is not for the use of the believer today. The so called heavenly tongue that many claim to use is easily proven to be of something other than the Lord and His plan.

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES: The supernatural ability to interpret what is spoken by the person speaking in tongues.

APOSTLES: This would seem to be the office that the disciples and Paul held. There is no equivalent to this office or gift today.

MINISTRY GIFTS

MINISTRY: This would seem to relate to the work of the Deacon. This is the ministering to the physical needs of the saints. I rather suspect that many people have this gift in there is so much to be done in this area of the church. Indeed, I have to think that many of the bench warmers that we have in our churches may well have this gift, for there is quite often to much ministering to be done for those that minister.

TEACHING: The God given ability to search the scriptures and declare that truth which has been learned. This seems to carry with it the ability to create interest in spiritual things and have insight into

the needs of the students. We have many teachers in our churches, but I'm not sure how many gifted teachers we have in our churches. (That are busy Ministering at any rate.)

EXHORTATION: The Spirit given ability to comfort and help those that call you along side for help or assistance. The term is also used of the Holy Spirit in relation to his ministry as the comforter. The person who has this gift quite often finds that people with problems seek them out for help, advice or just a listening ear. If you have this gift PLEASE use it at every opportunity. Many in our churches are hurting and have no one to talk to.

GIVING: The ability to give money for the ongoing work of the Lord with a single minded commitment to continue to do so as long as the Lord allows. This does not mean that you are or will be rich. We had a supporter that felt that giving was his gift. He was on a disability income from social security and is unable to work. He and his wife give as much as they can and are determined to do so as long as the Lord gives them income and life. Even though they are low income, they seem to have the gift of giving.

RULING: Some would lump this into the gift of governments however there is a possibility that the two are different. Ruling may have the idea of ruling over the church as in oversight. The idea of the one that guides the church along.

MERCY: The ability to show mercy or kindness to those in the body of Christ that are hurting and/or are in need of encouragement. This will normally be a part of a pastors ministry, however there may be some in the body that could do a much better job of mercy. We should teach people this so that the pastor is not burdened with a ministry that he is not gifted to do. The pastor can do his part and allow others to come in and hurt with the people. I've noticed in the past, however that normally the pastor does do well in this area and is probably gifted for the ministry.

HELPS: The ability to step into any situation and assist in accomplishing the task at hand. This gift may well involve the ability to organize and carry through on a task until done. In a church in Nebraska there was a man that always headed up everything. At potlucks if something needed done he was in the middle of rounding

up workers to get it done. His motto was, "Everybody works!" Many joked of the man's work, but he was a man that got the work completed in quick and good order.

GOVERNMENTS: As opposed to Ruling this gift would be in the area of administration. The smooth running of the church affairs. Possibly an assisting of the different church leaders. We have churches and organizations with gifted people in this area, but the heads of the groups are too insecure to allow them to minister and have a great effect upon the body.

EVANGELISTS: The gift that enables its bearer to share forth the Gospel to the unsaved in a way that is both powerful and effective unto the leading of souls to the Lord. Some churches are seeing an advantage in having an evangelist on staff. This is a man that is equipped, not only to evangelize, but to train others to do the same. He is usually head of outreach for the church and is given a certain amount of time in the pulpit to exercise his gift among the assembly.

It is not necessarily the man that is called in for evangelistic services. The order of evangelism in the New Testament is for the church to train workers that go out evangelizing and then bringing the new converts into the church for training. (I think that you have read that before!) If the church was functioning properly, there would be no need for an outside evangelist to come in for meetings.

PASTOR-TEACHER: (Again, I would suggest you read appendix eight for more on this topic.) The shepherd of the flock that can both shepherd and feed the flock with the food from the Word of God. This man may well have the gift of administration in a small church, yet not in the large church where they have a very good business manager. When you are organizing the church as it develops, be sure to see what qualified and gifted people you have. This may well help you know what ministries the Lord has in mind for your people. If you are in a city and find that you have three evangelists and four or five pastor-teachers, you might conclude that a few satellite churches would be in order.

Let's look at a few views of the gifts by other groups.

OLD TIME PENTECOSTAL VIEW: 1. They believe in the New Birth. 2. They view Spirit Baptism as Post Salvation. 3. They lay emphasis on all the miraculous gifts especially tongues and healing. 4. Tongues are the evidence of the Spirit Baptism.

CURRENT PENTECOSTAL VIEW: 1. Hold to Spirit Baptism. (May be pre or post salvation.) 2. The book of Acts is a pattern for today. 3. You are spiritually lacking without tongues. 4. Healing is also seen as very "today."

PROTESTANT - Non Pentecostal view: 1. Miraculous gifts. 2. Spirit Baptism is at salvation. 3. All gifts are active today. 4. Each believer has one or more. 5. They rely on experience. One of the leading seminaries fired three men for holding to this position. At the time of hiring they knew the men leaned this way, but when they shifted and started propagating their beliefs the seminary let them go.

PROTESTANT - Non Pentecostal - Non Sign gift view: (Body life movement people.) 1. The lack of gifts has hindered the church. 2. They emphasize interpersonal relations and normally are light on the theology. 3. Many differences on the types of gifts. 4. Many differences on definitions of gifts. 5. Many differences as to which gifts are for today.

PROTESTANT - average fundamental view: 1. The sign gifts were for the establishment of the Gospel message in the time of the apostles. 2. The ministry gifts are for today for the edification of the local church. 3. There are differences as to which are active today but usually this difference is prophecy. 4. The gifts are for the believers use within the church, but it is not a "hurry up and find it" attitude. The gifts will surface as a person is active within the church. 5. Misuse or none use of a gift would be considered sin. (That is assuming that you know what your gift is.)

For a number of years the emphasis was upon the gifts. You must find yours! What is yours? etc. It was not unlike the worlds quest for knowing their astrological signs. Many would ask what your gift was before getting to know you.

The better emphasis is very definitely upon the giver of the Gifts, Jesus Christ. Christ's provision of the gifts through the Holy Spirit was for the building up of the church.

To dwell on gifts is to be a poor steward of your time. To uplift your gifts is to be a poor steward of your humility. May we all seek to minister in the church to the best of our ability? Indeed, that is what the Lord would have us do. We should function as we are gifted to the best of our ability.

A WORD OF WARNING CONCERNING GIFTS

There are some in the church that will not allow others to minister in the area of their gifting. I really have to wonder if those people won't be held accountable for limiting the gifted peoples function in a particular instance.

As you go out into the ministry, seek to help people find their gifts and then use them in the assembly.

Realize that unless all are functioning properly, then the church is not functioning properly. If you have bench warmers, then the church is not functioning properly. If you have absentees, then the church is not functioning properly. Apply that one when you want to go to the mountains. If you are not involved in a local church then some local church is not functioning properly, unless you are in an itinerant type ministry.

A pet view of mine follows and I am not sure that I could prove it from scripture, but I believe that the indications of scripture run along this line.

Every church or organization has just as many gifted people as they need to do the work that God intends to have done. This may mean that if something is not being done, then someone is not functioning. Either from inability to or lack of desire to. This means that if a new aspect of ministry comes along and there is no one present that can do it, then you should begin praying for the person needed and look to the Lord for His provision. This means wait till the provision is made before launching out into that ministry. It means that if your only gifted teacher is transferred to South Africa there may be one present

and just not knowledgeable of his gift. You should check around and train him when you find him.

SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS:

I trust that you will pay attention to the next section of information. I believe that if it isn't helpful now, that it may well be useful to you at some time in the future.

We have been talking about spiritual gifts and the fact that you have one or more. God has called many people into ministries of many different character.

Some in the ministry begin to question whether they should really be there or not. Usually this question is raised because they are in ministries that are not going well or not going at all.

The following thoughts are based on observation, plus a bit of scriptural indication.

Some Biblical indicators:

Paul always went to the Jews each time he entered a new area. They rejected his message. TAKE NOTE OF SOME THINGS: The rejection was of Christ and not of Paul. The rejection did not mean that Paul was a failure. The rejection did not indicate that the Lord did not lead Paul to that place to minister to the Jews.

Some of the Prophets of the Old Testament were sent to a non-listening people. God told the prophet up front that the people would not hear. TAKE NOTE OF SOME THINGS: The not listening was not because the prophet did not communicate well. (It was because their ears were plugged with sin.) The judgment that followed was not the prophets fault. The judgment was due to the sin and the not turning back to God, not any lack on the part of the prophet.

Now some application and some observation:

1. God may lead you to minister in an area where there will be no visible lasting result. This is not your affair to worry about. It is God's desired result for His desired ministry for you.

2. God at times gives a people or an area every conceivable opportunity to come to Him, and then when they have turned their backs, He will give them another opportunity.

I have seen men go into an area that has had abundant opportunity for a church and the men will work their hearts out and not see any real results. THAT IS GOD'S BUSINESS AND HIS DESIRE, OR THEY WOULD NOT BE THERE! The key to this type of situation is to be open to the Lord's leading as to when to leave. Be open to the Lord to be sure that your life is straight before Him. Be open to the Lord to be sure that you are doing all that you can. THEN, if there is no result it is due to God's plan! He will care for it.

I really believe that He gives every opportunity to some, just so they will have no valid comment at the judgment seat, be it the bema or the Great White Throne, they did not know what to do.

3. Your only responsibility is to be right before God and do the work that He leads you to do.

4. There may be times when you will minister in an area for years with no real success. It is God's success that we should be interested in!

There are many accounts of missionaries that have labored a life time to see very little results. The next generation of missionaries, however usually reap the benefit of those works and see great things done for God.

God will give the increase in His day and His time! Just because you do not become a rousing success in one place of ministry, do not assume that you have no gift and that you are a failure. You may indeed have the specific gift needed in that case and be a rousing success in God's mind and plan.

If I were to measure my success in light of man's standards I would become very discouraged! I try to keep my eyes on the Lord and His leading and trust that He is seeing all that I do as a success.

Be realistic, and understand that this is not an easy thing to do. There will be times when you have doubts concerning your abilities. There will be times when you become disgusted because you can't do something that you feel is needed, because the Christians are to dead to get involved. There will be Monday mornings! There will be times when you become discouraged. There will be times when you type up your resignation.

THE POINT OF ALL I'VE SAID IS THAT YOU NEED TO, AT THOSE TIMES, GO BEFORE THE LORD AND ASK FOR MORE OF HIS STRENGTH!

1. Be thankful. 2. Don't be prideful. 3. Don't look down your nose at those that we have spoken of in the preceding section. 4. Be an encouragement to your brothers and sisters in ministry that are having ruff times.

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VIII. THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

I personally have only been in a church involved in church discipline one time and that fairly recently. Church discipline is a topic that many let slip for many years. It is coming back into the foreground again for which we should be very thankful.

It is the means of keeping the local assembly pure, and it is a needed tool at times.

It is not hard to recall a minister that has fallen from his position due to immorality or theft. It is not hard to remember several members of local congregations that have gone off into open sin. The hard thing to recall or remember may be that any of these people were ever disciplined for their activity.

In the past there have been many that have taken church discipline very seriously. We have a series of Questions and Answers from history that were set forth by Menno Simons in 1550 concerning how the disciplined person should be treated. The "ban" in these questions refers to the fact that the sinner is banned from the local congregation.

I would like to share some of these questions for you. So you can see how seriously some believers in the past were about discipline.

"Should husband and wife shun each other on account of the ban?"

"Should we greet one that is banned, with the common, everyday greeting, or return our respects as his greeting?"

"Are we allowed to show the banned any charity, love, and mercy?"

"Are we allowed to sell to, and buy of, the apostates....?"

"Are we allowed to be seated with an apostate in a ship or wagon, or to eat with him at the table of a tavern?"

We might assume from the questions on the ban, that these people were serious about what the word says about church discipline.

I read an article some time ago that mentions a study in the south. The author had done some research on church discipline in a specific area (Mississippi). The church members did not know of any serious church discipline, except for one person that remembered a discipline of a singing star in Hollywood. The point? Church discipline is not a common thing.

Someone has, tongue in cheek suggested, that church discipline today is the pastor and elders keeping quiet about the sin in deacon Jones life so that he won't rock the financial boat.

To say the least, discipline is not a prime topic of activity or discussion these days in the local church, yet the Bible very clearly teaches that open sin should be dealt with by the church body.

DEFINITION

Let us define church discipline as the correction of action, or the removal of the erring believer from the local church body, for the purpose of correction and/or restoration. This is normally undertaken for immorality or deviation from approved doctrine.

At the outset we must realize that discipline is NOT to make the church sinless. It is to maintain a proper testimony before the world. Anyone thinking that discipline can make the church sinless does not understand the teaching of man and his relationship to sin.

Matt 5:23-24 is a text that would indicate we should be right with any brother that has anything against us before we offer to God. This is under the law but in the New Testament context I would assume we could apply this to coming before God with our gifts or offerings. In short if we have anything against a brother, we should settle it before we move into a place where we are approaching the Lord.

This alone would eliminate many of the problems of the church. We need to work on these items as we attempt to build a body for the Lord.

Matt. 18:15-17 is the text which gives us the guidelines for correcting a brother. If you have a problem go to the brother alone and confront him. If this does not work take one or two with you so all can be established in front of witnesses. If this fails then tell it before the church. If this also fails then "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a tax collector".

Some might wonder if this text is appropriate for the church age. The fact that it appears after Matthew 13 where the Jews seem to reject the Messiah, and He begins to teach of things other than the millennial kingdom indicates that it is for this age. Even if you saw it for the kingdom age the principles seem to be good, and I think some of these ideas are born out in the epistles.

Most definitely the most drastic account of church discipline is found in Acts 5. Ananias and Saphira have lied to the church and more specifically to God, and their discipline is very quick and strong. Their lives are taken upon confrontation with their sin. This is a text which relates to the apostolic leadership however the idea that the sin was confronted and cared for immediately should be usable to us today. Note should be made that it was God that took their lives and not the church. The church confronts and in our age takes action of reprimand and/or removal. This is the extent of the churches authority. God may and I personally believe in some cases does, take further action in the lives of unrepentant believers. I believe that John 15:1-14 and I Corinthians 11:30 show that God may remove a sinning believer that is unwilling to turn from their sin from this life.

In Rom. 14:1-15:1 Paul sets down some principles for handling differences of opinion. This chapter shows clearly that differences of opinion are not in view for church discipline. These items are of personal decision and Paul lays down principles to deal with these situations.

The basis for removal of an erring believer from the assembly is based on I Cor. 5:4-11. I would like to consider this for a moment. First of all is this a believer or nonbeliever? It seems to most that this is a believer for we see in verse 5 that Paul is concerned for his soul. If this was a nonbeliever their soul would be on the way to destruction and there would be no need to turn it over to Satan.

Some suggest that verse 11 mentions him as being a so called brother or lost ("...any man that is called a brother...."). However, the context seems to shift in verse 9 from the man in sin to another topic.

This man was involved with his fathers wife. Paul is quite plain there is a problem and that it should be dealt with. Verse 7 uses the terminology that indicates the removal of the person from the church assembly. "Purge out." The term purge would indicate there is to be a cleansing action in the whole process. If you have removed a man that is in open sin, you certainly are cleaning up the church.

In verse 5 they are to deliver him to the Devil for the destruction of his flesh. The purpose of discipline is seen in 7 and 8. Sin is like leaven and you must get it out of the lump before it leavens the whole lump. (Leaven is the same as yeast.) Leaven is usually seen as a type of sin in the Bible.

I have wondered if Paul's choice of words wasn't deliberate. "Puffed up," would picture a lump with leaven throughout - fully raised. His comments then in 7 & 8 would call on them to clean out that pride - which is sin - they can be a new lump. Indeed Vs 6 indicates this.

It seems somewhat hard to envision a church that is proud of the sin that is within. The idea may be they were proud of how tolerant they were of the sinners. Tolerance is not something that is to be desired in the church, be it tolerance of sin, tolerance of false doctrine, or tolerance of improper activities.

We attended a Sunday School class in the South while on vacation and the teacher was involved in this idea of being pleased about how tolerant the people in her church were of one another. She mentioned they even had fundamentalists and liberals in the church and they all got along fine. That is not getting along, that is being tolerant of false doctrine in your church assembly!

We need to look briefly at II Cor. 2:6-11 before we move on. Most agree that this is speaking of the man in I Cor. 5 that was to be put out of the church. Paul tells them to commend their love to him and to forgive him and comfort him. Restore your fellowship with him would be the idea of the text.

Another text which relates to the topic is Gal. 6:1,2. If anyone be taken in a fault restore him in meekness. The warning also is given to consider yourself so that you aren't tempted in the same manner.

The question is, "Does this relate to church discipline?" Specifically I would doubt it. It seems more of a generic type sin rather than immorality etc. The principles set forth may well apply however. Restore in meekness - and seeing to it that you don't become tempted. Along with this we must not forget that Christ was very forceful when he ran the money changers out of the temple (John 2:12-17), and most consider him meek.

There seems to be evidence that unruliness or disobedience is also a basis for taking steps of discipline. I Thes 5:14 "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient toward all men." II Thes. 3:6,14,15, mentions that we should withdraw from those that are disorderly and those that walk not after "the tradition which he received of us." Verse 14 tells us to "have no company" with anyone that disobeys the words of the epistle.

The elders or church leaders are not exempt from the possibility of discipline. I Tim. 5:19,20, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Trouble with elders should be heard only if two or three witnesses are available. Then confront him before the assembly.

In our "don't scare people" atmosphere today we don't dwell on the aspect of hell because we don't want to scare anyone into heaven. This text tells us that disciplined people will cause fear in the assembly. Fear is not the best motivation to obedience however, the Word states that it is a possible motivation.

Titus 3:10-11 sets a basis for discipline for divisiveness. "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject, Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." This verse tells us to reject after the second admonition the heretic. The term heretic seems to have the idea of one that is divisive.

Another text which we need to look at is II Jo 7-11. First of all we need to see that verse 7 shows these to be lost people! This seems quite clear that we are to have no part with "RELIGIOUS" people that have a wrong view of Christ. This would be in the realm of having them in our homes for hospitality and encouragement. I'm not sure it prohibits having them in to witness to them yet I'm not sure that is a good idea either. You might run into difficulties. We can certainly witness to them - that is not a thought in the text!

From what we have seen there is plenty of evidence to show that we should and must discipline believers that are in sin. If we do not then we are allowing the leaven that Christ spoke of to contaminate the entire assembly. If we do not discipline, then we invite trouble and strife into our churches.

Discipline is not popular in our churches today. I have talked with pastors that have taken a needed stand and found themselves questioned for their activities.

The next question. What offences do we discipline for? I would submit a list of topics and references for your consideration.

- a. Immorality. I Cor. 5**
- b. Unresolved disputes between brethren. Matt. 18:15-17**
- c. Elders that sin. I Tim 5:19,20**
- d. Repeated troublemaking. Titus 3:10**
- e. Outward sin, such as divorce or immorality.**

A related question. Are there others that we should separate from?

- a. Those teaching false doctrine. II John 7-11.**
- b. Professing people involved in fornication, covetousness, idolatry, railing, drinking or cheating. I Cor. 6:11**

We have shown that discipline is Biblical and that it is being ignored in our day. So, why do churches today fail to discipline? May some possibilities be set forth for your consideration and future avoidance.

- a. Afraid to rock the boat. Financial problems will come if we make trouble. We might hurt someone's feelings. How would it look to the community?**

b. Indifference. We don't care.

c. There is always the usual outcry that "We can't judge." This argument is illogical. God states that we are to discipline. Thus we must assume that discipline is not "judging," or else God is telling us to do something that He has told us not to do. Now, just how logical is that?

All of these allow the leaven to leaven the whole lump.

Now that we see discipline to be correct we need to consider who it is that should do the disciplining? Yes, the individual should confront, yes there should be witnesses on the second trip. These witnesses should be the elders so they are involved from the beginning. Several references indicate that the elders are the ones to become involved. Acts 20:28 show the elders over the church. I Thess. 5:12 mentions some are over the church for the purpose of admonishment. Heb. 13:7,17 mentions those that rule over the church and that the church is to submit them.

If you have been reading newspapers or listening to the network news over recent years you know that churches have been sued for disciplining a member. There is a lot of worry about lawsuits.

First of all we need to remember that the law of man is not the law of God. God tells us to discipline. If the law of the land punishes us for doing so, then so be it. We must do that which God has said.

The lawsuits that I have heard about seem to have been caused by improper application of the discipline. One lawsuit in particular was brought because the church broadcast the sin of the person far and wide. There is nothing in the Bible to suggest that we should take out a personal want ad to advertise a persons sin. We should be as discrete about discipline as possible without causing hurt.

We need to consider a few easy steps of prevention that might save your church from a lawsuit.

I might suggest an article from Christianity Today, "Church Discipline Without a Lawsuit" by Carl Laney, Nov. 9, 1984 which

deals with this problem. I have adapted some of Mr. Laney's points into the following list for you in case the magazine is not available to you.

1. Get insurance for the problem. Some church insurance companies have it available. We have insurance to avoid lawsuits for accidents etc. so there should be no real moral question in taking this step. Yes, it is sad that our Christian society has degenerated to the place where we have to insure ourselves against such activities, but this is the society that God has asked us to operate in.

2. Don't slander while the discipline is going on nor after. There is no need to cause pain and suffering. Present the facts to the church family, act and keep your mouth shut.

3. Don't spread the information outside the church family. This is a family problem and there is no need to take it outside the family, no matter how badly you want to talk about it.

4. Include in your constitution a clause that allows for church discipline. Have each member sign the constitution as they join the church. This may or may not take care of the possible situations.

5. Possibly a visit to your lawyer in your state would be of good advantage.

Include just what you believe church discipline is, why it is to be used, and the procedure which is to be followed. Indeed if there is no clause in your constitution, put one in and ask all to sign it, be they new members or old.

Dr. Laney suggests the inclusion of a paragraph which forbids the member to sue the church leadership or the church if they bring church discipline action against the member.

I would work into this statement, something that covers you and the church in case they withdraw membership during the procedure. This would give them a moral obligation not to sue. You could also include information on the fact that Scripturally the believer is not to go to law with a brother etc.

5. If someone tells you something in confidence then you are bound to keep that confidence. If there is a real problem it will probably come to the surface in time.

I might take a side track for a moment and state there is a real lack of keeping confidences in the church today. Many of the illustrations I hear come right out of counseling sessions. That is not confidence!

6. In all of the activities attempt not to embarrass those that are involved. This can only hurt and bring about hard feelings. The desired result of discipline is restoration and hard feelings will not aid in this process.

7. During the process be sure to reveal only the information that is necessary for a proper procedure. Disclosing all of the little details is not necessary.

If at all possible, keep all discipline activities within the local assembly. If the person tries to transfer membership to another church, you should be bound to let the new church know they are under discipline. The details may not need to be given unless it affects the new church's decision.

If it is a pastor that is disciplined then there should be contact with the men of his ordination council, so that proper steps can be taken if any are needed.

Now, the following is my OPINION! DOCTRINE OF DERICKSON.

If you have someone come to your church for membership from a church close by, take time to find out why they left the other church. It may save you a multitude of trouble. Usually when people leave it is because of problems. You don't need those problems. If this is the case it would be good to talk to them and ask them to return to their previous church to solve their problem, and then they can be considered for membership.

8. If a lawsuit comes into your future, find a good lawyer so that you know you are doing things correctly and seek an out of court settlement. This will allow you to not go to court with your brother. If this is not possible, then you are bound by the law of the land to

answer the charges and you must do the best you can to bring about a peaceful end to the matter.

9. Be very careful to inform the congregation. A church in Oregon discovered a teacher and woman were involved. They were guilty and would not cease their activity. The elders wanted to keep it quiet because both parties were very prominent members. The couple left the church voluntarily, but the elders did not inform the congregation. Rumors began flying and the elders still kept quiet. Before the situation was over others left because they mistakenly thought that the elders had kicked the erring couple out of the church with no reason.

Let's draw some conclusions to our study.

1. Church discipline is not a four letter word. It is taught in Scripture and we should be practicing it!

2. We need to know our own attitudes. Discipline is to be done in love and concern for the other person. Forgiveness is the required when confession and repentance are forthcoming. (I Cor. 5:2; Gal. 6:1; II Cor. 2:7)

3. There should be a restraining influence from discipline upon the rest of the membership. I Tim. 5:20

4. For the church that is contemplating not bringing discipline I would recommend they read Rev. 2:12-17

5. I Pet. 1:15 calls us to holiness. II Tim. 3:2 mentions that the elder is to be "above reproach". I Thess. 5:22 calls us to avoid any appearance of evil. Let these be your guide.

In light of such verses, we as local churches must maintain the purist assembly that we can. This comes from personal purity. This comes from prodding our friends to purity. This comes from purging impurity, if need be.

Years ago we attended a church in Denver, CO that had a missions conference. Two missionaries from Africa came to the conference and were talking about how great the church was doing in Africa. It was growing, it was evangelizing, it was an alive church.

I asked the two missionaries why the church in Africa was such an alive, growing church. The younger missionary quipped out some quick answers that I accepted. (I wasn't convinced that he had answered my question.) The next day the older missionary came to me and said, "Stan, I think I can answer your question from last night with one word. "Purity." He went on to explain that the church was pure on a personal basis and they were pure on an ecclesiastical basis as well. That was an answer that made much sense.

6. In the end result, I believe our emphasis should be squarely upon the Word of God. If lawsuits come they come. If bankruptcy comes it comes. God's Word must stand and we for it!

Mr. Laney ended his article with I Tim. 3 12, "Indeed, all who desire to live Godly in christ Jesus will be persecuted.."

I suspect that the following is the best policy. PROBABLY THE BEST CURE FOR CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS CHURCH DISCIPLIN'. If we teach them right there will be less chance for error.

Some other references which might add to your personal study: Ex. 12:15-19; Ex. 13:7; Lev. 2:11; Deut. 16:4; Matt. 16:6,12; Mk. 8:15; Lu. 12:1; Gal. 5:9; I Cor. 6:11.

CONCLUSION

This is the second of the sections of my theology that I have gone through, to convert my class notes into book form. It has been a very joyful experience to review the greatness of the church, the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, yet I am discouraged to a point in what I see in so many local assemblies.

There is so little genuine caring for the lost, for the newcomers, or for the membership at times. There is so little genuine teaching being done. The preaching is not all that great at times either. I have discussed this with many church people and pastors and they feel that my observations are valid.

So, why is this the case when we have the Holy Spirit empowering us, teaching us, leading us and comforting us? So, why is this the case when we have Christ Himself in charge of the work?

I am confident there is no problem with the Lord Jesus, and I am just as confident that the Holy Spirit is doing His work properly and adequately. We must assume from logic then that it is not the Head nor the plan, nor the power source. That leaves only one answer.

US!

We the people are the problem and there is nothing that can be done until we do it. Don't worry about your neighbor and how sinful he is, don't worry about your pastor and how uninteresting he is, and don't worry about the church membership and how worldly they are. You worry about you and your relationship to the Head of the church. You should be sure you are in a proper mode, and then pray that the Lord would bring about needed changes in the assembly.

There is one subject which is somewhat related to this thought of the church. I have not made comment on it as such but feel that it is important to do so.

If the church is Christ's body and if it is His desired vehicle for reaching the world, and I believe it to be, then why do we have para church organizations all over the world?

I am not condemning the para church groups for they are doing a job that the church is not doing, however that is not the point. They are not the church.

The church in our generation should begin to correct the problem that has developed over the years. Most of the groups give lip service to the thought of allowing the local churches to have a say in things. Most will say they are an extension of the local church however, the control that the church has seems to end at the purse strings.

There is no reason why the church shouldn't, indeed must, take steps to do the ministries of these groups. The groups ought also to take steps toward allowing church control. There are some that are already working on this by adding pastors and laymen to boards, by having yearly get togethers of supporting churches and mission leaders. These are good steps and should be continued, but more must be done.

Possibly one of the easiest ways for the corrections to begin is to see to it that new ministries become the extension of a local church or two, and see to it that the ministry remains under that control. This would place ministries under the control of spiritual men within the church that can lead and guide the ministry.

Moving on I would like to mention that the section concerning other types of church government was brief and intentionally so. There are other works that elaborate in detail these systems.

As I have moved in and out of churches over the years I have observed many problems. I have also discussed problems with pastors and laymen. The result is that I realize that the elder form of government can, if run properly, create a church environment which would eliminate many of these problems. There are many difficulties when we work with people however, the creator of these people has set forth a system for governing those people in the Word. If He has given these guidelines then it is logical they will be the best possible method of operation.

Even if a died in the wool congregationalist must reject the thought of accepting this form of government, at least give credence to the process of qualification. There must be a qualified leadership or the job is doomed to failure.

The principles set forth in this section can and do work. I have knowledge of a few churches that are operating with this form of government. As we see more and more churches becoming involved, I am personally confident that we will see some great results in the area of church relationships, as well as church growth. As we believers function Biblically, church growth will be automatic.

One final topic. The thought of a "paid" pastor is one that is currently accepted, yet it is not historically nor Biblically. The Bible allows for it and I am not saying get rid of paid pastors, however we need to consider the possibility of non-paid people running a church. Many of our small churches today are pastored by non-paid or poorly paid pastors. As observations go, I feel that often these men are considered less than normal. They, after all are not "full time" in their ministry.

There seems to be a real hierarchy developing in our church thinking. There are full time, there are part time, there are the laymen, there are janitors and then there are missionaries. My teaching has always included the thought that we are co-workers with Christ. If we are co-workers then there is no level of importance.

May we consider our developing problems in the church, get in touch with the Head and move on to solve the problems.

I did not go into the idea of fellowship, of what the church should be in the social realm, nor many of the other thoughts that relate to the church. I did include a section in appendix nine relating to how we view ourselves. Are we a society as believers, or are we really the "body" that the Lord wants us to be. Be sure to read this appendix.

06450

APPENDIX NUMBER ONE

A CONSTITUTION FOR A MULTIPLE ELDER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

This document comes from a compilation of many hours of study and reading on the subject. There was input from many sources including two college level theology classes which went through this study of the church with me. One of the projects in those classes was to create a church constitution based on the Biblical principles which we had studied. (This document is a rework of one of those constitutions.)

I thank all those that gave information and thought to this document, which by the way is not inspired! It could serve as a bare bones start for a constitution for a church that desires to have this form of government. There might be things that a particular congregation would like to add. The basics are based on the Word of God and we trust that the suggestions will be of assistance to churches in the future.

**CONSTITUTION
OF
FIRST
CHURCH
OF
ANYTOWN**

I. PREAMBLE

We the people of _____ church believe that the Scriptures show both a universal and a local church. The Universal church is that body made up of all believers that are redeemed by the

blood of the Lamb. The local church is an assembly that is gathered and organized for the purpose of edification and evangelism.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this local church is to edify the believers who in turn will go out evangelizing. (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11-16)

Jesus Christ is the head of both the universal and the local church. The individual believer will seek to know Christ's will for himself as well as for this local gathering of saints.

III. MEMBERSHIP

Anyone desiring to enter into fellowship with this church must:

- 1. Have accepted Christ as his/her personal savior and have a desire to achieve the purposes set forth in the preamble.**
- 2. Have prayerfully read and considered the church constitution and believe it to be based on God's Word. The person should desire to commit themselves to abide by that which is set forth in the church constitution.**
- 3. Have agreed that if at any time he/she should determine to disagree with the constitution, he/she will without trouble withdraw from the fellowship, giving the pastor and board permission to erase his/her name from the membership.**
- 4. Agree to accept the discipline of the church in accordance with this constitution or separate themselves from the membership according to number three above.**

Process of becoming a member:

The person desiring to unite with this church will request to be considered by the elder board. The elder board will hear their testimony of salvation and recommend the candidate to the general assembly for vote. The person will give their testimony publicly before the church votes.

III. COVENANT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

We as a local body, having been redeemed by God (Rev 5:9), being the body, of which Christ is the head (Col 1:18), and being indwelt by the Spirit (Rom. 8:9), believe God has saved us by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8), do hereby establish this covenant.

Those that join this fellowship know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and they shall share in its privileges and also the duties required (John 1:12,13; 8:12; 10:27).

As a fellowship we pledge ourselves to walk in Christian love, remember each other in prayer, aid each other in Christian living (I John 4:7,8), and to help those who are sick and in need (James 5:14). There should be no gossip, backbiting, and anger, being slow to take offence and quick to reconcile, keeping unity and peace (Eph. 4:31,32).

We covenant together with the desire to promote the true church's spiritual and physical well being: by regular attendance, supporting its worship, services, ordinances, discipline and doctrines (I Cor. 15:58), and assisting in whatever way possible in supporting the operation of the church (I Cor. 16:1,2). Finally our desire is to spread the gospel here at home and abroad (Acts 1:8).

We as members of this body should educate our children in the Christian faith (Deut. 6:5,7; Titus 1:6). We also should refrain from fleshly lusts, and practices and associations, that would dishonor Christ and/or the church (I John 2:15-17).

We also agree to cooperate with those in leadership, to submit to and oversee discipline in a loving way, (as officers and members of this church Heb. 13:17), and accept responsibility and positions such as God has qualified and called each to do through the Holy spirit (Rom. 12:1-8).

By the guidance of the Holy Spirit I accept this covenant. I also promise if I find myself at anytime in the future in disagreement with doctrines and standards of the church I will withdraw my name from the membership and not cause any friction among the members (Rom. 12:18).

I further submit myself to the Scriptural authority of the church leadership and will abide by the churches disciplinary policies if there be cause for discipline due to sin in my life.

V. MISSIONS

In keeping with the purpose of evangelization, there will be a missions committee maintained at all times for the purpose of stimulating the membership to give, pray and go in relation to Christ's commission to evangelize and disciple all nations. (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)

This committee will be responsible to schedule missionaries to share their burden and call of God with the membership of the church.

This committee will oversee the missions giving of the church body through the church treasurer. Funds designated by the church for missions will be distributed in accordance with the policies set forth by the church leadership.

VI. GOVERNMENT

POLICY

- 1. The church will not be ritualistic in practice.**
- 2. It will not be subject to any authority or power save it's Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and it's own leadership.**

SUPPORT

All church expenses including pastor's salary, Sunday School expenses, various organized bodies, are to be raised by voluntary, free will offerings. (The pastor's salary will be set according to the needs and funds available.)

BUSINESS AFFAIRS

- 1. The annual business meeting of the church shall be held _____, and the new church year shall begin _____.**

All officers of the church and heads of departments shall give reports of their transactions at this annual business meeting.

- 2. Special business meetings may be called at any time with a two week notice given publicly at each normal service of the church.**
- 3. Beyond the routine weekly affairs, no meeting shall be carried on without the pastor, except to determine his continuance as pastor.**
- 4. A quorum of more than two thirds of the members of adult age (21 and older) is required to hold a business meeting of this congregation.**

VII. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

PASTOR

CALLING A TEACHING ELDER (OR PASTOR)

This is not to assume that a paid teaching elder is required by this constitution. If there is a qualified elder present in the congregation that desires to fulfill this function and it is agreeable by a 3/4 vote of the elder board, then this should be accepted. He may be paid if the congregation so desires.

- 1. A pulpit committee shall be formed of two elders and two deacons. (If no elders are available then deacons shall fill these spots. If there aren't enough deacons, members will be elected from the congregation) and two members from the congregation.**
- 2. The pulpit committee shall secure names of prospects. Prospects shall be supplied with a copy of the church constitution and any other information the committee deems appropriate.**
- 3. An application form shall be sent to all interested prospects. The application shall include questions concerning the applicants qualifications and a request for references.**

4. The qualifications for the pastor shall be those listed in I Timothy three and Titus one that pertain to elders.

5. Qualified prospects shall visit the church at least one Sunday and one Wednesday in a row during which he will fill the pulpit. Time shall also be scheduled for the combined boards to interview the prospective candidate. There will be a concerted effort to encourage the church membership to have the candidate and his family into their homes for meals and/or fellowship so they can get to know the family on a first hand basis.

6. The candidate will then in two weeks be presented to the congregation for a vote. The elder and deacon board chairpersons will give a report on their boards feelings concerning the candidate.

The candidate shall be called if there is a 3/4 majority of those voting members present.

It is recommended that the candidate be informed of the numerical outcome of the vote of the congregation.

7. The candidate will be informed from the beginning that he will be expected to go through and complete the qualification process as set forth in this constitution.

TERM OF THE TEACHING ELDER

1. The pastor shall serve as long as mutually agreeable to him and the church.

2. The pastor may be removed from office by unanimous vote of the other elders and by a 2/3 vote of the congregation. (Good reason for removal should be the basis of the elder board moving to dismiss. Good reason would include personal ongoing sin, and immorality as well as other problems deemed proper.)

DUTIES

1. The pastor shall serve as a voting member of the elder board, supply spiritual leadership to the board and the congregation as a whole.

2. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations and committees.

3. The pastor shall fill the pulpit of the church at regular meetings, or supply such from time to time as needed or appropriate.

ADDITIONAL STAFF

1. Assistant pastor(s), Youth pastor(s), Associate pastor(s), etc. may be added according to the need of the church.

2. These would be called in the same way as the teaching elder and have the same office term as the pastor, unless otherwise specified by the elder board and congregation. They will be ex-officio members (without voting privileges) of the elder board and their duties would be specified by that same board.

3. The pastor should be very much involved in this choosing of staff, so that the church is assured that the two men can minister effectively together.

ELDERS & DEACONS

CHOOSING OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

1. All candidates for the elder or deacon board shall apply to the elder board in writing. Applications shall assume that the candidates feels qualified according to I Timothy three and Titus one and shall state why they are applying and why they feel they desire the position.

2. The elder board shall publish the name of the candidate to the congregation and investigate his qualifications. They shall especially seek advice from the deacon board and/or other members of the church. It is recommended that the elder board speak with the candidates neighbors and secular coworkers concerning the man's character. The family of the candidate should be considered as another source of information as to the qualifications of the man.

3. The prospective member will meet with an elder board specified representative for a period of three months during which the two men

will evaluate the scriptural qualifications and the prospects own feeling of his living up to those qualifications. During this time the congregation would be encouraged to share any information pro or con to the chairman of the elder board to be used in evaluating the prospect.

4. At the end of this three month period the prospect will be presented to the full elder and deacon boards for questions and answers.

5. Upon approval the prospect will be presented to the congregation for confirmation. If the prospect fails to gain the approval of the boards or the congregation, then he will be referred upon mutual agreement to another six months of encouragement along the lines in which he was found deficient. At the end of this six month period another appearance before the board would be in order. Failure to complete the qualification process is not indication of something negative, but on the other hand a recognition there are things that the person needs to work on in their spiritual life, a condition that is true in most church members.

6. The prospect shall be approved by a unanimous vote of the elders and a 2/3 confirmation of the congregation.

7. There shall be no limit as to the number of elders in the church, however a minimum of three elders will be required. Elders should be added as there is a need in the overall organizational structure of the church. If the board becomes too large, and its own members unanimously agree, a system may be set in place whereby the elders would serve on a rotating basis with active and inactive elders. Inactive elders may attend and have input at meetings but only active elders would have voting privileges.

If three qualified elders are not available, then the church should modify its government slightly and use the elders that exist as a guiding board with the congregation the final authority in most decisions.

TERM

1. The elders and deacons shall serve as long as mutually agreeable to the officer and the church. Lifetime seems to be the acceptable unless there are reasons for considering less.

2. An elder or deacon may be removed from office by unanimous vote of the elders and by a 2/3 vote of the congregation. (This action should only be taken in light of sin in the elders life and his unwillingness to repent of that sin. In the case of immorality and divorce there would be an automatic removal.)

DUTIES OF THE ELDERS

1. The elders shall be responsible to oversee the churches spiritual growth and vitality. They are to see to the proper teaching and direction of the church.

2. The elders shall elect from among themselves a head elder, or chairman and a secretary to record minutes of meetings.

3. The elders shall meet jointly with the Deacon board once a month for the exchange of information and to inform the deacon board of any recommendations for their action.

4. The pastor shall chair the joint meeting or delegate the responsibility to another elder.

5. If the church doesn't have enough qualified men for elders the remaining elders and deacon board with the leadership of the pastor shall perform as many of the duties as they are gifted and able to perform.

6. Any action taken by the deacon board that is deemed detrimental to the church can be overruled by a unanimous vote of the elder board.

Upon such veto the deacons may, if they desire, submit the proposal to the congregation for a congregational vote. The meeting will be called by the elder board and both the elder and deacon boards will be given time to submit their feelings on the proposal.

A 2/3 vote of the congregation will pass the proposal.

DUTIES OF THE DEACONS

- 1. The duties of the deacons are to be servants of the church and to meet the physical needs of the church body.**
- 2. Special attention should be paid by the deacon board to the needs of the poor and widows of the church.**
- 3. The deacon board shall be responsible for the church property and funds. The funds will be expended according to the needs of the church with the elder board approving of any major expenditures over \$50 item.**
- 4. The deacons shall elect from among themselves a head deacon, or chairman and a secretary for the keeping of records.**
- 5. The deacons shall meet jointly with, and report to, the elder board once a month.**

VIII. QUALIFICATION PROCESS

All teaching elders, elders and deacons will go through a process whereby the church body and the individual desiring the office will attempt to determine the candidate's qualification for his desired office. Pastoral staff may be added to the church without going through the process, however they will enter into this process at the first opportunity. Failure to qualify does not mean they will be dismissed. The elder board will consider the candidate's position and recommend steps by which the candidate may correct any deficiencies or they will recommend dismissal. The candidate will enter into the process at the next earliest opportunity if they are retained on staff.

- 1. There will be a time of self examination by the candidate during which he will consider the qualifications for his office with the Lord. An existing elder will assist the person in this process with explanation of the qualifications and prayer.**
- 2. References will be sought from the candidate for the purpose of sending out letters to request information about the candidate. Letters will be sent to the person's employer, one coworker, two**

neighbors and his last church in the case of a pastor or newer member.

This letter will request information concerning the person's qualification and character.

These letters will not be the sum of information that a decision will be based on. They will be only a part of the total information used in determining the persons qualification. (These letters should not be sent out until the candidate has completed his personal evaluation before the Lord and the elder board.)

3. The church body will be given a list of candidates for their earnest prayer. The church should desire great wisdom in this process to choose it's leadership.

4. The church body will be given a list of the candidates with space for comments weither positive or negative for the consideration of the elder board. These documents will remain confidential and must be signed in case the elder board desires to investigate any negative responses.

5. The head elder will stress the importance of this process, and the prayer behind it, to the congregation. This can be accomplished through the bulletin or from the pulpit.

6. There will be a minimum of 90 days given for this process with more time to be taken if needed.

7. The elder and deacon board will spend time with the candidates for the purpose of getting to know them and praying with them.

8. There will be a class taught concerning the qualifications, responsibilities and lifestyle of the offices. This will be required of new candidates and will be open to all that might desire to gain this knowledge. This class will be offered yearly if there is interest or candidates. (It could be offered during the Sunday School hour as an elective.)

This process is to allow the church time to consider the candidate and a time for the candidate to look at the church, his future responsibilities and his life before God.

It should be emphasized that if a candidate or the church feels that the candidate is not ready for leadership that the candidate is welcome to enter the process the following year. There should be no feeling of inadequacy or inferiority if a person does not enter an office. We are attempting to find well qualified men that meet the Biblical standard set forth by God for the men that would lead His church.

All Christians are to be striving to attain this same level of Christian living!

IX. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Discipline may be defined as the correction or expulsion by the church of one or more of its members for immorality of life, or heresy of doctrine.

Discipline is of God (Job 36:10; Heb 12:6), to maintain sound doctrine (Titus 1:13), to correct disorder (II Thess. 3:6-15), to rebuke offenders (I Cor. 11:34), and to remove the unrepentant (I Cor. 5:3-5,13).

God disciplines His own directly concerning matters of their family relationship to Him. But he has also ordained mediate discipline by the church concerning those affairs that concern the life and walk of the corporate household of faith.

There are two kinds of offenses of which a church member may be guilty, namely public and private. (Matt 18:15-20; Acts 5:1-11)

Church discipline whether private or public may take one of three forms and should be kept in the local church (I Cor. 6:11).

- 1. Private reproof.**
- 2. Public reproof.**
- 3. Breaking of fellowship.**

(Matt. 18:15-17; II Thes. 3:6,11-15; I Cor. 5:3-5; 11-13; Matt. 5:23-24; II Cor. 2:6-8)

Our attitude toward the believer in sin should be one of love and humility seeking to heal and restore their attitude. The purpose of all discipline must be to restore the person to his Lord and the church body. (Gal. 6:1; II Cor. 2:4).

All effective and true discipline can only be carried out in an attitude of prayer.

X. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

- 1. Any member may propose an amendment to the elders.**
- 2. The elders then will prayerfully consider the amendment.**
- 3. If the amendment proposed is rejected, the elders are to contact the person who wants the addition or subtraction and explain the reason, or reasons for rejection. If the member proposing the amendment feels the elders have acted wrongly, opportunity will be given to the member to present his/her thoughts to the congregation. If the congregation feels by a majority vote that the elders should reconsider the proposal they shall give the matter another sixty days consideration and prayer. If the proposal is deemed inappropriate after this time of consideration and input from the congregation then the matter shall be dropped. If they feel the amendment has merit, then they shall proceed as with any other amendment.**
- 4. If the elders approve the amendment, it must be put to the vote of the active members of the church.**
- 5. Proper written notification to members will be given by posting and announcing thirty days in advance what is to be voted on as well as the time and the place of voting. A meeting may be called before the written notification is given for explanation and information.**
- 6. The amendment will require a 4/5ths majority of the members present to pass.**

7. If approved, copies will be added to all future constitutions and copies will be made available to the membership to amend their own copies.

XI. ORDINATION

Those desiring to be ordained by this church will make their request known to the elder board and they will consider the possibility along with the congregation. If there is interest the elder board will enter the candidate into the elder/deacon qualification process to ascertain the candidates qualifications.

Upon completion of this process the elder board will call a proper meeting of the congregation for the ordination of the candidate to the Gospel ministry.

The church will maintain contact with the person for his entire ministry and give due consideration to any inappropriate activities that might warrant the withdrawal of recognition or ordination.

XII. DISSOLUTION

In the case of this church closing or disbanding the assets will be distributed among foreign missionary agencies to be determined by those members remaining in membership at the time of closing. These agencies will be groups that hold to the major doctrines set forth in this constitution.

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APPENDIX TWO

This appendix contains all of the references that contain the terms elder, elders, deacon, and deacons.

ELDER

Luke 15:25	Romans 9:12	1 Timothy 5:1
1 Timothy 5:19	1 Peter 5:1	1 Peter 5:5
2 John 1:1	3 John 1:1	

ELDERS

Matthew 15:2 21:23	Matthew 16:21	Matthew
Matthew 26:3 26:57	Matthew 26:47	Matthew
Matthew 26:59	Matthew 27:1	Matthew 27:3
Matthew 27:12	Matthew 27:20	Matthew 27:41
Matthew 28:12	Mark 7:3	Mark 7:5
Mark 8:31	Mark 11:27	Mark 14:43
Mark 14:53	Mark 15:1	Luke 7:3
Luke 9:22	Luke 20:1	Luke 22:52
Luke 22:66	Acts 4:5	Acts 4:8
Acts 4:23	Acts 6:12	Acts 11:30
Acts 14:23	Acts 15:2	Acts 15:4
Acts 15:6	Acts 15:22-23	Acts 16:4
Acts 20:17	Acts 21:18	Acts 22:5
Acts 23:14	Acts 24:1	Acts 25:15
1 Timothy 5:17	Titus 1:5	Hebrews 11:2
James 5:14	1 Peter 5:1	Revelation 4:4
Revelation 4:10	Revelation 5:5-6	Revelation 5:8
Revelation 5:11	Revelation 5:14	Revelation 7:11
Revelation 7:13	Revelation 11:16	Revelation 14:3
Revelation 19:4		

DEACON

1 Timothy 3:10

1 Timothy 3:13

DEACONS

Philippians 1:1

1 Timothy 3:8

1 Timothy 3:12

06550

APPENDIX THREE

I'm going to be intellectual for awhile in this appendix. Eisenhower defined an intellectual as, "...a man who takes more words than necessary to tell more than he knows."

What I am including in this section may be just that.

In light of the comments made in this work concerning pastors and their working in secular work I feel that this section may be of help to the reader.

PRINCIPLES FOR VIEWING MATERIAL THINGS,

IN LIGHT OF YOUR PROBABLE LOW PAYING MINISTRIES

- OR -

HOW TO ENJOY HAMBURGER 555 WAYS.

When in college we helped produce a college students cookbook designed for the poor wife that had to figure out how to fix the hamburger tonight. I might add that the wives were very inventive. The college was given a truck load of Scooter Pies (chocolate covered graham cracker and marshmallow). After awhile they were trying to decide how to fix scooter pies in a tasty manner. We ate them for breakfast, lunch and dessert for supper.

These are just some thoughts and illustrations that might help you to understand, how some believers chose to live, and it may challenge your own life now, or in the future.

One of the frustrations of my early Christian life was the lack of help I had been given in knowing how to live the Christian life. I stumbled and faltered my way through until I finally found some answers. The area of finances was a real problem to me at times, for I had some ideas of what God wanted, but I was constantly hearing "experts" in money telling me that I was doing it all wrong. I hope that some of

what I teach will help you avoid some of the frustration and confusion that I had to go through.

You will all come to a place where you need to make some real commitments to the Lord in the area of finance. This study is not to show how spiritual I am nor is it meant to show how other people live their financial lives before the Lord. I know many people who live according to similar principles and don't feel there is anything special about themselves other than possibly in the area of their commitment.

God has chosen to deal with Faith and I as He has, and I have decided to walk as I have, with the full discussion and assistance of my wife. We are in agreement concerning how we live and enjoy it as is.

I want to illustrate these principles so you have some practical guide to go by if you ever need to use them.

I might introduce these thoughts with a reminder of the widow and her two mites. She was one of the last illustrations that Christ gave to the disciples before his death. You should note as you consider her offering, that it was all that she had. She could have saved half for food, but she didn't. Do you suppose she had heard Christ tell the followers not to worry about what the morrow shall bring. She gave till she was forced to live by faith in the Lord's provision. Can you imagine how many missionaries we could send out if all Christians began to practice that philosophy of giving?

Principle one: Be a good steward - as directed by God.

Not as directed by someone else. You get on your knees and see what God wants for you!

Stewardship may mean investing to some. I disagree if you are looking to save up for rainy days. If God gives us an overabundance we usually find places to put it. If we don't have needs, we try to find others that do. We try to share what we have with others. If we have an abundance of food we invite people over to share it while we fellowship. If we don't have extra food we still invite people for the fellowship. It isn't wrong to have someone in your home without food, though with food is more fun!

Principle two: Always be willing to give up all you have to move to another ministry, or to another place of residence if the Lord should lead you to do it. For that matter be willing to give up all you have if the Lord should lead you to do so.

We have sold all we could sell several times to finance the trips cross country to college and to ministries. One time we sold everything we wanted to get rid of and loaded the trailer. The next day we headed to the next town where our in-laws lived and found that our car did not have enough power to pull the trailer. We drove in 2nd gear for 40 miles. We backed up to their garage - unloaded everything and began sorting the essentials from the non-essentials. We began a large pile of stuff that we wanted to leave and decided that we should give it away. We called the pastor and asked him to contact needy families and send them over. WE MADE THEIR DAY - AND I MIGHT ADD HE MADE OUR DAY!!!

We really enjoyed seeing those folks get some of the things they needed. We reloaded with about half the stuff and continued on the next day. Miss the stuff? Some we have missed at times, but those things we really needed we always had the finances to replace them when we needed them. For the most part it was non-essentials that we left.

We have always felt that our belongings were for conversion into cash if we had need. We have sold many things at many different times to make up where the bankbook left off.

It has been interesting at times to consider the things that we absolutely could not sell. We for five years tried to sell our piano at a very good price. There were no takers. We did finally sell it when we were selling everything that we could so that we could make a move. That particular move was very expensive and our income was interrupted for a sizable time. The money from the piano carried us through those incomeless days.

We have never suffered from having sold anything. There are times when we wish we had such and such but we have either replaced it or done well without it.

It has been fun to see how the replacements of things we wanted to replace came about. When it came time to replace, quite often the

only thing in our price range was something on sale that was much better quality than what we had sold.

We started our college days with a \$10 stereo amplifier and a very poor am/fm tuner. The next one was a stereo that didn't work that was given to me in about 100 pieces in a cardboard box. I was able to repair it and we sold it later for a sizable price. We sold and replaced many times with very little cash outlay over what we sold the old one for and today we have a 30 watt AM/FM tuner amp and speakers that are worth more than \$400. We paid very little for it. By the way we have tried to sell that outfit many times and couldn't.

Principle three: Always be willing to give of your prizes as He leads.

I became interested in coin collecting in the 80's when the silver and gold prices were low. I was not selective in coins that I purchased, but bought those that caught my interest and those that might increase in value.

I had quite a collection of neat coins gathered together. I was becoming quite attached to them because they were so very interesting.

One day the silver prices started going wild. I watched the market and decided not to buy any more silver coins. As the market went up I decided that to own silver coins was foolish. There was no way that I could collect them on our budget, so had been thinking about selling them.

One day at church a friend mentioned he wanted prayer for their finances. He was due to register for seminary shortly, and had to come up with several hundred dollars to pay off the preceding semesters bill in order to register.

Faith and I wanted to help but had no money. The coins crossed my mind so we discussed it and went for it. We had no idea what we could raise in the way of money, but decided anything we could do would be a help.

I packed up all the coins and headed for the coin store. The silver price was up even more than before. The man totalled up all that was before him and he gave me the figure. I told him to give me the cash.

The total was enough to pay the seminary bill plus enough to reimburse us for all that we had invested in the coins. The very next day the silver market plunged!

Principle four: If you are offered free insurance or retirement benefits, it would be sensible to accept them.

This may be the method by which God is going to provide for you.

We have had this come up several times in our lives. We have seen God provide for medical needs and dental needs through free and very inexpensive insurance. Faith worked for Penneys and they offered med/dental insurance for the family for under \$15 a month. We opted for it and received benefits far above the premium, in care.

He does not always provide in that way. We had an emergency a few years ago that cost more than \$2000 and took me away from work for a couple of months. We had no insurance and little income. Would you believe that the Lord was able to handle it? He provided through a good job after the time off, that gave us enough to live on and pay on the bill. He also provided through a good church that helped in many ways.

YOU DO ALL THAT YOU CAN AND GOD WILL FILL IN THE GAP!

I was offered a retirement plan that was totally free. I was planning on being in the area only three years and it would not have benefits for five years so I told my Jewish boss no thanks and told him why I thought that it would be unnecessary. He said, "Stan you don't know how long you will be here so you sign it." I signed it, and we were in the area for seven or eight years.

When I left the company they informed me we would receive two checks over the next few months, but they didn't know how much they would be.

We moved away and found that we had some large needs when we arrived at our new ministry. The first check arrived and it was for over \$1000, and it took care of the needs. See, God can provide our needs, at times eight years before we know about them. The second check was around \$800. All that for a signature. Anyone want to make me an offer like that today?

Principle five: Keep your eyes on God, and not everyone else's paycheck.

I GUARANTEE THAT THIS WILL BE A MAJOR JOB! Realize that God deals in different ways with different people. He may chose to put you through the mill and some one else on easy street.

During our first year of college we were eating pancakes to many times a day. We were really in a bad way. One day in chapel they opened a time for testimonies. One of the Sophomores stood and told that he had gotten a job at a grocery store and that the boss was giving him a good wage and told him that he wanted to provide all his groceries for the rest of his college days.

Yes, I was wondering why him and not US! God needed to teach me through that testimony time that He does as He wills. The pancakes still filled us and so we went on for a time.

Principle six: In particular situations seek all info - figure - think - pray - decide.

You must use the wisdom that God gives to you when you ask in accordance with James 1.

At times it is wise to wait. At times it is wise to move quickly - let God tell you which one.

We needed a car in a very bad way at one time. We had prayed and the Lord had given us \$200 toward a car. We were looking and praying. We found several possibilities, all of which seemed good and affordable. We did not have peace about any of the cars. We waited and prayed. We waited for over a month with this looking and seeking and no peace.

Finally, I told Faith that I thought that we should go back to our hometown and see what we could find. I called my father to ask him to begin looking around for us. He picked up the phone and we went through the hi, how are you routine, and before I mentioned anything about cars, he said, "By the way Stan, could you and Faith use a car if it was free?" Naturally, I told him we weren't interested. HA! We went back to pick it up and it was unbelievable. The car was a former highway patrol interceptor and believe me, a neat car! We drove the car for some time, free of charge!

By the way we have had three cars given to us over the years that have given a total of around 150,000 miles. Two of them came from people that had no idea that we needed them.

On the other hand we have driven cars that belonged in junk yards, because that is what the Lord had provided. One we had burned oil so bad that when you stopped at a stoplight and the sun was shining you could see this cloud rolling from under the hood. I used to sit in total embarrassment when we got caught on a red light. However, we drove that car for over a year and a car dealer gave us \$250 for it when the Lord provided another.

Principle seven: If you find that you have an excess of money and you usually are broke, don't go out and spend it immediately, unless you have the Lord's direction that you should.

Many times in our lives we have been given large sums of money - get all excited about how we were going to use it, and find out in a few days that the car needed a set of tires, or the daughter needs teeth pulled, or the wife is in the hospital, or what ever God may have provided it for.

At other times the Lord just enjoys making a bright spot in your day.

Principle eight: God promises to meet our needs. I assume that is a lifelong promise.

I will warn you that trusting in this promise gets harder as your age increases. As the poor health years approach and the possible need to stop ministering due to health approaches all sorts of worry can set in. This was especially real to me when we moved to Cheyenne, WY and

could not find work of any sort for some weeks. Then as I worked at my part time janitorial job, I really wondered about the wisdom of not having had a savings account, paid for home and an IRA.

Just another thought: As you reach retirement consider - God has provided your needs for 65 years and didn't go broke so 15 to 20 more years shouldn't strain Him too much.

Principle nine: Give as you are able and as God directs.

We've attempted never to go below a tenth, and have given at times as much as 50%.

There were times when we felt that the Lord would have us really skimp in our own lives and give heavily to help missions. These have been usually brief periods of time. I have often wondered if He was just interested in seeing if we would do it. There are other ways of giving as well. There are material things that can be given to missionaries.

We had an electronic keyboard for a number of years. We never used it and had it out at every garage sale that came along at a ridiculously low price. During a missions conference a man ministering in South America mentioned they used them in Brazil. My brain lit up! A way to get rid of that thing in the closed that is always covered with dust. God had a place for it and He just asked the Dericksons to keep it dusted.

Principle ten: Watch and enjoy how God decides to provide for you!

God has a good sense of humor and timing. I had a professor in graduate school that took most of a class period to tell us that God does not provide for students through the mail box. Now, I don't know of many students that have not at one time or another gained great financial help through their mail box. It is just one of the ways that God works with Bible school students. God does do great things through mailboxes!

True we should not sit on our duffs waiting for the bucks to fall, but at the same time God gives through the mailbox at times.

I do not fault this faculty member, because he was formerly a banker that had never had any reason to live by faith. He always had the money and always controlled it well.

After this long session on the practical aspects of money, I was in the library and one of the students asked me if I agreed with the professor. I said that I didn't and shared some of the times when the Lord had supplied through the mail box. He had been very concerned that he was in error, because the Lord gave money to him at times through the mail box.

I didn't think to much more about it. We were preparing to make a major move cross country and had decided we would need around \$2000 for a different car and trailer expenses. We hadn't really been praying about the money yet because we hadn't done any exact figuring.

That day when I went home for lunch I stopped for the mail and found a letter with a check in it. \$2000. The next day I sat down by the student and said, "Say, do you know what I found in my mailbox just after we talked yesterday?" When he said no, I slid the check out of my checkbook enough for him to see the amount.

God provides in many ways, so don't try to box Him in even though He likes mail boxes.

There is one other area that I might mention. Debt or credit.

Facts:

- 1. It costs dearly. On one account we had we paid a payment of \$22.00 per month and the interest was \$18.37 per month.**
- 2. It is very handy to have at times.**
- 3. It can be a trap.**
- 4. It is not against scripture to borrow.**

a. Romans 13 mentions owe no man anything. If you are current, you don't technically owe. When you are delinquent in your payment, then you owe.

b. The Old Testament has laws of usury or interest and it was all right to loan and to borrow.

5. If you never borrow you will be the better for it. It is spending what you don't have, and that is never best.

6. A guide: If the benefit of the item purchased is more than the finance charge, then you will profit from it. (You would profit more if you paid cash however.)

7. If you know someone in debt don't give them a guilt trip. I became sick of guilt trips years ago, when the super saints felt we shouldn't be in debt. At that time we shouldn't have been, but we realized it after the fact, and the guilt trips helped very little.

We have always tried to stay debt free, but at times take on debt.

Most people who are against debt own homes that are financed. That is debt even if they call it an investment. Most make payments on cars as well.

You let God lead you in your decisions. Gather facts - pray - think - plan - pray and follow Him.

These are just some thoughts that I have jotted down and I'm not sure that the Derickson family has always functioned under these principles as we should have.

These are set forth for your consideration and not as a teaching of scripture. I believe they are based on the Bible and what God would have us do, however these are convictions and decisions that you need to make with your mate and your God!

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Don't expect this type of answers to your prayers.

God is far too inventive to answer yours as he has ours. Indeed, He seldom answers my prayers like I think He might.

2. We dropped all life insurance in the 60's due to several reasons:

a. We were broke and owed \$6000.

b. We decided that God can take care of Faith without my help if I should die before she does.

c. We felt that this would be more in keeping with the thought of living by faith and laying up treasures in heaven.

3. Some time ago a student asked me if we saved money, and I sidestepped the question. My answer? HA!

At times we have put extra aside toward some project or some need that we knew that was coming. Usually and normally we do not put money away. In recent years due to our income we have not had reason to consider it.

As far as retirement goes, I am trusting that the Lord will keep me active until He decides I should go home. We did not opt out of Social Security as some ministers do, because I could not in good conscience sign the statement. The statement declares that you feel that it is against your belief system.

If Social Security fails before I get to the retirement age I will not be totally surprised, nor heart broken. God can use other means than the United States government to support us. INDEED, the United States government may not be here when I'm 65. God has brought about changes that most would have deemed impossible in 1987 in the Eastern Block. Don't put your stock in the institutions of this world for they rise and fall, but put your stock in the Lord - He never changes.

Many lost loads of money when the Savings and Loan scandal hit. Some will never recover their losses. You cannot really plan for the future. We have some older friends that had sold a business and invested very wisely. They had planned for a set amount to live on and a set amount to give on a monthly basis to the Lord through

missions when they retired. The economy did some strange things after they retired and they are not living as they had planned. The Lord has supplied and they live nicely and still give according to what they have but it is not what they had planned.

Do not put your trust in what you can do, save, accomplish, for God may well have other plans for you. Plan to the best of your ability with wisdom from the Lord and allow Him to do the rest. I trust that this has not been to boring.

I also trust that it has been a time of uplifting the Lord and His watchful care over us.

In closing, do not tell people this is what I teach as the proper way to live. You consider it and see if you feel it is Biblical and if it is, apply it to yourself, and then teach others.

One last point. These principles came about over a period of years. I didn't just up and one day institute them in our lives. They are things that Faith and I have discussed and considered before the Lord, and decided we wanted to be a part of our life together.

Part of all this is that God has always chosen to keep us on short accounts financially. It is easy to live by these principles in that circumstance. Give us a million dollars, and I have no idea how we would apply these principles.

You do the very best you can using what God has given you to work with. You care for your family as you can. If you can't care for them like you want, or like others think you should, don't worry about it. God knows what He's given you to work with - He is your master not others.

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APPENDIX FOUR

Since I have made reference to the Baptist distinctives it seemed good to give a listing and brief explanation of these for the reader.

Baptists believe in the usual fundamentals of the faith, however due to their history and convictions they are distinctively "Baptist." Most are Baptist by conviction and are convinced that the Baptist stand is correct.

This is somewhat of a consternation to other Biblically sound people in that the distinctives which we will soon see are Biblical distinctives first and the Baptists have by nature held to them through the years. The Bible church movement holds to these same Biblical distinctives also.

The difference may be that the Baptists have held them longer. However there is evidence there were Biblically centered people much earlier than the Anabaptists.

"Baptists believe in the scriptural teaching of the priesthood of believers, which is the spiritual principle underlying their democratic type of church life. They believe that every believer receives salvation and has free access to God the Father at any time for spiritual comfort and forgiveness of sins through the one and only High Priest, Jesus Christ our Savior. With this principle in mind, Baptists have opposed any distinction between the clergy and laity that savors of priesthood." (from a pamphlet WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE by Robert Torbet)

They feel that the congregation has the final authority in all matters.

Due to their persecution by state churches in their early days they have held tenaciously to the separation of church and state.

The Baptists have what they call "BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES". These are some beliefs that Baptists from the early days have held to be Biblical. They are not Biblical distinctives but "Baptist

Distinctives". I have discussed this often with many baptists and always end up with the same frustration.

These things are doctrines of the Scriptures. God made them up and not Baptists. They are doctrines that Baptists for years have held but they are still Biblical distinctives. I feel that if you hold these ideals and doctrines you are a Bible believing Christian. I say what I say knowing that I am as Baptist as most baptists. I have been educated in two Baptist schools and feel more comfortable with Baptist churches than any other.

BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES:

1. Biblical Authority. The Bible is the rule for faith and practice in all areas of life.

Whats more the Bible is the only authority for your life as opposed to the Roman church that the Baptists fought with in their early days. A church system has no authority over the believer. This is not to say that the individual of a local congregation can't be disciplined if there is sin in their life. The thought of a church hierarchy telling a person what is spiritual is what they oppose.

2. Autonomy of the Local Church. This means that the local church is independent of all ties with other organizations.

There are fellowships of Baptists which are loosely knit gatherings of pastors and laymen for the purpose of fellowship and mutual edification. There are some churches that will work together in the areas of youth work and evangelism.

Some are very strong on not being linked in any way with other churches - even of their own kind. In Denver years ago there were at least a dozen independent Baptist churches with Christian day schools. They wouldn't even go together to buy paper and supplies together to get a price break.

3. Priesthood of all believers. The emphasis is on ALL believers. Each and every believer has the right to go before the throne of grace with his needs and sins to set them right before God.

4. Two ordinances. There is the Lord's table that is usually open to all believers, but not always. Some have closed tables for their own members only. The second ordinance is that of baptism by immersion as an outward sign of an inward change.

5. Individual Soul Liberty.

6. Saved, baptized church membership. All people desiring to be part of an assembly must be baptized and saved before they can become members.

7. Two offices. Pastors or as they very seldom say but usually admit to elders and deacons. The deacons are the board that keep the church running. Most deacon boards are very active in the spiritual end of things as well as the physical.

8. Separation of church and state. They are opposed to any state intervention into church affairs. Be it worship or day school.

I agree with their feeling and would back them on their feelings however in turn, logic demands that the church not be benefited by the state. The majority of Christians be they Baptist or other would be up in arms if the government took away our tax exempt status. Now if we really want separation of church and state shouldn't we welcome the lifting of tax exempt status?

From the above distinctives you can see why a congregational form of government has been the hallmark of Baptists churches. It is only in recent years that some have begun to stray from this distinctive.

If the individual believer has access to God on his own and can be lead and guided by God then it follows that the church should be lead by all the people as they are in tune with God.

The balance between "Baptist Distinctives" versus "Biblical Distinctives" was met by a college prof of mine. Mr. Richard Muntz told us that the distinctives were not purely Baptist, but they were points of doctrine that the Baptists have closely followed through history. He mentioned that the points are needed to fully achieve the Biblical local church. He also stressed that if a church did not follow these points of doctrine, they were not truly a Baptist church.

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APPENDIX FIVE

The listing of references that speak of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. Read each reference and see if you can find out if there is a difference between these two kingdoms and if so what that difference is. Also try to determine what the kingdoms are.

KINGDOM OF GOD

Matthew **6:33**

12:28

19:24

21:31

21:43

Mark

1:14

4:11

4:26

4:30

9:1

9:47

10:14

10:23-25

12:34

14:25

15:43

Luke

4:43

6:20

7:28

8:1

8:10

9:2

9:11

9:27

9:60

9:62

10:9
10:11
11:20
12:31
13:18
13:20
13:28-29
14:15
16:16
17:20
18:16-17
18:24-25
19:11
21:31
22:16
22:18
23:51
John 3:3
3:5
Acts 1:3
8:12
14:22
19:8
20:25
28:23
28:31

Romans 14:17

I Corinthians 4:20
6:9-10
15:50

Galatians 5:21

Colossians 4:11

II Thessalonians 1:5

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Matthew 3:2
4:17
5:3
5:10
5:19-20
7:21
8:11
10:7
11:11-12
13:11
13:24
13:31
13:33
13:44
13:47
13:52
16:19
18:1
18:3-4
18:23
19:14
19:23
20:1
22:2
23:13
25:1
25:14

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APPENDIX SIX

This is a partial listing of the references concerning "one another" or "one toward another" in the New Testament. See a concordance for a complete listing.

"one another"

Ro 2:15	Ro 12:10	Ro 13:8	Ro 14:13
Ro 15:7	Ro 15:14	Ro 16:16	I Cor 16:20
II Cor 13:12	Ga 5:13	Ga 5:15	Ga 5:26
Eph 4:32	Col 3:13	Col 3:16	I Thes 4:9
I Thes 4:18	I Thes 5:11	Tit 3:3	Heb 3:13
Heb 10:24	Heb 10:25	I Pet 5:14	I Jn 3:23
I Jn 4:7	I Jn 4:11	I Jn 4:12	II Jn 5
Re 6:4			

"one to another"

Ro 1:27	Ro 12:10	Ro 12:16	Ro 15:5
I Cor 4:6	I Cor 6:7	I Cor 11:33	I Cor 12:25
Ga 5:15	Eph 4:25	Eph 4:32	Eph 5:21
Col 3:9	I Thes 3:12	I Tim 5:21	Jas 5:16
I Pet 3:8	I Pet 4:9	I Pet 4:10	I Pet 5:5
I Jn 1:7	Rev 11:10		

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APPENDIX SEVEN

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (listed in order by references)

Romans 12:6-8

**Prophecy
Ministry
Teaching
Exhorting
Giving
Ruling
Mercy**

I COR 12:8-10

**Word of wisdom
Word of knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Discerning of spirits
Tongues
Interpretation of tongues**

I Cor 12:28-30

**Apostles
Prophets
Teachers
Miracles
Healings
Helps
Governments
Tongues**

Eph. 4:11

**Apostles
Prophets
Evangelists
Pastors and teachers**

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (arranged to show duplicate listings)

ROMANS EPHESIANS	I CORINTHIANS	I CORINTHIANS	
12:6-8	12:6-8	12:28-30	4:11
.....			
Prophecy Prophets	Prophecy	Prophets	
Ministry			
Teaching		Teachers	
Exhorting Giving			
Ruling			
Mercy	Faith Word of wisdom		
	Word of knowledge		
	Healing	Healing	
	Miracles	Miracles	
	Discerning of spirits		

	Tongues	Tongues
	Interpretation of tongues	
Apostles		Apostles
		Helps
		Governments
		Evangelists
Pastors and teachers		

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (listed by Sign vs. Ministry gifts.)

SIGN GIFTS

Prophecy
Faith
Word of wisdom
Word of knowledge
Healing
Miracles
Discerning of spirits
Tongues
Interpretation of tongues
Apostles

MINISTRY GIFTS

Ministry
Teaching

**Exhortation
Giving
Ruling
Mercy
Helps
Governments
Evangelists
Pastors and teachers**

Those that make distinctions between sign and ministry gifts normally reject the sign gifts for our own day. The sign gifts were for the apostolic days and this can be shown in several different ways.

APPENDIX EIGHT

THE GIFT OF PASTOR-TEACHER EXAMINED

OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION

I. THE CONTEXT OF THE GIFT

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GIFT

III. THE MEANING OF THE GIFT

III. THE APPLICATION OF THE GIFT

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

In my early college days the Lord laid it on my heart to prepare for the ministry of teaching at the college level. All of my college and seminary work was aimed toward that time when I would be teaching in a Bible college or Bible Institute. The Lord used a number of things to help me understand that I had the gift of teaching. To begin with, I found that I seemed effective as a teacher with several age groups. Many people responded positively to my ministry and finally there were many that told me they felt that I had the gift of teaching.

I proceeded to pray concerning where the Lord might be able to use me and it seemed obvious that teaching was the area. From that point on I attempted to be involved in that ministry. As time went by, I discovered that the usual college/institute teacher was a pastor that had decided later in life to go into teaching. Many of them as I observed were men that did not do that well in the pastorate.

At one point in my life I was faced with deciding whether I should go into the pastorate. I was not comfortable with doing the work that we normally assign to the pastor. The roll of marrying, counseling, funeraling etc. As I considered these things it crossed my mind that I was certain what a teacher was, but that I was not certain about what a pastor was. As I considered this, a word study about the word "pastor" seemed appropriate.

I. THE CONTEXT OF THE GIFT

The gift is listed in Ephesians four. Please take time to read verse 11-16. Notice that the gift of pastor is linked to the gift of teaching. This gift is listed in Rom. 12:6-8, I Cor. 12:28-30, and Eph. 4:11. We cannot look at the gift of pastor without considering the gift of teaching. Some link these two gifts together showing there is a gift of pastor-teacher and a gift of teaching. The thought being that the pastor of a church should have the gift of pastor-teacher while a teacher would have the gift of teaching.

The text seems to indicate that the Lord gifted different men in different ways. The emphasis is on the man that is gifted in the text. The man that was listed as a pastor also received the gift of teaching. This is not to say that every pastor must have the gift of teacher, only that Christ gifted some with both pastor and teacher. You might wonder why I give emphasis to this. The church is given the gifts that it needs. We have a wrong concept of what the pastor of a church is. Today a pastor is a man that preaches, teaches, counsels, calls, visits, mows lawns, cleans floors, and everything else.

I believe, and I believe that Scripture teaches that this concept is grossly wrong. A pastor is not all of these things. A pastor is a man that has the gift of pastor. This man may be the local undertaker, or the banker, or the butcher. He is a man in the church that can do the work of a pastor. We will look at what I mean as we go along, but we MUST get rid of the thought that the pastor of a church is the man that does everything.

Paul in Ephesians was not trying to say that the pastor-teacher was the head of the physical local assembly. He was telling the Ephesians that the Lord had given some men the gift of apostleship, some men the gift of prophet, some men the gift of evangelism, some men the gift of pastoring and some men the gift of teaching. The first two, the gifts of apostles and prophets were among the sign gifts that have passed away. He stated by coupling the gifts of pastor and teacher together that some men have both gifts. He was not requiring that the pastor be a teacher or that every teacher be a pastor.

There are two gifts. Pastor and teacher. The pastor gift is not listed elsewhere in scripture. Indeed the translation of this Greek word by the term "pastor" is misleading and probably due to the wrong concept of pastor that the church has had for many years.

The Greek term translated pastor here is actually translated differently every time it appears in the New Testament. It is normally translated shepherd, which is a totally different idea than what we have for the pastor of our day. Let's consider all of this for awhile.

What are the terms that are used in Eph.? The term translated pastor is "poimeen" and it is normally translated shepherd. Indeed, it is never translated pastor, except in the Eph. text. The term translated teacher is "didaskalos" and is translated "master" in the Gospels and teacher in the rest of the New Testament.

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GIFT

Let's look at the term "poimeen" and find out just what a shepherd should be. There are only two references containing this term in the epistles and both of them are referring to the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ. (Heb. 13:20; I Pet 2:25)

The other uses of the term are found in the Gospels. We won't take time to look at these, but they show the ministry of a shepherd to his sheep. Probably the reference that depicts the overall idea is Matt. 9:36 which shows the overall concern of the shepherd. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they were faint, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." You should note that this Shepherd not only had the compassion for the people, but His entire ministry was the steps He took to relieve their misery. It was a caring, and ministering to the sheep.

I would like to sum up the thoughts of the other Gospel references and just list the items that can be seen concerning the shepherd. (These references contain the word "poimeen". Matt 9:36 (Mar. 6:34); Matt. 25:32; Matt. 26:31 (Mar. 14:27); Lu. 2:8-20; Jn. 10:1-16.)

THE SHEPHERD:

Gathers the sheep. Collect, control, draw, and limit are part of gathering sheep.

Keeps the sheep from falsehood or things that are not true.

In the case of Christ, He died for the sheep.

Watches over the sheep.

Stick with the sheep to assure their safety. Won't leave them.

Know his sheep. His sheep will also know the shepherd. This is not descriptive of many of our churches today.

We won't go into these thoughts. You can apply these things for yourself.

III. THE MEANING OF THE GIFT

If the man is gifted to be a shepherd then he is one that practices the art of shepherding with a flock of believers. The man that is a teacher is teaching the sheep to do the work that the Lord has for them to do.

It is of interest to me how the apostle Paul operated. Some of the apostles were active in the local church at Jerusalem while others according to tradition went out evangelizing as Paul did. Acts 13 mentions there were prophets and teachers that were active in a local assembly. One of those men was Saul, or Paul as we know him. He was either a prophet or teacher and I would guess that he was one of the teachers, because there is no indication in the NT that he was a prophet.

Now, why did Paul never settle down in a church? The only reason that I can think of is that he realized that he was a teacher and that the Lord wanted him out teaching. He did not practice the gift of pastor in the NT as far as I can find. He knew his gift and he practiced his gift where he could. He did not stuff himself into a pastoring position because he knew he was not gifted in that area.

I trust that as we continue on through life that we will seek to find ways of allowing the gifted to practice their gifts instead of placing them where they do not belong.

A teacher is a teacher and a pastor is a pastor. If a man is both then he should do both. If a man is a teacher, he should be a teacher and if a man is a pastor, he should be a pastor.

May we make some observations:

1. There are five gifts listed in the text. This may have application in three areas: a. This could mean that you will have one man with two gifts, that of pastoring and teaching. b. This could mean that you have one man that is a shepherd and one man that is a teacher if you have a plurality of leadership. If you have only one leader then the man should have both gifts. c. This could mean that a teacher should not be the soul leader of a church. If that is all you have then you should look around until you find the man that is gifted to be a shepherd. Use a "teacher only" if that is all you have, but I believe there will be a shepherd if there is a need.

2. Shepherd is a gift separate from the gift of teaching.

3. In Eph. 4 we see that these men are there for the training of the believers. We must assume that the shepherd is involved in training as well as the teacher. Let's think about how the two might be able to train believers.

THE SHEPHERD: Leads to proper food, corrects, protects from falsehood, guides, motivates to move, and gathers.

THE TEACHER: Teaches proper principles of living, interpreting etc., teaches the Word, warns from the Word.

There seems to be a difference of ministry between the two. We must realize that one cannot do the other, and they are a complimentary pair of gifts. Indeed, the evangelist can train the believer in areas that the shepherd and teacher cannot.

The teacher can teach principles of evangelism, however it is the evangelist that can take the believer out and show them how it is done.

All three gifts work to train the believer, yet the three cannot operate alone and be effective.

(Some feel that the gift of prophet is current today but that it is functioning in a different way than in the sign gift days. They feel that the prophet is the preacher. This does not detract from what we have stated thus far.)

III. THE APPLICATION OF THE GIFT

The importance of all this is seen in the fact that we may have a man that is a pastor and a teacher at the same time, but it is also true that we may have a man that is a pastor and a man that is a teacher and that we could function well as a local assembly with either situation.

I include this study in the hope that we will change our concept of "pastor" to one that is Biblical and not traditional. I have met many men that would love to preach and teach from a pulpit in churches, but they do not feel they are able to handle the other parts of "pastoring" which the church has laid upon the man in the pulpit.

On the other hand I suspect that we have many men that can shepherd that would never be capable of entering into a preaching or teaching situation that are not functioning in the local church because the pastor does those things.

If we had a proper understanding of the term pastor, we could operate a church with a teacher in the pulpit, in the class room or in the Bible study and a pastor in the sick room, or in the counseling room, or in the visiting room.

CONCLUSION

Christ gave gifts to all believers. Some of these gifts are for training the sheep.

As we move into a new century for the world and the church might we look into the scripture for our forms and organization, rather than into the traditions that we have inherited from past generations.

May we seek to minister to one another as Christ has gifted us.

May we determine that we are not going to cram a teacher into a pastoring position or a pastor into a teaching position.

I might mention there are churches that have realized these things and have allowed their teachers to teach and their pastors to pastor. These churches have a plurality of leadership and function quite nicely with these principles. I am told that A.W. Tozer was a teaching elder in his church and that others did the shepherding.

APPENDIX NINE

BODY BUILDERS OR SOCIAL CLIMBERS?

I would like to consider whether we, as local assemblies, are bodies as the Scripture states we are to be, or are we societies.

Forgive me for the length of this quote. Society according to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary is: "1: companionship or association with one's fellows: friendly or intimate intercourse: COMPANY 2: a voluntary association of individuals for common ends; esp: an organized group working together or periodically meeting because of common interests, beliefs, or profession 3 a: an enduring and cooperating social group whose members have developed organized community, nation, or broad grouping of people having common traditions, institutions, and collective activities and interests 4 a: a part of a community that is a unit distinguishable by particular aims or standards of living or conduct : a social circle or a group of social circles having a clearly marked identity ... b: a part of the community that sets itself apart as a leisure class and that regards itself as the arbiter of fashion and manners 5 a: a natural group of plants usu. of a single species or habit within an association b: the progeny of a pair of insects when constituting a social unit (as a hive of bees); broadly: an interdependent system of organisms or biological units" P 1119 (By permission. From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary copyright 1991 by Merriam-Webster Inc., publisher of the Merriam-Webster (registered) Dictionaries.)

Let's list the aspects of "society" from this definition:

1. Society is companionship with others.
2. Society is association with others.
3. Society contains friendly conversation.
4. Society contains intimate conversation.

- 5. Society is being with others toward a common end.**
- 6. Society is being with others because of interests.**
- 7. Society is being with others because of common beliefs.**
- 8. Society is being with others because of a common profession.**
- 9. Society is an organized group of people with traditions.**
- 10. Society is an organized group of people with institutions.**
- 11. Society is an organized group of people with collective activities.**
- 12. Society is an organized group of people with collective interests.**
- 13. Society is a recognizable community because of their aims.**
- 14. Society is a recognizable community because of their standards of living.**
- 15. Society is a recognizable community because of their living or conduct.**
- 16. Society is a group of people that stand out because of their identity.**
- 17. Society is a group of people that set themselves as a standard of fashion or manners.**

To begin with I see little difference between the above list and the church in America today. I took a class in college on sociology that required us to read a book that held to the teaching that society was based on groups of people that are playing games. The doctors play the doctor game and do what doctors do, the lawyers play the lawyer game and do what lawyers do, and the laborers play the laborer game and do what laborers do. The author's thought was that the doctors did things that doctors do because that's what doctors do, etc. Naturally the Christians would be playing the Christian game and would be doing what Christians do.

I am beginning to believe that some Christians and churches are playing the Christian game. We talk a good talk, we work a good work, we do what is expected of us because we are Christians playing the Christian game.

SO, what is the difference between the Christians in our day and the idea of society? Is the church a society within the general lost society of our world today? Is the church a mini-society that operates among the other mini societies in the world?

The church is told that it is a body. Just what did the Lord mean by that? How can we relate that concept to the church? Can we be a body and also fit the thought of a society? Because we have already stated that the church seems to be a society, is there something that we should be doing that would automatically change us from the status of being a society to the status of being a body?

BODY VS SOCIETY: Let's consider the ideas of body and society for a moment.

1. A body is living while a society is organized. Even though the church may be loosely organized, the primary emphasis is supposed to be on the living.

2. A body is made up of interdependent parts that must draw life from the common physical bond, while a society is made up of people that are drawn together because of a common mental or ideological bond.

3. A body part cannot exist apart from the whole, while a part of society can exist and thrive apart from the whole.

4. A body is directed by one source, the head, while a society is led by the dictates of the whole.

5. A body is in the business of survival of the whole, while a society is open to destruction of the parts and/or the whole for the survival of the other.

Illustration: The communist block was a whole that is now in the process of destruction for the survival of the parts. The church body

must and will survive because we have the Head, Jesus Christ, directing toward that end.

6. The body exists to grow and develop, while an organization may or may not desire to grow and develop.

7. In the body, growth and development is automatic because it is living, while an organization must plan and labor to grow and develop.

8. A body is sensible, or it can sense the world outside of itself in all respects, such as emotional, mental, and physical, while a society may or may not sense the world around them.

Are these differences important? I suspect that the differences are the keys to why many of us originally felt that the church fit into the definition of society. The differences, if realized and maintained in the church then should move a local assembly from the place of being a society to the place of being a body.

Let's list these differences in a short thought that would help us work on being sure that our churches are bodies and not societies.

1. A BODY GROWS NATURALLY: A living body is growing naturally because of individual parts reproducing themselves (cells). In the broader thought, the head is teaching the limbs and parts to work together for the common good.

A body is an organism not an organization. An organism lives, while an organization is given life by its participants.

2. A BODY'S PARTS ARE INTERDEPENDENT: Every part is interdependent, thus every part is of supreme importance as a part. A part missing is a part that is not supplying something to others in the body.

3. THE PART CANNOT SURVIVE ALONE: A believer apart from a local assembly falters spiritually, thus when a part absents itself the whole OUGHT to be concerned rather than being critical or allowing them to go their own way.

4. THE HEAD DIRECTS THE WHOLE: When the parts begin to direct the whole rather than the head, the group cannot be a body.

5. THE BODY WILL SURVIVE: This would have application in the area of problems that we allow to develop into church splits. A body cannot split and survive, so why do we feel that a church can?

6. THE BODY EXISTS TO GROW: The Church should exist to grow and develop. This eliminates the purpose of growth for any other reason than this. Growth is not to provide for building of personal kingdoms, of buildings, budgets etc.

7. THE BODY IS LIVING: How much energy is spent in the church organizing growth campaigns, and contests to produce what should happen naturally?

8. THE BODY SENSES ITS SURROUNDINGS: Are we as a body of believers really sensitive to the hurt and destiny of the world? Are we really sensing the impending danger of hell for those around us? Are we open to helping a hurting person?

Body has been described as a mass of matter. Some indicate it is a mass that is different from other masses. Now, to call the church a mass is not too appropriate, however the idea of a mass that is distinct from other masses **SHOULD BE** descriptive of the church. We should be distinct from the rest of the world. We should be, shall I say, easily distinguishable from the world.

So why do we dress, act, spend, live, invest etc. like the world?

Another item that is important for us to consider is the attraction of those outside the church to the church. Is that attraction because they desire to be a part of a living, thriving, growing body or are they attracted to what the society can do for them. I fear that many in our churches are socially attracted rather than spiritually attracted.

I trust that you will consider the differences between the body that we are supposed to be and the society that we seem to have become. I trust that you will commit yourself in your local church to work toward being a body rather than a society.

06900

THE LORD'S TABLE - WHO WHAT WERE?

Question: Is it correct for an institution or organization aside from the local church to offer and/or celebrate the Lord's table?

DEFINITIONS:

1. Local Church: An organized body of believers gathering for the purpose of edification of the saved, and the evangelization of the lost.

The term organized would refer to the fact that they have a pastor and/or elders and deacons functioning for the leadership of the body of believers.

2. Ordinance: Theissen, "We may define an ordinance as an outward rite appointed by Christ to be administered in the Church as a visible sign of the saving truth of the Christian faith."

Bancroft in *ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY* p 310 mentions, "The word ordinance comes from two Latin words which in their final meaning signify 'that which is ordered or commanded.'" (Taken from the book, *ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY* by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.)

Ryrie in *A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE* p 149 mentions, "an outward rite prescribed by Christ to be performed by His church."

OBSERVATIONS:

1. The Church is the church and organizations or institutions are not the church.

The Church has a specific organization, purpose and function.

Any organization that is not a church will have a different organization, purpose and function.

**Example: A Bible Institute declares it's purpose to be,
" _____ is a highly specialized institution raised up by the
Lord for intensive and comprehensive training in God's Word. It
exists to prepare men and women to serve the Lord as pastors,
evangelists, missionaries, youth leaders and Christian education
workers."**

**The only organizations that function with a leadership of pastor
and/or elders, and deacons are churches. No other organization or
institution that this author knows of has this type of organization nor
terminology.**

2. No organization other than a church claims to be a church.

**3. Most doctrinal statements, if they mention the ordinances list them
as "ordinances of the Local Church."**

The above Bible Institute's doctrinal statement mentions,

**"5. We believe that there are two ordinances given to the local
church:**

a. "Water baptism...."

**b. "The Lord's Supper, which is to be observed only by believers as a
memorial to the death and coming again of our Lord Jesus."**

Note should be taken of the phrase, "given to the local church"

**This, in essence, would indicate that no other organization or
institution has the right to practice the ordinances.**

**4. Since para-church organizations are a relatively new movement
there are no Scriptural references which may be quoted to support
their use of the Lord's table. By the same token the church fathers
and their writings would not have reference to our question.**

**5. The text usually presented to show the institution of the ordinance
is usually one of the Gospel accounts of the Lord celebrating the
passover. He used the elements that were present on the dinner table.
He mentioned that He would not drink of the fruit of the vine until He**

came in His Father's Kingdom. (Matt.) Luke in 22:19 records, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20.

6. I Cor. 11 is the other text which relates to the question at hand. Verse 2 mentions, "...keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." Paul himself had given them the information they needed for the observance. Items to observe from this text. a. It is an ordinance. (v 2) b. It is for the church. Paul is speaking to the church in Corinth and he also mentions the "church of God" in verse 22. I Cor. 10:16ff shows that the church at Corinth had been taught of the Lord's table prior to this letter.

7. Matthew records in 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." There is no mention of the church in this text. Indeed the church did not exist. The context of this verse is prayer. There cannot easily be an organized local church with three members.

8. The early church might be suggested as an example of the Lord's table.

Acts 2 is where most place the beginning of the Church. It might be of interest to note that the apostles did not observe the Lord's table prior to Pentecost. The day of Pentecost was 50 days after the passover (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia p 2318) and Acts 1:3 mentions that the Lord ascended about 40 days after the passover. This would indicate several days (8 to 10) between the ascension and the day of Pentecost - surely enough time to have the Lord's table if they thought it important. (Indeed one must wonder if they were waiting for the Lord's quick return to have it with Him.)

Indeed it is difficult to show from the Scriptures that the apostles participated in the Lord's table after the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:42 mentions for the first time the "breaking of bread" which most hold as being the Lord's table. Verse 46 states, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart." Might one suggest that these phrases may well indicate sharing of meals and not the Lord's table. The next text relating to

food is in chapter six where they were eating as a group. Again there is nothing specific about the Lord's table.

One further text uses the term "breaking bread" but again the way it is stated to read into it more than eating is just that reading into it. "When he, therefore, was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed." Acts 20:11

One is left to wonder if the early church indeed did practice the Lord's table prior to the teaching of Paul. It could easily be suggested that the Revelation to Paul from the Lord may have been the first and official institution of the Lord's table.

c. Christ revealed this information to Paul personally. It is not meant to be a quote from the Gospels, but it is meant to be the exact information that the Lord gave to him.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Lord has so designated the Church as His body and His organization to work in and through. It is this writer's opinion that one must assume heavily to even suggest that there is any other organization that is qualified to initiate or perform either of the ordinances, be it Baptism or the Lord's Table.

2. Is it wrong then, for other organizations to perform these functions? Let this be answered by another question. By what authority might they presume to function? There is no authority given in Scripture to any group other than the Local Church.

3. In specific relation to Colleges, Seminaries and Bible Institutes one must take into consideration several items:

a. Do the schools feel that they are an extension of the Local Church. Most schools make no such claim nor do they seek to become an extension of the church. b. Does any Local Church have any control over the schools? The answer to this is no unless they are denominational schools. c. Is there any organizational or intended connection between schools and local churches other than by speaking, attendance, or membership of individuals from the school?

Again the answer is no. d. At most, the schools could possibly be classified as an arm of the Local Church, however this is not indicated by most schools. This is not to say that they are the local church nor is it to say that they have any authority as does the local church.

They have authority only over their own people and students. That authority that does exist comes from their own organization and the individuals submission to it, not from Scripture? The school has no authority in the area of church discipline nor ordinances.

4. Many conservative pastors and teachers feel that the Lord's table may be held anyplace and under most circumstances IF the service is under the authority of the Local Church.

Bancroft in his ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY p 312 mentions, "There are a number of questions which may be asked in relation to the two ordinances, such as these: What is the proper method of observing baptism and the Lord's supper? Who is qualified to administer them? Who are fit subjects or recipients of them? And to whom does the responsibility for their proper observance or administration belong? Suffice it for us to say in general that these are church ordinances and are therefore not to be administered or observed in promiscuous assemblies, or by individuals, but by the church in the regular local assembly, and according to the pattern furnished by the Lord Jesus Christ." He follows this statement with his doctrinal summation on ordinances. "The church is the custodian of the two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, and is responsible for their administration." (Taken from the book, ELEMENTAL THEOLOGY by Emery H. Bancroft. Copyright 1977 by Baptist Bible College. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.)

DIVORCE/REMARRIAGE

PRESUPPOSITIONS:

- 1. This is not to condemn anyone in any relationship.**
- 2. This is to present the Scripture involved, and draw conclusions.**
- 3. This is to reprimand the Church for its steady decline and slide toward the world in relation to this subject. The Churches divorce rate is about that of the world's.**
- 4. This is to confront people in this situation with a head on look at what God says concerning the subject. Many today have accepted the norm for themselves, and have never looked into the Word to see what God has to say.**
- 5. Malachi 2:15b, 16 States, "Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."**

Note: God hates the putting away of the wife of your youth. If you do, you deal treacherously against her. This is the context that this study must be done in. All else that the Scripture states must be understood in light of the fact that God hates divorce, and that the person that does go ahead and divorce, is dealing treacherously with their spouse.

- 6. This is also a call to the church to commit itself to two items:**
 - a. Begin to properly teach the principles of marriage.**
 - b. That it begin to minister to those already in the divorce/remarried situation.**

First I would like to present some of the views held today on the topic.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. No divorce | No remarriage |
| 2. Div. OK in some cases | No remarriage |
| 3. Divorce OK | Rem. OK in case of fornication |
| 4. Divorce OK | Rem. in case of fornication and
desertion |
| 5. Divorce OK | Rem. OK in all cases |

One, three and four are held in conservative circles, although four is not widely held. Three is the past favorite. Two is fairly new and not to much is being done with it. One is very conservative but I believe that it is growing rapidly due to the rethinking of the old position of number three.

Most view death as grounds for remarriage though Paul indicates that staying single may be best (I Cor. 7). Paul hints that young widows probably ought to remarry in one of his epistles if they can't handle the life of a single. (Which is hard for most young people that have lost a spouse via death. I Cor. 7:7-8 mentions it is better to marry than burn, however that is specifically in the context of single persons considering not marrying for the first time and widows. It has nothing to do with the divorcees situation.)

Let us begin with a text that God set forth through Moses long before any of the texts that we will consider, were given.

Gen. 2:23-24, "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."

May I add a New Testament passage also?

Matt 19:4-8, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made [them] at the beginning made them male and female,

"And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"

"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

"They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

"He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."

Most agree to this. Marriage is between two, and in the beginning, was for life.

"Leave" is imperative to a good marriage. The cleave is indicative of holding to one another and no one else, as in parents or friends (This is not the idea of moving away from parents, for the Old Testament concept was the family staying together. The one flesh is indicative of the unity of the marriage.

How can you divide one flesh? This is the dilemma that faces those that see divorce as an option. They just don't deal with it.

I might add immediately that a legal separation may be very wise and in some states divorce. This will provide legal protection in some cases for the person. IT SHOULD NEVER BE SEEN AS A DIVISION IN THE MARRIAGE FOR THE LAW CANNOT DIVIDE FLESH. DEATH IS THE ONLY DIVISOR OF THE ONE FLESH OF A MARRIAGE.

Let us look at the passages that seem to relate to the problem.

Exodus 20:14 "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

The clear command of God in one of His ten big ones! He says that you shalt not do it!

Lev. 18:16 mentions that it is not right for a brother to uncover the nakedness of his brother's wife. This would be in the case of a brother with his presently married brother's wife I would assume.

Lev. 18:20 mentions that adultery defiles the man.

Leviticus 20:10 "And the man that committeth adultery with [another] man's wife, [even he] that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."

This passage is clear that death was the laws answer to the adulterus activities of the Israelites. Christ, living under that law, obeying that law and fulfilling that law would naturally have known of this passage. He would have had to be thinking of this when He announced the so called exception for fornication. He knew that under the law, death was the answer to fornication, and there were no other cases whereby adultery was acceptable. It is not acceptable in the case of fornication, but is cause for death.

Let us look at the relationship of Christ to the law.

1. Christ was made of a woman under the law: Gal 4:4

2. Christ came to redeem those under the law: Gal 4:5

3. Christ came to fulfill the law: Matt 5:17-20

**4. Christ would have to keep the law to fulfill it:
Matt 4:13-17 ("fulfill all righteousness")**

5. Christ taught the keeping of the law: Matt 19:16-19

6. Christ did not come to destroy the law, nor to set it aside: Matt 5:17

In light of this it seems doubtful that the Lord was giving an exception for divorce, but rather He was stating there was no reason for divorce. Indeed, the reaction of the disciples indicates that they viewed marriage for life and not something that could be dissolved.

If Christ had such strong feelings about divorce/remarriage, why shouldn't the minister of God, why shouldn't the woman of God, why shouldn't the man of God abhor divorce/remarriage within the family of God?

Deuteronomy 5:18 "Neither shalt thou commit adultery." This is a repeat of the commandment.

Deuteronomy 24:1 We need to understand this text in light of the Malachi passage concerning God's hate for divorce, and realize that the New Testament mentions this was allowed because of the hardness of their hearts. (Matt 19:8)

1. "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

2. "And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

3. "And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;

4. "Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

Some brief information on the words used: v 1 some = 1697 (from 1696) = "dabar (daw-baw) = twot 399a; relates to saying, speech, word, or business. uncleanness = 6172 (from 6168) = "ervah" (er-vaw) = twot 1692b; relates to nakedness and shame, or exposed. bill of divorcement = 3748 = "keriythuwth" (ker-ee-thooth) = twot 1048; means divorce or dismissal. v 4 defiled = 2930 = "tame" (taw-may') = twot 809; This tern relates to being unclean or impure. It can be sexually, ceremonially, or religiously.

The use of the word "dabar" would indicate that this uncleanness may be related to the spoken word. It could be cursing, or more to the point probably, would be the confession of some uncleanness. However, when you put this word with the word "ervah" you have a double term indicating other than the thought of uncleanness, but rather the thought of some spoken nakedness or exposure. This could

relate to most any exposure of information that causes the man to decide he does not want this woman for a wife.

Many believe that this passage relates to the engagement period, before the actual marriage. It is something that the man finds out before the actual marriage ceremony and consummation of the marriage.

The term married = 1166 = "baal (bah'-al) = twot 262; Strong: "...to be master; hence...to marry:-have dominion (over), be husband, marry..." twot "possess, own, rule over, marry." Neither mention the thought of engagement period. This would indicate that they were indeed, married, however, since marriage is for life and the penalty for adultery is death, it seems right to assume that the text may well be speaking of the engagement period rather than an actual completed marriage.

Barne's Notes has a good comment which needs to be considered. (Cook, F.C., editor; "THE BIBLE COMMENTARY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House; no copy, pp 315-316) The author mentions that these four verses are actually one sentence. "Moses neither institutes nor enjoins divorce. The exact spirit of the passage is given in our lord's words to the Jews; 'Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives' (Matt. xix. 8). Not only does the original institution of marriage as recorded by Moses (Gen. ii. 24) set forth the perpetuity of the bond, but the verses before us plainly intimate that divorce, whilst tolerated for the time, contravenes the order of nature and of God." He goes on to state, "Moses could not absolutely put an end to a practice which was traditional, and common to the Jews with other Oriental nations. His aim is therefore to regulate and thus to mitigate an evil which he could not extirpate."

Since this is a text that we can't really nail down as to meaning, it should be subjected to a proper level under the institution of marriage in Genesis and the thought that God hates divorce. The most you might conclude from this text would be there is something revealed that causes the problem. You should not assume that this is basis for the divorce rate we see today.

A New Testament illustration of this would be Matt 1:19 when Joseph considered putting Mary away before they had consummated and completed the marriage.

In an informal paper from Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, OR, the faculty were trying to work through the issue of divorce/remarriage. They state of the Deut. 24 passage, "Divorce in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 was allowed but not ordered. What was commanded is this: if there were a divorce, the person being divorced must be given a bill of divorcement...." They go on to emphasize that the divorce was due to the hardness of their hearts.

It seems that the emphasis is not on allowing divorce, but that if you are going to be hard hearted enough to divorce then give a bill of divorcement.

The term defiled in v 4 is "become unclean" according to the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. It is used in the following texts: Lev. 18:20 defiling a neighbor's wife; Ezek. 18:6 defiling a neighbor's wife; Num. 5:13,14,20,29; This is strong number 2930.

The first husband caused his wife trouble evidently because she went out and remarried.

NOTE: The 2nd divorce or idea that she is defiled to the point she is not able to be married without adding problems to the situation indicates that the defilement is permanent. Marriage is for life.

Divorce is only recognized in this text, and is not commanded. Divorce is not even condoned in this text. Divorce is only recognized as being in existence in this text.

The first husband and I would assume all others are not to marry this woman. She is defiled for life! The text does not state it but the second marriage is what defiled her. She is not to remarry.

If the husband divorces he is to do the paperwork that is involved. This is all that this text is getting at.

The standard of the woman for marriage was: Being a virgin Deut. 22:13ff, Matt. 1:18ff; or a widow - Ruth and Boaz produced a child in the line of Christ.

The defilement of this woman was life long. Barne's Notes backs this line of thinking as well.

Conclusions:

**This woman defiled herself when she married the second time.
This woman had caused problems in the marriage.
This woman would defile any one that she married.**

**Thus the divorcee that remarries is defiled or unmarriable for life.
The second and succeeding spouses are defiled because of the marriage to the divorcee.**

The defilement in the case of the divorcee is for life, while we aren't told of the second spouse. The indication of Lev. 22:7 is that the priest would be defiled. If there was a possibility of him removing that defilement the Bible is silent. I would assume that if he were to put her away, then his defilement would end.

Leviticus 21:7 "They shall not take a wife [that is] a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he [is] holy unto his God." (v 14 also)

The priest is not to marry a divorced woman because he is holy. This is very plain and the indications are very clear that the divorced woman would be a defilement to the priest.

An associated passage is Lev. 22:13. A priests young childless - widowed or divorced daughter may live with the priest, but no strangers are to eat there. Since this text mentions the widowed, I would assume that the danger here is that some unwanted possibilities would exist if a stranger were to drop in for a period of time.

Conclusions from the Leviticus texts might run along this line. If a man marries a divorced woman he will become defiled or unholy.

It should be pointed out that 22:13 tells us that associating with the divorcee is not defiling. The divorcee needs to be ministered to and that is a real problem for the church. We have many divorcees going to churches that are inadequate doctrinally because they find acceptance there and they don't in our fundamental churches.

A word of warning: I think that a close relationship to a divorcee could well damage a good marriage, so there is a real danger in this. The divorcee can affect in a negative manner a happily married person to the point of damaging the marriage.

Some suggest many things from Deut. 22:13-21. There is a lot built on this text that is not really there. If you see comments on it be sure that you look very carefully. The context is a woman that is claiming to be a virgin and is trying to publicly get away with her lie. Note: If she is virgin the marriage bond is for life! Divorce in vs. 19 is literally "send her away". This is a problem that arises before the marriage is consummated. (virgin)

It is of interest that Joseph (Mary's husband) knew this ruling. If he thought that Mary was a non-virgin He may have been showing a great love for her by trying to divorce her quietly. He didn't want to chance any harm for her and her baby.

Deut. 22:22 Remember for awhile, the fact that verse 22 mentions death as the punishment for adultery. Divorce is not in view here!

Deuteronomy 22:28, 29 is of interest while we are in the vicinity. It speaks of a single man and single woman that have relations. The point of the passage is marriage and payment of money to the father. The passage ends with a command, "...and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. This idea is in v 19 as well. It seems Moses wanted to emphasize the point. Unless I am seriously wrong, this is a command that a marriage is for life. It would not seem logical to penalize these particular situations for life, so we should see it as general principle - marriage is for life. If there is divorce, the person is defiled when remarried.

Ezra 10:3,19 "Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the

counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.

"And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and [being] guilty, [they offered] a ram of the flock for their trespass."

Chapter nine and Neh. 13:23-31 are also background for this text.

This speaks of putting foreign wives away, however there is no mention of divorce or bills of divorcement which Deut. required.

The most you can draw from this is that the Jews were allowed to separate themselves from foreign wives - not divorce. The term used here "put away" is "yasa" which means to go out from. (This is Strong's 3318 and twot's 893) This is not related to the terms for divorce in the Old Testament. This was a step to keep the Messianic line pure, and I have not found any that speak of this being for today.

Proverbs 6:32 "[But] whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he [that] doeth it destroyeth his own soul."

There are two things mentioned here. The adulterer lacketh understanding, and he destroyeth his own soul.

Just what the last item means is another thing. It would probably be readily accepted that this is not talking about eternal things. It would seem that it speaks of the man's earthly life. The soul is the center of our world consciousness, thus the thought should relate to how the man relates to his world. Adultery certainly has been observed to seriously affect the mental and emotional side of people involved, and these two often can cause problems within the physical realm as well.

Thus the destruction probably relates to the life, or quality of life of the people involved. I once was told by an older woman of a part of her life. Her account relates to this point. She had divorced her first husband and had remarried. She began to look at the Bible and realized that she should not be married. She mentioned that she went through many years of guilt feelings because of her situation. She said that she was very relieved when her first husband died. She felt that she had been freed.

Jeremiah 3:1 "They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD."

God views the put away wife that remarries as an harlot, or as we've seen - defiled.

Jeremiah 3:8,9 "And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also."

"And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks."

The whole tenor of the text should set the person contemplating adultery at odds with their straying desires.

Several things to note:

Israel committed adultery and was put away: This might indicate that the exception of the New Testament for fornication had Old Testament basis. This is God that did this.

It could better be said that it is an understandable picture that God gave to the Jews, and that He did not really give them a divorce - He just put them away for their spiritual adultery.

The thought of Israel being His wife is merely a picture, thus so would be a divorce from her. If you make the mistake of making this a real divorce then you have him married to Israel and divorcing her, while he is married to Judah. You might tack on the fact that Christ will marry the church one day. Bigamy on the part of God - not a tolerable teaching!

God gave a bill of divorce: Again this does not indicate an Old testament basis for the exception of the New Testament. Even if this is a true event of divorce on the part of God, it was for the fear factor in others. He did it to salvage a relationship with Judah. Application of

this might run along the line that any divorce in this age should be an example and a case to cause fear in other peoples relationships. It is of interest, that if this is true, then the people of our day have done as Judah - feared not and played the harlot.

Conclusions from this text:

1. The thought of the text is that God was trying to set an example and salvage another relationship.

Those today that do not take the example of others divorcing are not fearing God and the party that is unfaithful is an HARLOT.

2. This text should be taken within the context of all prior Old Testament information on divorce, and putting away. The Jewish mind would have understood this terminology because of their background.

The thought that God actually issued a bill of divorcement should not be taken as a literal writing and delivering, nor should it be taken as an okay for man to do so.

I personally feel that it was a picture for Judah and that it was an illustration. As were the anthropomorphisms of the Psalmist. They picture an attribute or act of God. He merely saw their adultery and put them away because of it.

Verse one "they say" may refer to Deut. 24:1-4

The most you might come up with here is that the wife that plays the harlot, and continues in it for many years - not a one time act of adultery, may be put away. Remarriage is never an option here. However to view this as a basis for putting away, I believe that it would be stretching the text. Indeed, reconciliation is the thought of all that God does in the book of Jerimiah. He is always calling his people back to Himself. If you see divorce for adultery in this text, then you must also see no thought of remarriage to another, as well as the key thought of reconciliation. Note should be made that this adultery was over many years and even generations and God still wanted them to return to Him.

Some information on the words used: "committed" and "adultery" are one word: 5003 na'aph {naw-af'} a primitive root; TWOT - 1273; It seems to mean to commit adultery. It is used of men/women/figuratively of idolatry. "her a bill": 5612 cepher {say'-fer} or (feminine) ciphrah (Psa. 56:8 [9]) {sif-raw'} from 5608; TWOT - 1540a,1540b; it has the idea of a book, document or legal document. "of divorce": 3748 k@riythuwth {ker-ee-thooth'} from 3772; TWOT - 1048a; simply refers to dismissal or divorce. "harlot": 2181 zannah {zaw-naw'} a primitive root [highly-fed and therefore wanton]; TWOT - 563; relates to commission of fornication, adultery, or harlotry.

Jeremiah 5:7 "How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by [them that are] no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses."

The spiritual adultery of Israel should let us know how God feels about it in the physical realm. Words like these should move the believer to refrain from the act, to abhor the act, and to teach against the act.

Jeremiah 7:9 "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;"

This use of adultery is speaking of physical and not spiritual adultery. Adultery is related to stealing, murder, lying, and idolatry. Are these things that a believer wants to involve themselves in? I fear in our "gray area" Christian society, believers feel free to be involved in these areas with no thought.

Jeremiah 23:14 "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah."

Again, how can the believer desire to have anything to do with adultery if God feels this way about it? Indeed, there may be a harsh message to the pastors and leaders of our day that give the idea that

divorce/remarriage are correct methods of operation. Pastors have now, in some cases, decided it is acceptable for them to be divorced/remarried.

Jeremiah 29:23 "Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and [am] a witness, saith the LORD."

This passage would call the erring believer to realize that God is witness of what they do in the dark. He is also their judge, the judge with the perfect, truthful, and unfailing witness - Himself.

Ezekiel 16:32 "[But as] a wife that committeth adultery, [which] taketh strangers instead of her husband!" A bold, concise, and clear statement of what adultery is!

Ezekiel 23:37 "That they have committed adultery, and blood [is] in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through [the fire], to devour [them]."

This passage should wake some up to the effect their life style has on their children. God states that the adultery of the father may well be passed on to the family. Indeed, this is easily observed within the fabric of our society today.

Ezekiel 44:22 "Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before."

Hosea 2:2; Hosea 4:2; Hosea 4:13, 14.

Matthew 5:27 "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

Christ related the wondering minds eye to the wondering physical eye. If you are involved mentally with one that is not your spouse, you are

involved in adultery. Christ relates this new truth to the commandment that we have already seen in our study.

One might ask the question, if a person involved in pornography comes to know the Lord does that person need to remove his mind from the pornography? I think that the overwhelming answer would be YES! If the one involved in mental adultery needs to come out of their sin when they are saved, why shouldn't we teach that the physical adulterer should set aside their adultery when they become believers?

Matthew 5:32 "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

It is of interest to me that Christ assumes that the person will remarry. This is related to the society they were operating in. The woman would have no way of living without a husband, so would naturally look for another husband.

The statement is clear - If a man puts away his wife, he causes her to commit adultery. Further, if one marries her he also commits adultery. "committeth adultery" is a present tense verb which indicates that this is an ongoing adultery, not just a one time act.

Q. What is this adultery that is committed? Is remarriage equal to one act of adultery, or is remarriage equal to moving into a relationship of ongoing adultery? It seems logical that it is ongoing rather than a one time event. There is no logical basis to relate the act of marriage to the sin of adultery. Getting married does not make you an adulterer, the intimacy of marriage to one not your spouse makes you an adulterer.

Some might suggest that remarriage = adultery = one time = this is what Christ was saying = leaving the spouse. If this is true then the application of that concept is that any man stepping out on his wife the first time commits adultery - one time act, and then following occurrences of infidelity are not adultery. The adultery was the original leaving. Believing that the adultery is a one time sin that is forgiven once, is not a logical conclusion.

Context: The Jews and no one else. This is a group of instructions given to the Jews to prepare them for life in the Kingdom. This is a Jew talking to Jews, in a Jewish setting, in Jewish times, in a Jewish law discussion, in Jewish land, with Jewish leaders about a future Jewish age, under a Jewish ruler.

Most use this verse to show that divorce is okay in the case of fornication. Most relate fornication to the sin of adultery. By the way none I've read mentions in this context that the Old Testament penalty for adultery was death.

The contrast of "some say" and "I say" is of interest as well. Christ is not teaching on what "some say", but on what He says. This whole section seems to be His expansion and explanation of some of the Old Testament concepts, that indeed had been misinterpreted by the Jews of His day.

You might easily view this verse as stating that in the case of fornication the death penalty (Deut. 22:24) is to be carried out and there is no remarriage in that case for the person is dead. This was Christ, the one that lived the law perfectly, that is speaking, and this would certainly be His interpretation I would think. It is also to be noted that Christ is speaking of the Kingdom in which He will reign with a rod of iron and judgment of wrong will be immediate. This would mean the adulterous parties will not be around long enough to remarry!

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DIVORCE/REMARRIAGE CONTINUED

In the case of divorce for any other reason the resulting remarriage is sin.

The term fornication is discussed at times but usually is related to adultery. Some miscellaneous information on some possibilities that have been presented. bestiality: the result was to be death, Lev. 20:16; Ex 22:19; Homosexuality: Death, Lev. 20:13; These were sins of the people that God destroyed at the hand of Israel as they entered the land, Lev 18:22-24

There is a study of the term "fornication" at the end of this paper. Basically the term is any sexual activity that is incorrect. In these cases it refers to adultery.

Some would suggest that the death for adultery was not being practiced in this time. The method of death was stoning. Stoning was yet present in Stephen's and Paul's time. John R.W. Stott in "DIVORCE" mentions that stoning continued until 40 AD.

Matt 14:3-14; Mark 6:14ff (Herod)

John The Baptist had told Herod that it was unlawful for him to have his brother's wife. Why? It would seem that his brother was still alive and he along with his wife were breaking the law. What law? The law of God that states that the man and woman are one flesh until death. Unger in his Bible Dictionary mentions that the Herod and Herodias eloped while both were still married.

John The Baptist was confident enough in His God to accuse even the king, of adultery, yet when a pastor suggests church discipline for the same thing in this generation, he is held up to ridicule.

Matt 19:3-12 We have here some questions and answers in this text. Question: v 3 "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Christ answers, Haven't you read: Christ refers to the Gen. 2 text.

Question: v 7 Why then did Moses "command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" THIS IS A MISREPRESENTATION OF MOSES! Christ corrects the comment, and tells them that it was because of the hardness of their hearts that Moses PERMITTED, not commanded it. BUT, This was not so from the beginning. Would Christ return to the beginning if He thought there were any basis for divorce or putting away? Not logical.

The term hardness of heart is used normally of unsaved and non believing. (Pharaoh; Mk. 16:14; 3:5; Rom. 2:5.) This may indicate that divorce is allowed in the unsaved world due to their unbelief and hardness, though I'm not sure you can even build that case.

Christ then goes to the thought of adultery for those involved in a second marriage after a divorce. No man in the text would include a husband. No man should cause separation!

The reaction of the disciples was of interest. They decided it would be better not to get married. (Matt 19:10, "His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." The discussion that follows makes it clear that they were talking about not getting married. Their reaction can only give evidence that they felt marriage was for life and that there was no way out.

Matthew 19:18 "He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,"

The Lord repeated all of the commandments except the sabbath, thus telling us they are still valid for today. Clear and concise - no adultery.

So, how can a believer be involved in divorce/remarriage? If they are they are openly before all that know, breaking one of God's commandments in an ongoing manner.

**Q. How involved can someone in this position be in the local church?
A good question! Today we have men pastoring in this situation.
Would we have an active murderer teaching our youth group?
Would we have an active thief teaching our beginners class?**

Probably not, so why do we have divorced/remarried people involved in these ministries?

I once spoke to a man that had recently divorced his first wife. They had both remarried and all four were singing in the church choir - an evangelical church - there was constant division because he felt that she and her husband shouldn't be involved in the choir. WHAT A TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST!

Mark 10:2-12 This is similar to Matt 19, except for one very curious exception. The exception clause of fornication is not mentioned. Now if the book of Mark was written for the edification of Gentiles it would seem that the exception clause would be explained for them, rather than not mentioned, if indeed there is an exception. Is Mark just applying the thought that death is the result of fornication and there are no exceptions? It would seem entirely possible. Christ is asked by the disciples again in private and Christ states clearly there is adultery in the case of ANY divorce - remarriage situation.

Some would submit that the reader would assume the exception clause due to their knowledge of the Matthew text. This is foolishness for the reader of Mark probably did not have the Matthew text to read. Mark was writing to specific people. Indeed, since this is true, the exception clause should have been present, if there was any case for remarriage without adultery being involved!

Some suggest that his leaving it out was to emphasize the concept of no divorce that the Scriptures set forth as the best. The fact that Matthew mentions the exception is because the Lord wanted to be in keeping with the letter of Deut. 24. Mark just eliminated it to emphasize the importance of lasting marriages. This to me seems to leave Mark in the position of being somewhat dishonest with his readers.

Some thoughts: Mark is probably the first Gospel written. He was presenting the message to a gentile audience that probably would never see Matthew. If he left out the exception, then he was dishonest and misled the readers. On the other hand, if he viewed Christ's "exception" as this paper indicates, as not really an exception but death to the adulterer, then we have Mark setting forth a proper and complete picture of what Christ said.

This text is even clearer that the divorce/remarriage is a sin based on the breaking of the original marriage. "committeth adultery against her", is clearly stating that his new marriage is against the original spouse - it is adultery against her. Can we ever delegate this to a one time act? I don't know how.

The divorce is not the adultery, nor is the remarriage. It is the divorce/remarriage that leaves a person in an adulterous relationship.

Can one that is divorced/remarried before salvation receive forgiveness for their sin when they accept Christ? YES! Does the wrong situation change because of salvation? NO. Does the first marriage suddenly disappear or become null and void? NO. Does the adulterous situation disappear or become null and void? NO.

The use of tenses in this text backs up the thinking presented here that the adultery is continuing. The verb for putting away is aorist (one time action), the verb marries is aorist (one time action), and the verb commits adultery is present (continuing action).

Verse 12 continues on, "And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." Again the married is aorist while the committeth adultery is present - continuing.

This use of the present tense would indicate that the Lord and the three Gospel writers considered the adultery as an ongoing state of affair rather than a one time act. If this is an ongoing condition then the person that is divorced/remarried is living in open ongoing sin with no thought of ceasing from their activity.

Corinthians tells us that open, ongoing, unrepentant sin is cause for the removal of the person from the assembly. Someone asked me once what I would suggest for the divorced/remarried person. He asked if I would recommend divorce. When I said that this would put them closer to the thought of marriage (one for life) and that it would remove them from sin, he stated that he thought it was foolish of me to suggest divorce because it was sin. The man did not think that in God's eyes there is no second marriage, so there is nothing wrong with going through a secular, legal "divorce."

I would suggest a question in answer to this thought of suggesting a second divorce. What would we ask a Mormon with four wives to do if we led him to the Lord? Would we welcome all four wives and the husband into the membership of the church? No, we would teach them the Bible and pray that the Holy Spirit would lead them to do the right thing. Missionaries have faced similar problems on the field over the years and find that the men with multiple wives normally separate from all wives but the first and support all wives and children involved.

Luke 16:18 "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from [her] husband committeth adultery."

Notice that Luke also fails to mention the "exception." He was not writing to Jews either, so would present the complete picture of no divorce. Matthew on the other hand was writing to Jews. He would naturally comment to them from the Jewish background which included the thought of death to the adulterer. Since their question was based on Moses, Christ had to respond to the Old Testament information.

Luke 18:20 "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother." It doesn't sound like the Lord appreciated adultery.

John 8:3 "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act."

I would like to look at this text for a moment. It might be used as a proof text to show that the Old Testament death penalty was being set aside. Not so. Christ told them, that were without sin, to cast the first stone. None of the men were without the same sin, so none cast a stone. Since Christ was not a witness to the act, nor was he in the position of judge, he would not be involved in carrying out the command to stone. The scribes and Pharisees did not deal with the woman as they should have under their legal system. They should not have taken her to Christ.

Romans 2:22 "Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"

This passage encourages the one that condemns adultery to be sure that he does not fall into the sin which he condemns. This is a strong admonishment to the pastors and leaders of our churches. Some leaders are now doing what they have always condemned.

Romans 13:9 "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Again, definitely in the church age, we have a clear statement of "Thou shalt not commit adultery...." We Cannot have church leadership, nor even teachers that are committed to the open breaking of God's clear commandments.

1 Corinthians 7:10, 11 mentions a woman leaving her husband. Some state this allows her to divorce him. Not so. Divorce is not mentioned - only leaving. She is told to remain unmarried.

Galatians 5:19 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,"

Adultery is mentioned as a work of the flesh. This passage is contrasting the works of the flesh with the works of the Spirit. It might well be pictured as the works of the lost contrasted with the life of the saved. The least we can draw from this text is that the believer should not be involved in the works of the flesh. If they are in an open manner, how can we allow them to minister in the church? We should not. Verse twenty mentions, strife and heresies. These are causes for church discipline and removal from the assembly, so why would we want someone living in open adultery actively ministering in our churches?

One might wonder why the church has left its strong stand of removal of divorced/remarried people from the assembly. The thought that the father that is in adultery, brings danger to his son in the same

area, may well relate to why the Church today has the same divorce rate that the lost world has. Because a few divorces were tolerated they became more acceptable, etc. Some miscellaneous references containing "adultery": James 2:11; 2 Peter 2:14; Revelation 2:22.

Question: When is adultery, adultery? Each intimacy with one not your spouse is adultery. The life style would also be a life, or living in adultery. The key is that the adultery is an ongoing thing as long as there are intimate contacts.

This is illustrated for us in the spiritual adultery of Israel. They could have ceased their adultery at any point by leaving their "other gods" and returning to God. This by the way is also an illustration of the proper remedy for divorce/remarriage adultery in our own day in the physical realm. Leave the one that it not your spouse and return to your original spouse.

Question: Is there any sin whereby it is sin for the lost and not for the saved? Only one that I can think of and that being the rejection of Christ's finished work. All other sin is universally wrong, incorrect, and unacceptable to God.

Thus if adultery is deemed sin in any manner wouldn't it seem that it is sin in all manner? If it is sin for the unsaved, then being saved does not change it to non sin.

One closing thought concerning divorce/remarriage. Spiritual adultery is leaving God for other gods. The remedy is leaving the other gods and returning to God. In marriage adultery is leaving your spouse and going to other women. The only remedy is to leave the other women and returning to your spouse.

Conclusions to the study:

1. The most you can say from Scripture is:

a. Divorce for sexual problems was tolerated for Jews because of the hardness of hearts in the time of Moses.

b. Divorce is not commanded in any circumstance. This leaves the thought of working it out as the option.

c. The Jews are the only people involved in this idea of divorce, even if you hold to the possibility of the adultery clause in the Gospels.

d. If you reject the Matthew text being to the Jews then you must do two things.

1.) Accept that divorce in the case of adultery is allowed - NOT COMMANDED NOR ENCOURAGED!

2.) You must prove that the stoning for adultery was set aside before the time of Christ.

e. You may from I Corinthians 7, envision a separation but not remarriage.

f. Remarriage seems to be out even if you hold to an exception clause due to the defilement problem of the Old Testament. If you marry a divorcee then the defilement is transmitted to you as well.

g. The church, and parents are to blame for our divorce problems today among Christians! We have not been teaching proper ideas of marriage, and when trouble comes we are not teaching a Biblical concept of divorce and adultery that follows.

2. Notes of interest:

a. Lev. 21:7; 22:13 show that associating with divorcees does not defile you. However, beware of their possible negative influence on your own spiritual life and marriage.

b. A priests daughter can be divorced without bringing change to the priests status of holiness or position.

We need to apply this to the parents of today. A pastor or layman that has a divorced daughter need not have his status in the church changed. The divorce was an adult decision by the daughter and does not affect the father.

c. Jer. 3:1-8: God put up with generations of adultery with Israel. This is not permission to people to remarry, but is an illustration of

God's longsuffering. Indeed, it shows that the spouse of a longtime adulterous partner can have the grace to look toward a reconciliation.

d. If God puts a couple together how can man do anything to tear it apart? The thought is foolishness. God put it together and there is nothing short of death that can change that fact.

3. The present tense indicates the adultery is of a continuing nature and not a one time act at the time of the remarriage. Matt 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18.

Some say these usages are a special use of the present tense which means that it was a one time adultery. I have asked several Greek scholars if there was a grammatical basis for saying this, and they said there is not.

4. The idea of the adulterous woman in John 8 is of interest. She was continuing in sin and was told to go and sin no more. She was forgiven of the past sin, but told to stop.

5. If the adultery of the divorcee is viewed as a one time sin, then all succeeding sexual relations are of no consequence. This seems to be illogical. The person that is married and has activity outside of his marriage is considered to be in adultery at each occurrence. Adultery is an intimate relation of a married person with a person not their spouse!

6. Some suggest that if a person was divorced and remarried before they were saved that they are not held accountable for what they did before they were saved. Let's think about that for a moment. If you murdered before you were saved are you not still a murderer after you are saved. Are you not liable for all consequences of the murder before you were saved? Salvation does not change our marital status nor does it negate the consequences of past sins.

7. Some ask what the person is to do. They suggest that a second divorce is wrong. The second divorce would be correcting the sin of the remarriage and is the only logical answer to the situation.

Indeed, is the second divorce a wrong. There is no second marriage in God's eyes, so the second divorce would be a legal tool to return to the

situation that God wants them in. One that is divorced and remarried before salvation has this option open to them and should consider it. Yes, it would be very difficult! Yes, there would be hardship. But the Scriptures mention the consequences and hard ship that follows our sins!

The business man that is saved Cannot just break contracts on bad deals because he becomes a Christian. The alcoholic that is saved is forgiven, but he has a life long problem facing alcoholism!

8. The problem we have today is twofold.

a. We have divorcees and people that have remarried in our churches! We must deal with these people as believers that need to be ministered to. We must attempt to minister to their needs. We do not have to condone their past actions, nor do we set aside the clear teaching of Scripture just to use them in the church. Timothy's clear command from Paul was that the elders were to be one woman type men, and that does not allow for divorcees and remarrieds.

b. The second problem is that we still aren't teaching our children and church people what proper marriage is, nor are we speaking out against divorce and remarriage.

We must minister the Word and allow people to be confronted with it even if they don't like it. God has spoken - that is what they will have to dislike!

9. How do we handle the already divorced and remarried?

a. Do not allow them to condemn themselves. God still loves them! Teach them the proper principles of marriage/divorce and allow the Holy Spirit to lead them to the correct conclusion.

b. Help them to understand that any restriction on their usability is not the leadership's fault but that it is the leaders responsibility from the Word.

c. Remember Abraham, David, Solomon and others. bigamy is in the end, adultery and they were used greatly by God, however they did not have the indwelling Spirit of God as we do. Their short comings

are more understandable. We will be held to a higher accountability due to our further revelation and the Holy Spirit's ministry to us.

10. It is a very hard subject for our day. There are multitudes of situations that are seen by some to be "special" or "different," but the fact remains that the Scriptures have made some very specific demands of the believer. It is our responsibility to look at the Scriptures and then in light of them, view every situation.

11. Divorce is not the best course, nor is it desired, but may be the legal protection a spouse needs to protect themselves from high bills and problems. The divorce in this case is only a legal tool and cannot be viewed as changing the marriage bonds in any way. God has set the standard, not man.

The most liberal view that has any basis in scripture would be that divorce and remarriage is okay in view of adultery. Even if you ignored the above pages of proof against that position and believed it was okay, then you are still faced with the key thought of God waiting generations for his people to return from their adultery (That by the way is idolatry or leaving God for other gods.) and always desiring to have them come back to Him.

12. I Cor. 6:9-10 is a verse to consider.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Just how does this relate to our problem? A reading of vv 9-11 will show that Paul is listing types of unsaved people. He uses this to contrast the proper living of the believer, or at least the hoped for living of the believer.

13. Perhaps some questions and answers would help to put some of this information into perspective.

Question: What is adultery? Adultery is a married person having relations with other than their spouse. In our society a single person having relations with a married person would also be considered in adultery, I would suspect, however the single person, Biblically, would probably be guilty of fornication.

Question: When is adultery adultery? Every time the sexual relations occur.

Question: Is adultery pre-salvation forgiven after the person is saved? Yes.

Question: Is adultery post-salvation forgiven because of the pre-salvation forgiveness? No. This sin can, and will be forgiven any time the person uses I John 1:9. Any blanket forgiveness post-salvation is not a Scriptural concept.

Question: How can adultery be considered as a one time act in the remarriage situation, but not continuing in the case of a man cheating on His wife? It cannot. Both MUST be the same. Both are ongoing.

Question: Can a continuing sin which stems from a pre-salvation remarriage be forgiven once for all because of the cross? No.

Question: Does not everything belong under the blood? This question is of recent consideration. I have not seen, read or heard it until recent years.

All sins - pre and post salvation - are or can be forgiven, however on a different basis. Pre-salvation sin is automatic in the acceptance/redemption process. Post-salvation sin is cared for only as the person seeks forgiveness, and attempts to rectify their improper action. If post-salvation sin were automatically cared for then license would be the result in our lives.

Question: Is there any indication that adultery is not sin each time sexual relations occur? No. Adultery of the mind is a one time act (aorist tense), yet it can be repeated and would be adultery each time as would actual relations.

Question: Is there a difference between continuing in the same sin week after week and being a person that has a different sin each week? Are not both people the same - in sin?

In God's eyes, yes, sin is sin, however there is a difference and I believe that God views the two people differently. The one that continues in the same sin is not changing as the idea of repentance and confession imply. The person that is in different types of sin is a person that deals with this weeks sin and puts it behind them. When they find themselves in another sin they need to deal with it. This person is progressing in their spiritual life, whereas the other person is continuing in their sin with no attempt to correct their lives.

Question: If I am in a divorce/remarried situation, what are my alternatives?

- 1. Abstinence: This should be on the basis of mutual consent according to I Corinthians 7:5, however this will be a very hard alternative. This may sound terrible, and it would be a serious strain on the relationship, however many couples have continued through their life in marriages where one partner was unable to have sexual relations due to physical limitations.**
- 2. If the remarriage has not yet occurred, then wait until the first spouse is dead. Many people that have found themselves divorced by their spouse have remained single until the spouse died.**
- 3. Separation or divorce. This would be the step which corrected the problem. Again, a very hard alternative.**
- 4. If you find yourself divorced, then do not allow yourself to enter into friendships that might lead to a desire to get married.**
- 5. Continue in your present situation. This is not a recommendation, but is a very real solution of many believers around the world. It can be observed that God continues to use the divorced/remarried person. The question is, just how much more the Lord could use them if they were not in this situation.**

One item of information that has not been discussed in this paper and that I have never heard brought into the divorce/remarriage

discussion is the item of vows. The wedding vows are promises that the people make to one another before man and God. A brief word study in the Old Testament concerning vows and God's view of them would be good for anyone considering divorce.

This paper is not designed to give all the answers to all the questions that might arise in the readers mind. It is, I trust an honest look at the Scripture as it relates to the topic.

To reject the conclusions of this paper cannot be a simple mental rejection of the conclusions. To reject you must find different conclusions based on the texts given. You must not fall into the temptation to spiritualize or allegorize. We believe in literal, plain, easy interpretation of Scripture and must practice it in ALL studies we do in the Word.

You must deal with the present tense verbs that the Gospel writers use. You must deal with the Malachi passage that tells us that God hates divorce and treachery. You must deal with the teaching of the Lord concerning the subject.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ON RELATED WORDS:

ADULTERY

The Greek word "moichos" is the noun form of the word. It means according to Vine, "...denotes one who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another...." "moichalis" is the term for the woman, "an adulteress" according to Vine. ("moicheia" is the adjective form, "moichao" and "moicheuo" are the verb forms.) See complete word study in divorce/remarriage file.

FORNICATION

We need to consider for a moment the thought of fornication in the Gospels. Most, I have read and heard consider this to be adultery within the marriage. The Greek words are as follows: Noun forms, "porneia" and "pornos", Verb forms, "porneuo" and "ekporneuo."

Vine on the word:

"pornea": "...of illicit sexual intercourse...." It is also used metaphorically of idolatry. Vine mentions that it includes adultery but can be distinguished from adultery. (Matt 15:19)

" pornos": "...denotes a man who indulges in fornication, a fornicator...."

"poneuo": "...to commit fornication...."

"ekporneuo": "...a strengthened form of No. I...to give oneself up to fornication, implying excessive indulgence...."

So fornication can be adultery, but may be other things as well.

Matt 15:19 states, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:" The text goes on to state "These are the things which defile a man...." Not an activity that a believer ought to be involved in once, much less on an ongoing basis.

**Adultery in the Matthew text is the Greek word "moicheia."
Fornication in the Matthew text is the Greek word "porneia."**

References that contain the term with some comments: 2 Chronicles 21:11; Isaiah 23:17; Ezekiel 16:29; Matthew 5:32; Matthew 19:9; John 8:41; Acts 15:20; Acts 15:29; Acts 21:25; Romans 1:29; Rom. 7:2-3 This is an illustration of the persons relation to the law. Under the law, it has dominion over you for life. Thus in marriage the vow has dominion over you all your life. Paul's clear statement is that the person that remarries while the spouse lives is an adulterer! His other clear statement is that death breaks that bond and that the person is free to remarry. In essence, because Christ died and fulfilled the law we are free to take Christ since the old bonds and dominion of the law are broken; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Corinthians 7:2; I Cor. 7:10ff This is a series of orders. vs 10 the wife shouldn't leave husband/vs 11 the wife if leaves remains unmarried or reconciles/the husband is not to send her away/vs 15 if there is an unbelieving mate that leaves then let them go but live in peace. They are free from the need to keep the marriage together. Ezra 10 may relate to this. vs 39 the wife is bound to the husband as long as he is alive/free to marry when he dies --"IN THE LORD"!

HOWEVER, Paul mentions she may be happier alone and not remarried. It is of interest that this may have been written before Matt. If this is true then was Paul not very remiss in not mentioning the exception clause if indeed it exists? The term bondage is never used in relation to divorce in the New Testament. Remarriage in the case of abandonment is not found in this text. The text is clear that marriage is for life; 1 Corinthians 10:8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Eph. 5:21-33 The marriage relationship is used to illustrate the relationship of Christ to the church. If the marriage bond is separable then the bond between Christ the head and the church His body is also separable and this is unacceptable. Both bonds are permanent; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 1:7; Revelation 2:14; Revelation 2:20; Revelation 9:21; Revelation 14:8; Revelation 17:2; Revelation 17:4; Revelation 18:3; Revelation 18:9; Revelation 19:2.

The term is not well defined by the passages. The fact that it is used allegorically of nations or kings fornicating with the great whore could lead us to believe that it is illicit relations, but whether it is among singles, or among a married and an unknown, is not clear.

It would seem easiest to understand the word to refer to literally, any improper sexual activity, and allegorically any improper relationship with those you should not be having relationships with.

Since the Gospel texts are in the context of married partners and new married partners, it would seem that fornication is adultery. Adultery would cover any improper activity outside of the marriage, which also fits into the definition and usage of fornication.

Two other Greek words that need to be mentioned:

Both of these terms are related to divorce. "apoluo" which is a term used in secular Greek for dismissal from the army, or from jail. It also is used of setting a debtor free. (From Wayne A. Detzler's book, "NEW TESTAMENT WORDS IN TODAY'S LANGUAGE"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 124.) This is the term translated "put away" in the Gospels.

"apostasion" which is used of the bill of divorcement. The Septuagint writers used this term to translate the word in Deut 24:3. This is used

in Matt 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4. This is also the term the Septuigent writers used in Jer. 3:8 for bill of divorcement.

ESCHATOLOGY

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PREFACE TO THE STUDY OF ESCHATOLOGY

Having just finished the study on Ecclesiology, I am very excited to look into the future for the Church. The study of the Church was exciting and fulfilling, but as we looked at the Word for that study we must do the same for this study. The Church was exciting, and we know it to be the same in our experience in local assemblies, however that is a portion of what God has planned for us as we assemble in eternity as the Universal Church to enjoy our wonderful Savior and Head, Jesus Christ.

God has created for us here on earth the temporal church to minister to our needs and problems, but in Eschatology we will see that not only is He tying up all the prophetic loose ends, but He is laying out the future eternal habitation for those of us that have decided to follow His Son.

As this study begins, a few explanations are in order. First these thoughts are not my thoughts alone. The Lord has led me through the theology courses of four colleges and seminaries, so you can imagine that much of what I relate to you is coming from many other men, and many books that I have had the privilege of reading. As I have worked through this information, I have evaluated and adapted it to my own thinking and theological system. There are more complete works on the subject of future things, but I trust this will be the most practical of these books. Eschatology should, if nothing else demand that we change our manner of living. We say we believe that Christ could come at any minute, yet we are amassing temporal things by the truck load as though He has revealed to us that He will not appear in our life time. Future things should definitely affect our present life as well as give us great hope and joy as we look forward to that day when we will be with the Lord.

The study will be divided into topics and as the topics are discussed they will be related to the other areas of discussion.

I trust that the reader will gain an overall view of the subject.

I trust that not only will the reader gain a proper understanding of what the Bible presents, but a general understanding of some of the false teachings in the area of future things. I also desire that the facts will motivate the life to changes that the Lord might direct in individual lives.

At the end of the book is a series of appendixes which contain some miscellaneous information that may be of help to the reader. There is a test to see just how much you really know about Eschatology, as well as other information. You should browse through these to acquaint yourself with the items.

One that might be of great assistance is a listing of authors/books and their approximate theological positions.

07050

OVERVIEW OF THE FUTURE

It is recommended that the reader take the test found in appendix one to see where they are in their knowledge of the future. This will give you some idea of how you are in your eschatological prowess.

This section is designed to give the reader a quick over view of all that we will be looking at as we move through the study.

Don't get worried if you become a little overwhelmed or confused in this section. You can come back to this section as you read the other topical studies and refresh yourself concerning the topic and where it belongs in the big picture.

We will cover items of interest in chronological order beginning with God before He created.

GOD:

Before there was time, Lucifer, man, earth or anything else the Trinity conceived of a plan to bring glory to themselves. The plan was complete in its totality. This is important to the position that will be presented. It becomes important when Christ comes to earth as the Messiah of the Old Testament and was rejected by His people the Jews. Some view the events that follow the cross as something new and unique. This study will submit a position that states the church is a continuation of God's continuing program and not a new program.

I will submit to you that it was not a new program, but rather a continuation of that original plan that was set by the Trinity in eternity past. The church was an integrated part of that plan from the beginning.

THE CREATION:

At a point in eternity past, God specified that creation would occur. He created through the Son and by the power of the Spirit. Creation

began with the angels and beings of the heavenly scene. Lucifer and his followers fell in this period before the creation of the heavens.

THE FALL OF MAN:

God created heaven and earth for the next step in His overall program. On the earth He placed Adam and Eve who soon after their creation fell into sin. The sin separated them from their creator.

Over time God worked with different men and women. These people followed the revelation that they had from God and found favor with God through a sacrificial system that is depicted in the early part of the book of Genesis and later in the law.

ABRAHAM:

God made a covenant with a man by the name of Abraham and made several promises to him. These promises were not conditional on Abraham's obedience. Abraham followed God's program through his life by faith in what God had told him. Abraham was the basis upon which God built the people of Israel. Israel was blessed through their father Abraham until the nation turned against Him in the time of the kings.

KING SAUL:

After many years of God dealing with His through the priestly system and leaders like Moses and Joshua, the Jewish people decided they needed a king to rule over them. This was because everyone else was doing it. All the nations around them had rulers so they decided they must have one also. God allowed Saul to be named king over Israel.

KING DAVID:

Saul's successor was David. David was not a prime example of purity in his life, yet he pleased God. God blessed David's ministry to His people.

KING SOLOMON:

David's son became king and ruled for many years. Under his reign the people become dissatisfied and ultimately his two sons became the kings of the divided kingdom. The ten tribes of the north went their direction, and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin went theirs.

The two peoples had a series of kings that ultimately brought the peoples to destruction. The northern tribes were taken captive by the Assyrians and the southern tribes fell into the hands of the Babylonians later.

THE PROPHETS:

Prior to the fall of these two peoples God sent messengers to His people to warn them of coming tragedies if they did not change their ways. He gave them fair warning to turn back to Godly ways or reap the consequences. These men preached their message until the fall of the peoples. Even after the captivities God chose to speak to his people through prophets.

Throughout the Old Testament the thought of a savior or Messiah is given. These prophets proclaimed the Messiah and the kingdom that He would set up here on earth. That kingdom was the desire of the Jewish people.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST:

When we move into the New Testament John the Baptist is on the scene preaching repentance for the kingdom of heaven is near. The kingdom that he was preaching about was that Old Testament kingdom that the Jews were awaiting for.

Christ began preaching the same kingdom when He started His ministry. The message was not acceptable to the Jews and as a result they rejected their Messiah.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST:

Ultimately the Jews killed Christ on the cross. This was not a mistake or a glitch in the plan of God, but rather something that the Trinity had planned beforehand. Some theologians suggest that the fall of man was a surprise party for God and that He dreamed up the plan of

salvation to salvage something from His creation. This is not true in any manner. All that has gone on in time is according to the plan that was set before the foundation of the world.

THE PLACE OF DEPARTED SPIRITS:

In the Old Testament period when a person died they were transported to the place of departed spirits, called Sheol.

This place is mentioned and defined in Luke sixteen in the account of the rich man and Lazarus. In short it was a two compartment area with a great chasm between that no one can cross. There has been much confusion as to why this place of departed spirits existed. Why would God send the saints there and then transfer them to heaven? What is the place for? Is this hell?

It seems that the best explanation of all this is that before the cross there could be no regeneration, thus no salvation as such. Yes, the Old Testament saints could please God by faith. Yes, they were eternally saved, however the provision was not made as yet. In God's eyes they would be in eternity with Him, yet there was the need of the death of Christ to make the provision. At the time of the cross all departed spirits were in Sheol. The lost were in the side of torments and the saved were in the side with Abraham. This place was temporary for the righteous until their salvation could be completed by Christ.

This was accomplished through His death on the cross for their sin. The Old Testament saints sins were covered so there was fellowship with God, but they needed Christ's blood to cleanse those sins.

After Christ died, He ascended to the heavenly tabernacle, according to Hebrews, and offered His blood once for all. He then proceeded to Sheol to empty it of the believing saints, to take them to be with the Father until the culmination of time.

At the time of the Great White Throne judgment the departed lost in Sheol will be brought forth to face their judgment and then they will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity. (Rev 20:11-15)

THE CHURCH:

The church is God's people in this age or dispensation. We are not something new and special, we are just a continuation of God's program and kingdom. The church is the gathering of all of God's people in this age, as Israel was God's people in the age of the Law.

THE RAPTURE:

At the end of the church age the Lord will remove His people from the world and prepare the earth and Israel for the final stages of prophecy, the tribulation and the events that will follow.

THE TRIBULATION:

The tribulation is a seven year period of great destruction and judgment upon the earth and the lost. During the tribulation Israel will turn to God nationally ending the great separation between God and His nation. The tribulation will be a time of preparation for the kingdom which is the next event in God's timetable.

THE RESURRECTION OF OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS:

At the end of the tribulation the Old Testament and Tribulation saints will be raised from the dead, and will enter the Millennial kingdom.

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM:

The saints of the kingdom will live for one thousand years with Christ ruling on the throne of David in Jerusalem. During the kingdom the Lord will rule the entire earth, and Satan will be bound. There will be peace in the kingdom until near the end, when Satan is released and will gather his forces for one final rebellion.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE:

The final preeternity act of God concerning his creation will be the Great White Throne. This will be the time when all the lost will appear before God for their final judgment.

THE LAKE OF FIRE:

The lake of fire is the final abode for all the lost, the Devil and all of his coworkers. This is not a time when they are destroyed, as in annihilation. They will be in eternal permanent torment which will not have end.

ETERNITY:

Eternal life, or eternal existence with the Trinity is the future of the believer. This existence will take place in the abode that He has prepared for the believers.

The overview that we have just had is called the pretribulational view of eschatology. We need to look at some terms that will become commonplace in our discussion.

PRETRIBULATIONALISM:

Pretribulationalism teaches that the church will be raptured or taken out of the world before the tribulation. There is no reason for God to allow His people to go through a time of judgment so will remove them to the heavenlies. During this time the judgment seat of Christ will take place. This is when the believers works not their souls will be judged. The marriage feast of the Lamb will probably take place at this time, though we have no text which really tells us this. Some feel that the marriage feast would fit well in the Millennial kingdom when the Old Testament saints are present, and others place it at the beginning of eternity when all the lost are taken care of and all believers are eternally with their Lord.

Where you place this occasion depends on your view of who the bride is. Most theologians follow the traditional thought that the bride is the church, while a few theologians suggest that the bride is Israel. Does that suggest a good topic of study for you? I trust that some of these suggested topics of study will tweek your interest and that you will dive into these areas as you have time.

MIDTRIBULATIONALISM:

This teaching holds that the church will go through part of the tribulation sees the church raptured at the middle of the tribulation, just before the Great Tribulation begins. There is indication that the

first half of the tribulation will be bad, but the last half will be Great. The Great tribulation will be much worse than the first half.

There is a similar teaching called partial rapture which sees the righteous believers taken out before the tribulation, however the not so righteous are left to go through part of the tribulation for purification. Those purified are either taken out all at once during the tribulation, or they are removed individually as their time of purification ends.

POSTTRIBULATIONALSIM:

Some feel that the church will go through the entire tribulation and will be raptured out at the end.

PREMILLENNIALISM:

The next item to consider is the teaching that we have given in this brief overview. Premillennialism teaches that the rapture and tribulation are before the Millennial kingdom.

POSTMILLENNIALISM:

Postmillennialism would teach that the rapture and/or the tribulation will occur after the Millennial kingdom.

AMILLENNIALISM:

Amillennialism teaches there is nor literal, real 1000 year kingdom. This teaching holds there is either no kingdom at all, or that the kingdom is going on at this time. The Devil is bound in this age and this age is not confined to a specific time limit.

COVENANT THEOLOGY:

Those holding to covenant theology believe that God has and will operate with man through the Old Testament covenants. The covenants were set, and we are still under them. Sometime in the future the Lord will tie all things together.

People holding to this position mix all the teachings and promises of Scripture and apply them to believers in this age. In other words there is no difference between Israel and the church. All believers of all times are the same, and the promise to one is the promise to all.

ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION:

The method of interpreting Scripture that is called allegorical sees all of Scripture as a series of information that really has no valid meaning as it is, but we must look into the "real" message of the passage. The Scripture text itself is only a vehicle to carry the real message of God. Nothing in Scripture can be taken for face, literal value. You must find the spiritual meaning. Some view a text in more than one level of information. The recorded level which was for the man that recorded it and then there is the level that has the "real" spiritual message for us.

LITERAL INTERPRETATION:

The other method of interpretation is called literal because that is how you interpret. The passage means what it means in plain, easy, literal reading. There is no "hidden" or "spiritual" message behind the literal message. We will look into interpretation as we go along in the study.

KINGDOM THEOLOGY:

Kingdom theology is a newer system of thought which appears in many different forms. The common thread of these new lines of thinking is that the church has the responsibility for getting the world back into a condition that would be conducive to the Lord's return. In short, Christ cannot come back until we get a specific job done.

This thinking is seen in some of the modern missions efforts. The thought of reaching the world by a certain date is based on the need to evangelize the world so the Lord can return.

DISPENSATIONALISM:

The system of eschatology that is opposite to Covenant Theology is dispensationalism. Dispensationalism sees a difference between Israel and the Church. The premillennialist will be a dispensationalist.

Dispensationalism teaches that God deals with man in different ways in different periods of time. We will look into this teaching in more detail later, however to prove that God deals differently in different periods of time is seen in the fact that the Old Testament saint was required to bring animal sacrifices for his sin, while we in the church age only have to confess and repent.

The dispensationalist will not apply the promises given to Israel to the church age saint. This system comes out of the literal interpretation of Scripture.

In thinking of many of these terms a list might help to solidify things in your mind. Normally if the person is premillennialist he will be those things listed below, and if a person is an amillennialist he will be those things listed below that position.

PREMILLENNIALISTS	AMMILLENNIALISTS
LITERAL INTERPRETATION	ALLEGORICAL
INTERPRETATION	
DISPENSATIONALIST	COVENANT THEOLOGIAN
ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH DIFFER	BLEND ISRAEL AND
THE CHURCH	

We trust that this overview will be helpful in placing the following studies into some perspective. It is similar to writing. If you have an outline to follow you know where you have been and where you are going. The information coming in can be placed where it belongs in time.

Reviewing this overview from time to time might be helpful for the newcomer to eschatology. It also might help the old timer to review what he has forgotten.

Perhaps a time line would be of value to the reader.

G	C	F	A	S	D	S	P	C	C	CHURCH	AGE	T	O	KINGDOM
G	ETERNITY													
O	R	A	B	A	A	O	R	H	R		R	L		R
D	E	L	R	U	V	L	O	R	O		I	D		E
	A	L	A	L	I	O	P	I	S		B			A
	T		H		D	M	H	S	S		U	T		T
T														
	I	A			O	E	T				L	E		
H														
	O	M			N	T					A	S		W
R	L	O	F											
	N										T	T		H
O	A	F	I											
											I			I
N	K	R												
											O	S		T
E	E	E												
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If you reproduce this layout on a separate piece of paper, you can then make notes as you go through your study.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF ESCHATOLOGY

The doctrine of the end times is not a subject that has been given the amount of study that some of the other sections of theology have been given.

The doctrine of Christology, for example went through many hashings and rehashings over the first few centuries, and we still aren't completely done. We haven't changed anything major in many years, yet sharpen the doctrine a bit from time to time.

Eschatology has not undergone that process. In recent years many have been doing some study, and many positions have been drawn. These positions are being redefined and revamped all the time. There are new positions coming along from time to time, because some have found systems that have a better basis than some of the old thoughts.

Eschatology has been viewed as an extension of Soteriology at times. It is the final step in the overall program of salvation.

Others have just tacked it on to the end of their theology, because they know it needs covering, yet they don't know where to put it. In recent times it has become a section of theology by itself.

Erickson mentions some possible reasons for the rise in interest in eschatology in recent times. I have adapted and added to his thoughts in case his volume is not available to you. (Erickson, Millard J., "CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985, P 1149ff)

1. The other divisions of theology are fairly well set, and the area of end times is fairly open to new study and development.
2. The entire western world is interested in the future. Corporations are into futurism studies and predications so they can plan and market accordingly. Their continued existence is based on knowing what to do in the future. Indeed churches are realizing that they should be doing this so they can minister adequately in the future.

The interest in the future will naturally create an interest in the far future. Many unsaved people have read Lindsay's books on the future just because they were interested in the future.

3. In the non-western world there is gloom and doom and nothing to look forward to in this life, thus many are interested in what the future may hold. There is a hope that things will become better. The third world church, is interested in the future times to know what is about to happen. It is a growing church and for the most part the end times information is new to them and their people.

4. The Socialism and Communism of our own day that predicts a take over of the world by their system of government may have been part of the reason for American interest in end times studies. This reason may be a historic reason soon with the seeming decline in Communism.

5. The threat of nuclear extinction, of winter scenarios, etc., that see the earth being destroyed by man, would naturally move some to look into the end times teachings of the Word.

6. Pastors want answers to the questions that their people are bringing to them. The alarmists that they read and see on the television are creating doubt and questions in the minds of people.

There are all varieties of interest in end times. Some people are real nuts and give all their efforts over to this study, while others could care less about the subject.

I had an employer that was a Lutheran. He asked me one day about the millennium and when it would be. I explained to him what I believed and gave him some charts. I warned him that I was sure his church would not teach this and that he might want to talk with his pastor about it. He asked his pastor one evening about what he thought about the millennium. His pastor replied, "We're all going to be dead and gone anyway, so why worry about it!" That was the total information that he had to share.

Somewhere we must find some middle ground to live on. We need to know what is coming and how it affects our lives, but there are many other things in Scripture that we also need to know.

Erickson also mentions in his book that he knows of college and seminary professors that conveniently never get to the prophetic books in survey classes, and others that teach theology that never get to section on eschatology. This is sad, for there is a lot of information in the Word that is prophetic and yet unfulfilled. It is information that we should be dealing with.

I will warn you up front that some schools are not teaching any school of thought. They give you all the ideas and allow you to sort through the information. Many years ago in a sermon one of the prominent Bible college presidents made the comment that he made it a habit to ask any graduate he meets, where they stand eschatologically. He stated that very few from one of our leading seminaries know where they stand. They can give you a run down on all positions, but they have not settled on anything in particular.

We will see that the different views of eschatology will generally vary in certain directions.

1. There are some that see the prophetic information as present and others see it as future.

The amillennialist and postmillennialist see things as going on at this time rather than in the future as the premillennialist views it.

2. There is either an optimistic view or pessimistic view of the years to come. The amillennialist and post millennialist see the future as getting brighter and brighter till all is completed. On the other hand the premillennialist sees the future as becoming worse and worse till the Lord comes.

3. The end of things will either come from man, his becoming better and better, and his bringing about all good on earth, or as the premillennialist states, God will bring all things to pass in His own time.

4. The Old Testament promises are in the process of being

fulfilled or, as the premillennialist sees it, they are yet future and will only come to pass in the end time.

5. Is it the church that will finally be uplifted and honored in the end, or is Israel going to be the focus of the end time activities? The premillennialist sees Israel being the only focus of the end times while others view it as God working with the church through to the end.

A chart should help to visualize these differences.

TOPIC	PREMILLENNIALIST
Amillennialism	

PROPHETIC TEXTS PRESENT TIME	FUTURE TIME
VIEW OF COMING YEARS OPTIMISTIC	PESSIMISTIC
ULTIMATE GOOD FROM MAN'S EFFORTS	GOD
PROPHETIC PROMISES FULFILLED NOW	YET FUTURE
ULTIMATE PROPHETIC CHURCH LIFTED UP RESULT	ISRAEL LIFTED UP

There has been over the years some changes of thinking concerning the end times. If you are interested in further study concerning liberal thought you might try Erickson p 1154 ff. He gives some of their thinking.

With this introduction we need to move on into our study. We will look briefly into the purpose of Christ's first coming.

In Mark's gospel he recorded the Lord's words, "...The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the gospel." Mark 1:15

Christ told his listener two things in this verse that are closely related, indeed the two are inseparable. First of all He mentioned that a time had been fulfilled, which He states is the reason the kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom is on their doorstep and it is because a period of time has been fulfilled.

Just what time was the Lord speaking of? In Daniel nine there is a text that we want to introduce to you. We won't go into great detail because others have covered this topic many times in good detail.

Daniel in 9:24-17 mentions some prophetic information which Christ used in Mark 1:15. Let us take a look at Daniel.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

"Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end of it shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

We want to notice some items in this passage.

The portion that states, "going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem..." relates to the edict of Ezra 1 which allowed the return of Jews to Jerusalem. They returned specifically to begin the rebuilding of the city. This was in 445 B.C. (SEE NOTE AT THE END OF THE FILE)

The statement, "the street shall be built again, and the wall" relates to the fact that the construction was completed. This event is recorded in Neh. 6:15 and 12:27 This completes one week of prophetic time which is seven years.

Another period of time is mentioned when Daniel records, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off" which speaks of Christ being crucified. The threescore and two weeks works out to be the exact amount of time between the completion of the walls and the time when Christ speaks of the Jews "day" (Lu 19:42) on the occasion of His weeping over Jerusalem. He has entered Jerusalem on the donkey knowing that the nation has rejected Him, His message, and His salvation. Within hours of this time He tells the disciples that it is time for Him to be crucified.

Dr. Pentacost in "THINGS TO COME" works through this timing in detail if you care to do further study on the subject.

The time is fulfilled - the kingdom is at hand - "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" (Lu 19:42) Christ knew that He was fulfilling Daniel nine, but He also knew that His people had rejected Him - their day had come and gone without their reacting properly.

The point of all this is to show that Christ was offering the Old Testament kingdom to the Jews at that time, but because of their rejection He did not set it up. Indeed there is one week of prophetic time left in Daniel nine that we will see later is the seven year tribulation when the Jews DO turn to their God and the Millennium then is set up for the Jewish people at the end of the tribulation.

There are other phrases in Daniel nine that are of importance also. "bring in everlasting righteousness" - Look at Matt. 3:15; "to anoint the most Holy" - Look at Matt. 3:16.

All was set to continue on with the last week of Daniel's prophecy, but things were placed on hold for a time. This created the Church Age in which we are now living in. I would like to repeat what you have read before, that this was not a surprise party for God - He had all of this planned out in advance.

A pastor in Denver pointed out a problem in what is said in this file.

I state in this file, "...relates to the edict of Ezra 1 which allowed the return of Jews to Jerusalem. They returned specifically to begin the rebuilding of the city. This was 445 B.C."

Technically this is incorrect. The Ezra 1 edict is not 455 B.C., but rather 538 B.C. The 455 date is the correct date for the beginning of the prophetic weeks of Daniel, but the edict should not have been the Ezra 1 edict. SORRY!

Some info to clarify the chronology of this topic:

TIME LINE:

This is a compilation of several sources.

538 BC

FIRST RETURN under Zerubbabel (have seen 536 BC also)
One author shows a return in 538 and Zerub. leaving in 537.
Ezra 1.14; 6.3-5; II Chron 36.22-23

516 BC

Temple completed. Ezra 6.16

458 BC

SECOND RETURN under Ezra. Ezra 7-10. (I've seen 459 on this as well.)

445 BC

THIRD RETURN UNDER Nehemiah. Neh 1-13.

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Dr. Prewitt suggests the following dates for the kings of this era:

521 BC

Darius I

486 BC	Xerxes I
465 BC	Artaxerxes I
425 BC	Xerxes II (some list this man as 424-423)
425 BC	Sogdianus
405 BC	Artaxerxes II
359 BC	Artaxerxes III
338 BC	Arses
336 BC	Darius III

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MISC INFO GATHERED FROM READING:

Walvoord in DANIEL THE KEY TO PROPHETIC REVELATION suggests four decrees.

- 1. Cyrus for the building of the temple/II Chron. 36.22-23; Ezra 1.1-4**
- 2. Darius confirmed Cyrus decree/Ezra 6.6-12 (Leupold suggests 517 BC)**
- 3. Artaxerxes/Ezra 7.11-26 (Leupold suggests 458 BC)**
- 4. Artaxerxes for the city/Neh 2.1-8 (Leupold suggests 445 BC)**

Leupold in EXPOSITION OF DANIEL held that Cyrus had the city in mind when he set his decree. The temple was the focal point of the decree, but that the city was assumed as part of the temple project. (The number of people involved would have required the building of many houses for people to live in while the temple was built.

**"decree of Cyrus mentions the temple and implies the city; the passage in Daniel mentions the city and implies the eternal temple."
(P 419)**

He agrees with the 538 BC year for the decree of Cyrus.

He suggests that the final command recorded in Neh. 2.7-8 is just a lumber order, so to speak, to fulfill the work that had been in progress for years.

Pentecost in THINGS TO COME p 244 mentions, "When we turn to the decree of Artaxerxes, made in his twentieth year, recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-8, for the first time is permission granted to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. This then becomes the beginning of the prophetic time appointed by God in this prophecy." This is in the context of stating that none of the other decrees specify the city to be rebuilt.

He mentions that from secular history we can date this as the month of Nisan BC 445. He also shows with comments from Sir Robert Anderson in THE COMING PRINCE that the 483 years fits perfectly with the triumphal entry of the Lord into Jerusalem to proclaim His Messiahship. (p 246)

To recap. I goofed, I was wrong, I was not correct. Actually, I included this mistake on purpose so that I could one day prove that I am not perfect. HA!

Thanks for pointing out my problem Dave!

07150

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH:

We need to understand that God has one overall program designed to bring glory to Himself, while within that context He deals with different sub-programs. Two of these sub-programs are Israel and the church.

God did not create the heavens and the earth and then create Israel. Israel came along much later in history. He had dealings with man long before He made His promises to Abraham which resulted in Israel. Then generations later the church came into being.

The basis of dispensationalism is the difference between Israel and the church. There is a difference and that difference must be maintained as you read and interpret the Bible. If the distinction is not maintained, it will result in confusion and error.

I must admit that most denominations and groups follow the practical aspect of distinguishing between Israel and the church. None of them bring blood sacrifices. They would reject the thought that Israel and the church are separate however.

May I remind you of the three parts to the "sine qua non" of Dispensationalism? Sine qua non is Latin for "without which not," or something that is indispensable to a belief or item. For example liquid is a sine qua non for a cake. There are three items which the dispensationalist will believe if he is going to be a dispensationalist. First, the dispensationalist holds to a difference between Israel and the church. Second, the dispensationalist holds to a plain, easy interpretation of Scripture. Finally the dispensationalist holds that God's overall program for all ages is the bringing of glory to Himself. (Salvation is one of the manifestations of that overall program of glory.)

TOPIC

CHURCH

ISRAEL

BIRTH AGAIN)	PHYSICAL (BORN A JEW)	SPIRITUAL (BORN
PROMISE SPIRITUAL	LITERAL (LIVING)	
POSITION IN THE KINGDOM	DEAD - RULING LIVING - RULED	RULING
POSITION TODAY CHILDREN	GOD'S PEOPLE (SET ASIDE)	GOD'S
SEED OF ABRAHAM	PHYSICAL	SPIRITUAL
ABRAHAM FATHER	HEAD OF ISRAEL	SPIRITUAL
LAND RULING/GLORIFIED	PHYSICAL	BODIES
NATIONALITY NATIONS	JEWISH NATION	FROM ALL
SALVATION CHRIST'S	LOOKING TOWARD CHRIST	UNDER BLOOD
GOD'S DEALINGS INDIVIDUALS	AS A NATION	AS
GOD'S GOVERNING SYSTEM	MOSAIC LAW	GRACE
TRIBULATION BEFORE	WILL GO THROUGH	TAKEN OUT

HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLING AT	HELPING BELIEVERS AT TIMES	ALL TIMES
STANDING GRACE	UNDER PROMISE	UNDER
GOD'S MEANING TO FATHER THE BELIEVER	ALMIGHTY GOD	GOD THE
CHRIST CHURCH	KING OF ISRAEL	HEAD OF
DIVINE POWER EMPOWERED	NONE	SPIRIT
CHRIST'S RETURN QUIETLY TO	IN POWER AND GLORY	RECEIVE
US		
INTERCESSION PRIESTHOOD OF	PRIESTHOOD	ALL
BELIEVERS		

We've seen multiple items which show that the church and kingdom are different and separate. The kingdom for all practical purposes is Israel.

From this we can apply our study of contrasts to our interpretation of scripture. They, Israel and the church, are different and should be treated as such. The promises of the kingdom or to Israel are not ours to claim. We are in the church and should seek those promises aimed at the church for use in our daily life.

It could be easily observed that the bulk of Scripture is directly aimed at Israel, though we can find much application in that majority for

use in the church age. We cannot, however, take each promise of God to Israel for ourselves.

Some texts to consider:

Acts 3:12 shows that Peter viewed the church people as separate from Israel.

Acts 4:8,10 show distinction between the people of the church and Israel.

Acts 5:21 shows a difference between some in the church and the children of Israel.

Romans 9:3,4 shows that Paul felt there was a difference between himself, a Jew, and his fellow Jews.

1 Corinthians 10:32 shows the distinction very nicely.

INTERPRETATION

When I move into a study of interpretation, I am reminded of a cartoon I saw once. The picture is of a little wimpy person who is standing by a huge strapping motorcycle person, with a skull and crossbones on his leather jacket. The little person says something to the effect that he is sorry but he will have to interpret the other man's last remark as a compliment.

Interpretation has always been a little subject to the context. In the late 1900's most believers find that their context allows them to sidestep the Bible's command to greet one another with an holy kiss. We relegate that portion to only the apostolic time, or any time other than ours.

There are different methods of interpretation. The technical name for these systems of interpretation is Hermenutics. The purpose of any of these systems is to learn the meaning of the Word of God. The types of hermenutics vary, however the main two are literal and allegorical. We will look at these two types.

We need to understand that your eschatological system will probably be determined by which system of hermeneutics you chose. The allegorical method leads to Amillennialism and Postmillennialism, while the literal method leads to Premillennialism.

May I illustrate why the method you use is important? Turn to Rev 1:14-16 and interpret it.

Using the allegorical method I would say it is a sword swallowing albino with sunburned feet, dressed in his bahai robe. A former student of mine claimed that it was an old time bath tub with brass feet in which the water is running. Neither of these interpretations can be proven correct, so we have a very serious problem in interpretation. Whose interpretation do we follow? Indeed, your interpretation might well be completely different that the two mentioned.

As a sidelight, it might be mentioned that when literal interpreters enter the book of Revelation, they usually leave all principles of interpretation behind. They usually end up using the allegorical method rather than the literal method. Just one brief example. I read a commentary on Revelation written during World War II and the creatures coming from the abyss were identified as the bombers of that war. A more modern commentary lists these creatures as the Huey helicopters of the Viet-Nam era. When a person leaves literal interpretation they leave themselves open for all sorts of discussion and confusion.

I. THE ALLEGORICAL METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

Ramm defines this system as follows: "Allegorism is the method of interpreting a literary text that regards the literal sense as the vehicle for a secondary, more spiritual and more profound sense." (Ramm, Bernard; "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, p 21)

In this method the historical and literal sense of a text is ignored, while the interpreter goes on to some deeper meaning. The use of this method allows for easy proof of different religious views and systems of thought.

Pentecost makes a statement that on the surface may be a little strong however it is worth considering. "It would seem that the purpose of the allegorical method is not to interpret Scripture, but to pervert the true meaning of Scripture, albeit under the guise of seeking a deeper or more spiritual meaning." (Taken from the book, THINGS TO COME by J. Dwight Pentecost. Copyright 1958 by Dunham Publishing. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. p 5)

This method sees very little historical importance to the text. The method may even ignore the original words and meaning entirely, while looking only to the message that those words convey. The method would see the words of scripture as the vehicle that carries the deeper spiritual truth. They seem to feel that scripture is a dump truck that is carrying the load of spiritual information to you the reader, and interpreter.

There are some dangers with the allegorical method. I will quote from Pentecost for our headings in the first three items (p 5-6) and add a fourth. (Taken from the book, THINGS TO COME by J. Dwight Pentecost. Copyright 1958 by Dunham Publishing. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.)

1. "it does not interpret Scripture."

Terry states: "...it will be noticed at once that its habit is too disregard the common signification of words and give wing to all manner of fanciful speculation. It does not draw out the legitimate meaning of an author's language, but foists into it whatever the whim or fancy of an interpreter may desire. As a system, therefore, it puts itself beyond all well-defined principles and laws." (Terry, Milton S.; "BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, no copy right, p 224)

If the authors of Scripture had thoughts to convey, would they cloud these thoughts in a menagerie of words? NO!

2. "the basic authority in interpretation ceases to be the Scriptures, but the mind of the interpreter."

If the man decides what the meaning is then the Scripture, and the authors of Scripture can give the man nothing by which he may interpret. He is on his own to do as he would please with the Word.

To think that some men are setting the Word of God aside for the PREFERRED THOUGHTS OF MAN!

3. "...one is left without any means by which the conclusions of the interpreter may be tested."

Who is correct? Who determines if I am correct, or if you are correct?

I sat in a study group in a fundamental church one evening. There were about 25 present. The leader read one of the Beatitudes and asked what it meant. Almost everyone had some thought about the meaning of the text. The study ended when the leader said, "Well I'm

not sure which of these ideas is the correct meaning, but I'm sure one of them is." There can never be any proven valid interpretation!

If God wanted to communicate with man through the Word and could do no better than that, then He is not a God with which we should desire communication.

4. It perverts Scripture.

Example: One author, when interpreting a passage concerning Joseph fleeing from Potifer's wife, surmised that Joseph had many mental hang ups concerning sex, and that his attitudes toward sex were very mixed up.

Allis (an amillennialist I believe) is quoted in "THINGS TO COME." His thoughts are recorded in relation to the idea that the system is in danger of doing damage to the meaning of the Scripture. "Whether the figurative or "spiritual" interpretation of a given passage is justified or not depends solely upon whether it gives the true meaning. If it is used to empty words of their plain and obvious meaning, to read out of them what is clearly intended by them, then allegorizing or spiritualizing is a term of reproach which is well merited." (Pentecost, J. Dwight; "THINGS TO COME"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958, p 6 quoting from "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH" By Allis, Oswald T. p 17)

Let us look at some further examples of allegorical interpretation.

Isa 11:6-9 mentions that the lamb and wolf will be together. An alogorist could say that this was Paul and Barnabus, and that Barnabus is trying to get along with the wolf Paul. Someone prove that this interpretation is incorrect.

Ezek. 37:16-18 speaks of two sticks with two names on them. One of the names is Joseph and of course the Mormon Church mentions that the Joseph is Joseph Smith! This is their basis for bringing all of his false teachings into a Biblical context. In truth the text speaks of Israel and Judah being reunited. (See vs. 19-22)

The allegorist believes that Israel in the Old Testament is the church now, and that all the promises for Israel are being fulfilled in the church today.

If that is true, then God promised me a chunk of the promised land. I want the corner of Tel'Aviv and Jericho for my mansion. That is in the upper middle class section of Jerusalem, mind you!

Luke 10:30-37 the account of the good Samaritan might be interpreted like this:

The man is Adam; The robbers illustrate the Devil; The priest depicts the Law; The Levite represents the Prophets; The Good man would probably be Christ; The Beast would be the physical body of Christ; The Inn is the Church and the 2 pence could be Christ and the Father. I think that you are beginning to get the picture.

II. THE LITERAL METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

A. Defined

Literal interpretation is giving to the words the same meaning they had when they were originally spoken or recorded. This demands that we attempt to determine how the term was used in the time when it was used. This would be the definition as well as the way in which it was used.

The system is known as the grammatical-historical method of interpretation. This is due to the fact that both the grammar and historical setting are important to the proper interpretation.

Ramm states:

"The customary, socially-acknowledged designation of a word is the literal meaning of the word.

"The 'literal' meaning of a word is the basic, customary, social designation of that word. The spiritual, or mystical meaning of a word or expression is one that arises after the literal designation and is dependent upon it for its existence.

"To interpret literally means nothing more or less than to interpret in terms of normal, usual, designation. When the manuscript alters its designation the interpreter immediately shifts his method of interpreting." (Ramm, Bernard; "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, p 64)

B. Evidence of the literal method:

Pentecost summarizes Ramm's comments on literal interpretation. (Taken from the book, ALL THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE by Herbert Lockyer. Copyright 1964 by Zondervan Publishing House. Used by permission. p 10.) Ramm's comments are located on p 123ff in his tenth printing of "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970, if you would like to study further. We will use these comments as a basis for further comments.

1. "That the literal meaning of sentences is the normal approach in all languages."

There is no known society that communicates in allegories. When a person says something, it is interpreted literally. Indeed, a society could not function if everyone was interpreting what others said to their own allegorical desire.

2. "That all secondary meanings of documents, parables, types, allegories, and symbols, depend for their very existence on the previous literal meaning of the terms..."

We cannot understand allegories unless we understand the text in which they appear in a literal sense.

Parables often are interpreted within their context so we can KNOW their meaning from the text instead of our imagination.

3. "That the greater part of the Bible makes adequate sense when interpreted literally."

Even the book of Revelation can be viewed in a literal sense unless the context states that some other mode of view is to be used. For

example, a phrase such as "it was like unto" would alert the reader that the item to be described is "like," not an exact replica.

4. "That the literalistic approach does not blindly rule out figures of speech, symbols, allegories, and types; but if the nature of the sentence so demands, it readily yields to the second sense."

In John 1:29, "Behold the Lamb of God" we see a figure of speech. John the Baptist did not mean a little woolly animal that came to be baptized! He was depicting Christ as the Lamb that would die for the sins of the world. Ps 98:8 mentions, "Let the floods clap their hands...." This is obviously not literal. You might look up Isa 55: 12 for another example.

Let me give you a modern illustration: "John is black." Please interpret that for me. The allegorically method might suggest that John has psychological problems, and that he has a very dark personality. The literal method on the other hand would submit that he is a Negro. This is from our view today, however this literal interpretation may change with a number of items.

HISTORICAL SETTING: He may have been a chimney sweep in past days.

GEOGRAPHICALLY: He may be a coal miner if he's in the south.

CONTEXTUALLY: John is black since he fell into the vat of ink.

Do you get the point? The historical setting, the geographical setting and the contextual settings may well vary your interpretation of a certain statement.

5. "That this method is the only sane and safe check on the imaginations of man."

When we remind ourselves of the suggested interpretations of John's vision of Christ in Revelation 1"14-16, we must admit that insanity would reign if we interpreted allegorically.

6. "That this method is the only one consonant with the nature of inspiration. The plenary inspiration of the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit guided men into truth and away from error. In this process the Spirit of God used language, and the units of language (as meaning,

not as sound) are words and thoughts. The thought is the thread that strings the words together. Therefore, our very exegesis must commence with a study of words and grammar, the two fundamentals of all meaningful speech."

The idea is this, if the Bible we hold is to be the message from God to man then the logical method of knowing what it means is to assume that God communicated it to man in a manner that would be consistent with his understanding, and not in a cloaked form that we cannot immediately understand.

Probably one of the prime examples of literal interpretation and fulfillment would be the prophecy against Tyre in Ezekiel 26. A study of history will show that this prophecy was fulfilled very precisely and very literally.

Within the literal camp we realize there are some methods of writing that the authors of scripture used which can alter how we view a particular text. We will take a brief look at these.

1. HYPERBOLE: To use exaggeration to draw attention to a point. For example: "I'm going to die if I don't get a coke!" A Biblical example of this is seen in Ps 6:6, "All the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears" See also Ps 78:27; 107:26.

2. ANTHROPOMORPHISM: This is the practice of assigning some body part to God to show one of His attributes. Ps 31:2, "Bow down thine ear to me" We know that God has no ears, for He is a spiritual being, yet we know that He hears us when we pray. Also see Ps 11:4; 18:15; 32:8.

3. IMPLICATION: The use of an item that illustrates the feeling you want to convey. In Ps 22:16, "For dogs have compassed me" we see that the enemy has surrounded the psalmist and his view of these enemies is one of fear that he might have from a pack of dogs. (Jer. 4:7; Matt 15:13 also.)

4. METAPHOR: This is a comparison of two things where one is said to be the other. Ps 84:11, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield" This implies that God is light and protection. Jn 10:9, "I am the door" - Christ declares with this phrase that He is 7 • 3 ☐Šthe

entrance through which man must approach God and not that He is wood and hinges! Hosea 7:8, "Ephraim is a cake not turned" He is half baked! NO! Ephraim is a man - not flour and water! (Ps 23:1; 84:11; 91:4 also.)

5. METONYMY: The using of one noun in place of another to describe a similarity between the two. Ps 73:9, "Their tongue walketh through the earth" This implies that wrong speech is heard everywhere. (Ps 5:9; 18:2; 57:9)

6. ZOOMORPHISM: A zoomorphism is the ascribing of an animal part to God so the reader can understand some concept about God. Ps 17:8, "Hide me under the shadow of thy wings" This depicts the protection offered to the believer by God. (Ps 36:7; 63:7; 91:4)

7. RHETORICAL QUESTION: The use of a question that requires the reader to accept or reject a fact. Ps 106:2, "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all his praise?" The implication is, that no one can do either. (Ps 35:10; 56:7; 94:6)

8. SIMILE: The simile is used to compare two similar items. Ps 1:3, "He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water" would indicate that the "He" is going to thrive as the well watered tree. (Ps 1:4; 5:12; 17:8; 131:2)

9. PERSONIFICATION: Giving a characteristic of a human to some inanimate object. Ps 35:10, "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee" This implies the inner depths of the psalmist. (Ps 77:16; 96:11; 104:19)

C. ADVANTAGES OF THE LITERAL METHOD:

Pentecost lists several advantages of the literal method from Ramm and then adds some of his own. I will paraphrase and combine these.

1. This method attempts to base its findings on facts and not the whims of man's mind. Facts gained from "grammar, logic, etymology, history, geography, archaeology, theology...." (Ramm)

2. The method requires similar controls upon interpretation to those controls that are imposed upon science. The information must be based upon fact.

3. The method has literally opened the scriptures since the reformation when Luther and others realized that the Word had a message for all of mankind. Many have followed through in history by using this method.

4. The method becomes its own standard of authority. The Word becomes the authority and not the theological system or whims of a man. The interpretation is compared with other Scripture instead of a theological system for correctness.

5. We are free to offer the Word to the common person that can read and understand it, instead of limiting its interpretation to only those that are trained in the mystic method of finding that illusive true meaning behind the words.

In short the allegorical method can only be limited by the number of people interpreting. They can each go his or her own way and none can disprove the other.

GUIDES TO THE LITERAL METHOD:

1. Interpret using all tools available. Meaning, grammar, logic, culture, geography and all others.

2. Interpret contextually.

3. Interpret figuratively only when necessary.

4. Interpret in light of how the scripture interprets. Look to see if the context has the Lord's interpretation included, before you go into long dissertations of error.

I trust that this has been adequate to convince all to interpret literally. When we read the newspaper we interpret literally, when we read road signs, we interpret literally and in all of life we interpret literally unless there is something in the context which indicates we should do

differently. So as we approach the most important Book in all of life, we must be consistent and interpret literally.

It would seem that the application of this section is obvious. The method of interpretation is critical to a proper understanding of scripture, thus be sure that your method is correct.

By the same token, you might be sure that your teachers and church leaders use the same method, rather than a method that could lead your church off into false doctrine.

There is the thought of your own family as well. As you take time to teach your children, be sure that you tell them how to interpret the Bible. This is a major doctrine they will grasp quite easily. They understand you because they already interpret literally and would see any other method of interpretation as foolish.

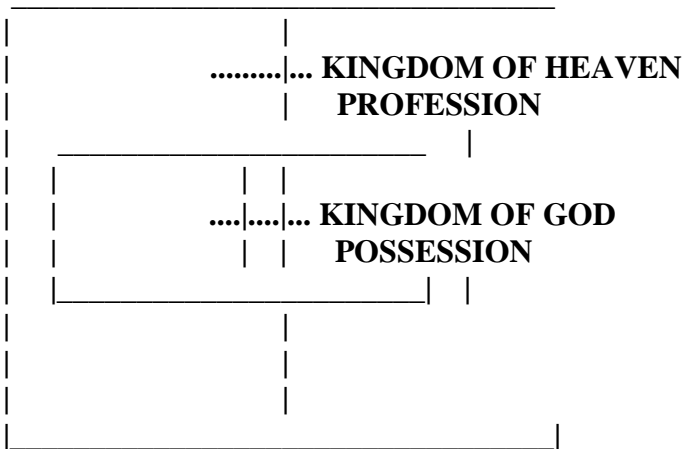
Teach the method in your Sunday School as well. All believers need to know this doctrine!

Finally, know that any method other than the literal method will lead you into false doctrine. You may also know that if you run into someone that is not interpreting literally that you are talking to someone that holds to false doctrine. BEWARE.

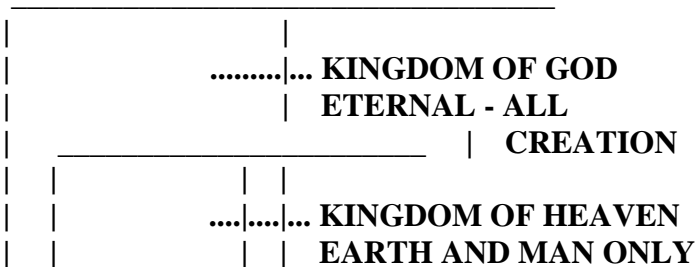
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

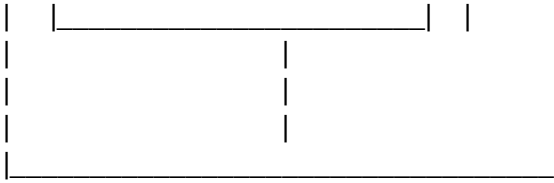
Before you begin this section there is an assignment that would add to your overall study in this area. In appendix five you will find a listing of all of the references to the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. Take time to look these references over for yourself. Find out what the two kingdoms are in your own mind before going on with the study.

There are several thoughts on the relationship between the two terms, Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God. A few charts will depict these thoughts:



This view would see the two kingdoms as existing at the same time (The Millennium) with the distinction that one contains only believers, while the other would have both saved and lost for occupants.





This position would view the Kingdom of God as the rule of God over His entire creation of all eternity, while the Kingdom of Heaven would be His rule over man and the earth during the time beginning with creation and ending with the start of eternity.

Others would picture the two kingdoms as two overlapping circles. While there are differences there are similarities where the two kingdoms overlap. Others would see no distinction between the two terms and would use them interchangeably.

J. Lewis Smith reportedly held that the two kingdoms were the same and that the kingdom was equal to the church. He felt that John The Baptist began proclaiming the kingdom, and that it came into being at Pentecost. He felt that it would run through the return of the Lord.

The "INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA" suggests that the terms are completely interchangeable. The author of the article equates the term heaven and God. The two are the same in his thinking.

Larkin suggests that the kingdom of heaven is earthly - the Millennial rule of Christ on earth. The kingdom of God will be merged into God's eternal, heavenly, and universal kingdom, the kingdom of God. Ironside, as I read him, viewed the kingdom of God as the eternal kingdom, while viewing the kingdom of heaven as the period from the ascension to the second coming. Barnes sidesteps the issue as far as I can find in a brief search. Matthew Henry seems to hold the idea that the kingdom of heaven was present from the day of Pentecost and ran on into eternity.

This study will discuss the thought that the two kingdoms are referring to the Messianic - 1000 year kingdom in the end times, while understanding there is a slight difference in the two.

SOME TERMS TO CONSIDER:

MILLENNIAL KINGDOM: This is the kingdom of the end times which comes to us under different terms: The Millennium, the Davidic kingdom restored, the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth and at times the mediatorial kingdom. The term mediatorial seems best reserved for the idea which follows.

MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM: The mediatorial kingdom would be the thought of God's rule over man, either via spokesmen or directly. This would include the rule of God through the priestly, kingly and prophetic systems, while also the rule of the church (kingdom in mystery form), and ultimately the rule of Christ in the Millennium.

UNIVERSAL KINGDOM: This is not a Biblical term but will help us understand the kingdoms, or the different ways in which God rules over man. This kingdom is the overall rule of God over all that is in His domain. This would be the pre-creation rule over the angelic host, as well as the post creation time of eternity.

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: Specifically this term is introduced in the Gospels and seems to refer to the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth in the end times. There may be three aspects to this kingdom. 1. The Kingdom was offered to the Jews by Christ, and was rejected by the Jews. This would have been the Messianic kingdom. 2. Some view the kingdom in existence at this time in mystery form. The kingdom in mystery form is the time between the cross and the second coming, or as we know this time - the church age. 3. The kingdom is future and is the Millennium. The emphasis in the gospels seems to be on the millennial kingdom.

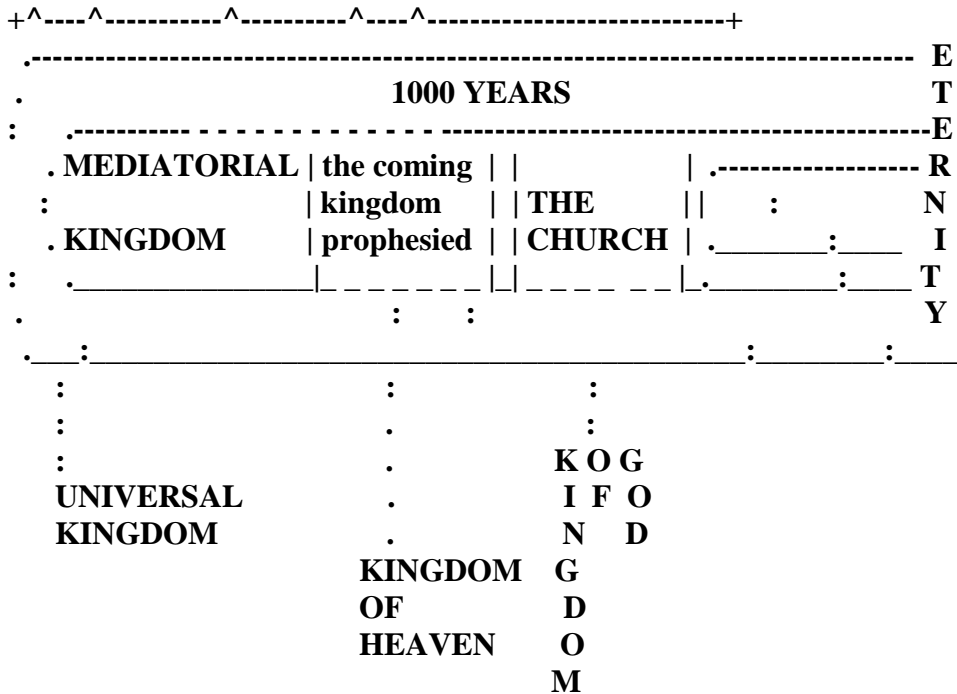
KINGDOM OF GOD: This is the kingdom of only believers that God is ruling over. Again there may be several aspects to this kingdom, though the gospel emphasis seems to be on the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.

Thus, the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God are a unique aspect of the mediatorial kingdom, while all of these are within the universal kingdom. A chart should help.

**THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
AND**

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

C A	CAPTIVITY	KINGDOM OFFERED AND
REJECTED		
R D		
E A	kingdom	
A M	postponed	kingdom
T		in mystery
I		form
O		
N		



THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS GOD'S RULE OVER SAVED PEOPLE IN THE MILLENNIUM. JOHN 3:3

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS THE RULE OF CHRIST OVER ALL PEOPLE, SAVED AND LOST DURING THE 1000 YEAR KINGDOM.

**THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS DELIVERED TO GOD BY CHRIST
AT THE END OF THE 1000 YEARS. I COR 15:24**

GOD WILL REIGN FOREVER. REV 11:15

Now we need to concentrate on the topic of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. There are basically four differences between the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God. 1. In the Kingdom of God there is no mixture of good and bad. On the other hand the kingdom of heaven has a mixture. 2. The kingdom of heaven is all inclusive - all that are in under God's control. (this includes the angels.) The kingdom of God seems to contain believers only. 3. The means of entrance into the kingdom of God is via the new birth, while all are automatically in the kingdom of heaven. 4. The Kingdom of God is inward and spiritual while the Kingdom of Heaven is outward and physical.

BIBLICAL EVIDENCE: The concept of the kingdom is an Old Testament concept.

The Kingdom of heavens is mentioned in Ps 103:19, "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." This suggests that the rule is over lost as well as saved and is clearly in the heavenly realm.

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom yet future according to Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This will be an ongoing kingdom that transcends time.

There are many references to God's kingdom in the Old Testament. Zech 14:9, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." This seems to be an earthly kingdom. Zech 14:16, "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles." Again, we see an earthly kingdom. Thus, we should not be surprised that the term kingdom is not defined in the New Testament. The New Testament Jew knew

what was being spoken of, when people spoke of the kingdom. The thought of a coming kingdom was uppermost in the Jewish mindset.

Christ and John the Baptist both used the terms in the Gospels without giving definitions to them. Indeed, the disciples, nor the people questioned them as to what they meant. From this we must assume that the kingdom mentioned in the Old Testament is the kingdom offered by Christ and John The Baptist.

The question is this. ARE THE TWO KINGDOMS THE SAME? (Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven) We need to consider this for a time.

PARALLEL PASSAGES IN RELATION TO TIME

The Gospels seem to use the two terms interchangeably.

1. The preaching of the kingdom. Matt. 4:17, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mark 1:14-15 "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." It seems that these are the same event and both terms are used.

2. Mystery of the kingdom. Matt. 13:11 (vs 11-17) This passage tells us that the parables were given to keep some from understanding the Mysteries of the kingdom. Mark 4:11 Is the same. Again this seems to be the same sequence of events and both terms are used. (Luke 8:10 may also be the same event.) (The order of events in Matthew depict Christ by the seashore, Christ then entered the ship, the parable of the sower, the call to hear, the purpose of teaching in parables, the beginning of the teaching on the mystery.)

The idea of keeping them from understanding is not a refusal on God's part to allow them to be saved, but rather a refusal on God's part to allow them entrance into the kingdom they had rejected. An illustration might help. The Jews were in the wilderness 40 years wandering around. This was not entirely for the purpose of punishing the Jews. It was also an opportunity for God to allow the Amorites dwelling in the promised land time to turn to God. The Israelites at

the end of the forty years then entered the land destroying the Amorites, the people who God had judged due to their rejection of Him. God kept the Israelites from the Land because they were not worthy of receiving from Him that which they had rejected. Matt 13: was a condemnation of the Jews because of their rejection.

3. The preaching of the 12 disciples. Matt 10:7, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke 9:2, "And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." The events are very similar and both terms are used.

4. John the Baptist in prison. Matt 11:11, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Luke 7:28, "For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." As before, we see the same context with the different terms used almost interchangeably.

PARALLEL PASSAGES IN RELATION TO TEACHING

1. Entrance into the kingdom: Matt. 7:21-23 mentions that entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven is by doing the will of God. Only a believer can do the will of God and understand God's will.

Entrance is also linked to conversion in Matt. 18:2-3, "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. It is linked to acceptance in Luke 18:17, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." Both terms used in the same context.

2. The problem of the rich: Matt. 19:23-24, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Mark 10:23-25, "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were

astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Verse 23 of both texts are identical passages and both terms are used. Indeed in Matthew the statement is made in two ways using both terms.

3. The time of the Kingdom of God: Luke 16:16 seems to indicate that John the Baptist's appearance on the scene introduced a new emphasis, that of the preaching of the Kingdom of God. (Luke 11:20; Matt. 12:28) In Christ's time it was presented.

4. The poor - an integrated part of the kingdom: This may be linked to the fact that the poor and the down trodden are often more receptive to the message of the Savior. He offered peace and good in the next life, even if there were neither in this life. (Matt. 5:3; Luke 6:20; Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28-29)

5. The expectation of the kingdom: The Jews were looking and waiting for the Davidic kingdom. Mk. 15:43 mentions that Joseph of Arimethia was waiting for the Kingdom of God. He was an Old Testament believer. (Luke 23:51 also)

6. The kingdom and the Lord's table: Matt. 26:28-29 Christ won't partake of it again until in "my" Father's kingdom. (Mk. 14:25 and Luke 22:18 both mention this in ref to Kingdom of God.) **THIS KINGDOM IS YET FUTURE!**

7. The relationship of the living disciples to the kingdom: The transfiguration was a glimpse of this kingdom, which tells us that it was yet future as well as that it will be quite glorious. (Matt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Luke 9:27)

THE USE OF THE TERM "KINGDOM OF GOD" OUTSIDE THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

1. In Jo. 3:3 it states that rebirth is the requirement for entrance into the kingdom. In verse 10 Nicodemus asked Christ a question concerning the kingdom, and Christ confronted him with the fact that

he taught Israel and did not understand the kingdom. This shows that the Old Testament saint should know of the kingdom.

2. Acts 1:3-6 shows that the kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God are the same and yet future to the ascension.

3. Acts 8:12 shows there are two parts to the message. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." It seems that the apostles saw no clear distinction between the kingdom message and the claims of Christ. They were involved in preparing the world for the kingdom that was yet to come. Even in the last chapter of Acts, Paul is preaching the coming kingdom. (Acts 28:30-31)

Paul saw the kingdom as coming, yet future, and directly linked to the claims of Christ. (Acts 14:22 also shows it future.)

4. Acts 19:8 Shows that the message of the Kingdom of God was to the Jews.

5. Acts 28:23,31 Indicates that the kingdom in question is the kingdom of the Old Testament. He spoke to them of Christ, and the kingdom from the law.

6. I Cor. 6:9-10 lists many that won't be in the Kingdom. (Gal 5:21 also)

MATTHEWS USE OF THE PHRASE "KINGDOM OF GOD"

1. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN SPEAKING TO ALL JEWISH PEOPLE. It is used in 6:33 where he is speaking to multitudes and the disciples. There is no indication that Jewish leaders were present thus indicating that the message was for the masses as well as the national leadership.

2. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN HIS POWER WAS IN QUESTION. It is used in 12:28 when Christ is accused of casting out demons in the power of Satan.

3. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN HIS AUTHORITY WAS IN QUESTION. It is used in 21:23-32 when the elders and priests questioned his authority.

4. CHRIST USED THE TERM WHEN HIS PERSON WAS IN QUESTION. It is used in 21:43 when He is rejected by the nation of Israel.

5. CHRIST USED THE TERM WITH THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. It is used in 19:23-24 when He equates the term Kingdom of God with the term Kingdom of Heaven. (There may be significance in the passage following this in that the disciples in contrast have forsaken all to follow Christ.)

We must conclude from these items that this kingdom is of great importance to and of close connection with the Lord.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Biblical evidence seems to indicate that the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are referring to the same time, or kingdom, and that is the physical kingdom of Christ on earth which follows the tribulation (the Millennium).

2. These terms were not defined in the New Testament - just used. Both John The Baptist and Christ began their ministries with the terms as though everyone knew what they were talking about, and indeed they did. They were accustomed to the terminology from their spiritual upbringing.

Some might wonder - if the two are so similar why were two terms used? Matthew used the term kingdom of heaven to Jews for they were looking for an earthly kingdom, thus he stressed the "heaven" aspect to show that the kingdom was coming from heaven. Matthew may also have used it as a substitute for the term "God" which was sacred to the Jewish leaders. The other writers were not writing to the Jews so they used God. The term heaven has a different meaning to the Gentile mind of Christ's day. The gentiles had many god's and they could send a kingdom from heaven, however when the Gospel writers mentioned a kingdom from God they would know they were speaking of the God of Jesus.

3. The Kingdom of Heaven will contain both lost and saved. (The lost come from those born into the millennium.)

4. The Kingdom of God seems to consist of only believers.

5. Matt 19:23 and Mk 10:23 show an interchange of terms within two writers view of the same statement.

6. Difficulty: On the one hand the scriptures show that the Kingdom of Heaven has lost and saved, while the Kingdom of God has saved only in it, yet on the other hand, scripture seems to use the terms interchangeably. Matt 19 23; Mk 10 23. There are two possible answers:

a. The terms were very general in Matthew and Mark, but took on more specific meaning later in time. (Matthew preceded Luke and it is probable that Mark was the first gospel written, so it would have preceded both Matthew and Luke.) We know John was later so this leaves Matthew and Mark being written early, using the terms in a general sense, while later we have Luke and John using the terms more specifically.

b. The Matthew 19 and Mark 10 passages seem to show that the two terms are used interchangeably and there is no difference between the kingdoms. It is possible that the Matthew 19:23 and Mark 10:23 texts mention entry into the kingdom only, and the terms were used generally. There may well have been a distinction and they were not interested in conveying the thought of that distinction.

Let us end with a dispensational fundamentalist quoting a dispensational fundamentalists.

"In regard to the terms kingdom of God and the kingdom of the heavens it is to be observed that, while not synonymous, they are used interchangeably. What distinctions there are are not inherent in the words themselves, but in their usage in the context. Both of these terms are used to designate the millennial kingdom, the spiritual kingdom, and the mystery form of the kingdom. While we recognize the distinctions between the earthly and the eternal aspects of the kingdom program, we must guard against making the terms absolute.

Only the context can determine the meaning intended to be conveyed by the terms." (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 need is to look at the context to see if there is a specific, while normally using the terms interchangeably.

07350

THE SECOND COMING

Before we begin, I would like to raise a question for your consideration. If I could zap you into a full day without need of working for a living, without family responsibilities, without studies - NO I CANNOT BRING HEAVEN TO PASS - but if I could do that for you, what would you do with your day? Go fishing, camping, shopping, buy a car, sleep, visit friends - just what would you do?

Okay, let us go on to our subject, and then at the end of the section we will look at this thought of "a day off."

THE SECOND ADVENT

Cambron gives statement to the importance of the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord in Scripture.

"It is said that one out of every twenty-five verses of the New Testament speaks of the Second Coming, while in the Old Testament there are eight verses concerning the second Coming to every verse concerning the First Coming." (Cambron, Mark G. D.D.; "BIBLE DOCTRINES"; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, p 264)

The term ADVENT means simply, "arrival." Webster's first definition is the Catholic idea of four Sundays before Christmas. We view the Christmas arrival, or advent of Christ as the first advent, and we look forward to His second advent, when He comes to take care of the program of God, and bring it to a final culmination.

The fact of the event is seen in the following passages.

a. Christ Himself spoke of the coming in relation to His preparing a place for the disciples in Heaven. This is a very joyful contemplation for the believer. His Lord and Savior is now at this time preparing an eternal abode for each of us personally.

What a thought! Jo 14:3

b. The angels spoke of it when they spoke of the Lord's ascension. It should be noted that He will return in like manner - that is physically and visibly. This will be the second coming and not the rapture. Acts 1:11

c. Peter spoke of it in one of his sermons. Acts 3:20, "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:"

He also spoke of the coming in his two epistles. I Pet 5:4, II Pet 1:16.

d. Paul spoke of the Lord's return several times. I Cor 1:4-7; Rom 11:26; Philippians 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; I Thess 5; II Thess 1:7,10; I Tim 6:14; II Tim 4:8; Tit 2:11-14.

Some might question some of the references that are listed. Some of them are normally listed as rapture texts. If you consider Paul and his every looking for the Lord's return and relate that to the preaching that he did, it is not hard to think that he was speaking of the second coming rather than the rapture. The texts are prophetic of the rapture, however from Paul's viewpoint, I believe that he was talking of the coming. We will look at this in more detail later.

e. The author of Hebrews spoke of it. Heb 9:28

f. James spoke of it. Acts 15:13-16; James 5:7

g. John spoke of it. I Jo 2:28; I Jo 3:2; Revelation 19:11-18.

h. Jude spoke of it. Jude 14

i. The prophets spoke of it. Jude 14; Isa 45:23; Ezek 21:25-27.

Years ago I ran into a Roman Catholic while doing some door to door visitation that really thrilled me for a time. As I shared the gospel with her she agreed with everything that I said. When I asked her if she had received Christ, she said that she had. I left thinking that she was probably a believer. Some time later I discovered that the Roman Catholic receives Christ every time they go to mass. The eucharist is Christ's very body. The woman was talking about mass and I was talking about salvation.

As you talk with people be aware that their meaning for words may not be the same as your meaning. This is true in relation to the term "second advent." It has different meanings to different people, so you need to find out what a person means. Some of the possibilities are as follows:

a. Some view the rapture as the second advent. Christ coming to earth to receive His own unto Himself. This may or may not be differentiated from the coming to set up the kingdom.

b. Others view the rapture as the introduction to the entire second advent time. The second advent includes the rapture, the tribulation, the second coming to introduce the kingdom and the kingdom age.

The first advent was 33 plus years long so the second one needn't be an event, but can be a number of years in length.

This would be seen in two phases, as Cambron mentions (p 266). The first phase is viewed as being the rapture of the church, and the second phase the second coming in glory to set up the kingdom.

c. Another possibility is that the coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation is the second advent. At that time He will set up His Millennial kingdom.

The rapture is not the second advent in that the first advent was a coming to the earth and the second will have the same idea (a physical visible appearance). The rapture is not a coming to the earth, but only a secret coming in the clouds for the saints.

d. There are some that view the second advent as a spiritual coming and that it will not be a physical return of Christ. This may take a number of forms. One man that I knew held that the second coming was when the Lord comes to take a believer home (at the point of physical death). The problem with this view is that the world system as we know it can never come to an end. Christ will never come to finish up unfulfilled prophecy and earth would have to continue for eternity.

Chafer mentions that Dr. William Clarke held the spiritual coming view. He sees the coming of Christ in a spiritual sense - that Christ is

here in His church. The new Jerusalem mentioned in the revelation is the "ideal church" and not a coming literal city. Chafer deals with the belief on page 283 and following of Vol. V.

and from rapture to the consummation we have **THE DAY OF THE LORD**, and following the consummation we have **THE DAY OF GOD**.

THE DAY OF MAN: Some have suggested that from the fall to the rapture we have the day of man.

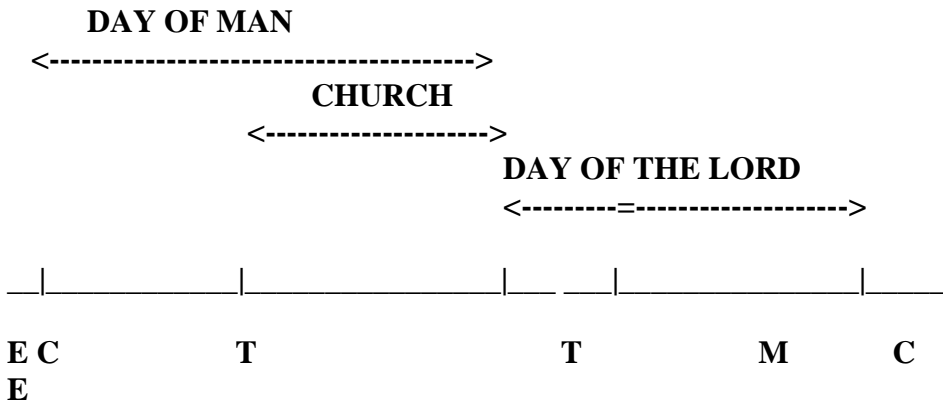
THE DAY OF THE LORD, I Thess 5:2, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

This shows that the day of the Lord is introduced by the rapture, yet we see within the context some items that might indicate that it covers more territory. In 5:23 there may be an element of judgment for the believers, which would indicate the judgment seat of Christ.

Verse three could indicate the trouble of the tribulation that was to come as well, thus the term may indicate much more than just the rapture.

THE DAY OF GOD, II Pet 3:12, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

THE DAYS OF GOD'S PROGRAM



T R E E R A R N T N I I I T O T Y N Y P F A U S T T U R E	H E C R O S S	R I B U L A T I O N	I L L E N N A I U M	O N S U M I O N
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**DAY OF CHRIST: Philippians 2:16
I Corinthians 1:8
II Corinthians 1:14**

DAY OF GOD: II Peter 3:12 (consummation)

SOME MISCELLANEOUS TEXTS AND TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

The day of Jesus Christ: I Cor. 5:5; Philip. 1:6

The day of Christ: Phil 1:10; Phil 2:16; II Thes. 2:2

The day of God Almighty: Rev. 16:14

The day of the Lord God: Jer. 46:10

**The day of the Lord: Acts 2:20; I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 1:14; I Thes. 5:2;
II Pet 3:10**

We want to list some of the differences between the rapture and the second coming.

RAPTURE	2ND COMING
1. The devil is still free	The devil will be bound soon
2. The Lord comes in the air	The Lord returns to the earth
3. Saints go up	Saints come with Him
4. Living saints translated	No translation
5. Dead church age saints raised	Old Testament saints raised
6. World unchanged	World changed physically
7. Imminent	Preceded by many prophetic events
8. New Testament truth	Old and New Testament truth
9. Saved only involved	Saved and lost involved (lost will be destroyed)
10. Christ coming for the church	Christ coming for Israel
11. To remove church	To establish the kingdom

The fact that Christ stated that He would return is plain from Jo 14:1-3.

We might make note of the fact that one of the purposes of the Lord's return is to gather His people unto Himself. There are other events that come along with this, but in Christ's mind at this point in time (early in His ministry) was the gathering of His people.

THE FACTS OF THE RETURN:

Acts 1:11 In like manner would indicate a number of items to consider. a. The leaving was visible and witnessed. b. The leaving was from the earth's surface. c. The leaving was in a physical form. d. The leaving was from the Mt. of Olives (Acts 1:12) To be in like manner, then we should look for all of the above to be true at the second coming of Christ. A literal, visible, physical return to the surface of the earth.

There are other references to the second coming in the Old Testament that you might want to read. Ezek. 43:1-7; Zech. 14:4.

Matthew 24:27 also mentions that it will be very visible.

Bancroft in his Elemental Theology (p 356 ff) lists the signs of the second coming. I will list those for you with the references that he uses. This is for your future consideration.

War	Matt 24:7
Famine	Matt 24:7
Earthquakes	Matt 24:7
Industrial unrest and lawlessness	II Thess. 2:7
Multiplied transportation	Dan 12:4; Nahum 2:4
Apostasy and demonic interest	I Tim 4 1
Commercial signs	Rev 13:16-17
Political signs	Dan 2 & 7
Jewish sign	Matt 24:32-34

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Turn to I Thess. 5:1 for a few moments and we will make a few observations.

a. Paul mentions, in verses 1-2, that they need not discuss the time of the return of the Lord. It will be as a thief in the night. They would not know when it will occur. The Lord told the disciples in the book of Acts that no man knew the schedule of the end times Acts 1:6-7. They were seeking information, but Christ gave them none, other than that the Father will take care of the schedule. (Some other refs that picture the swiftness that is in mind are: Rev 3:3; Rev 16:15; II Pet 3:10; Matt 24:43; Lu 21:34.)

b. In verse 3 Paul tells them that when people cry peace and safety that they should look out for destruction is coming.

c. In verses 4-10 Paul lets them know that they needn't worry of the coming, nor should they go to sleep to wait for it. They are to prepare and watch for the coming of the Lord, but they are to be busy with living until it comes.

He encourages them to realize that they are of the light and not of the darkness. (John 2:11; Acts 26:18 may be of interest to you along this line.)

d. Paul encourages them to bring one another along in the proper spiritual life so they will be properly prepared at the coming of the Lord in verses 11-23 (vs 23) "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I'd like to just list the things Paul encourages them to bring into their lives. Be not in darkness, let us not sleep, let us watch, be sober, put on breastplate of faith and love, put on helmet of salvation, comfort yourselves together, edify one another, know those that labor among you, know those that are over you, know those that admonish you (May I suggest that this is a strong indication that you have a responsibility to chose of your leaders and get to know them?), esteem the three above highly, be at peace among yourselves, warn the unruly, comfort the feebleminded (Who are the feebleminded? The mentally handicapped, the mentally injured, the senior citizens that are loosing their ability to operate properly mentally), support the

weak, be patient with all, don't render evil for evil, follow that which is good, rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, give thanks in everything, quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesyings, prove all things, hold fast to the good, and ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL.

WOW, WHAT A LIST TO LIVE BY! Can you envision a church that is attempting to live according to that list? Would it not be an awesome body to behold?

I would like to relate a story that describes some people who were serious about their Lord's return, and how they were living.

The occasion was some revival services in Alliance, NE at the Evangelical Free Church. The people involved were witness to people being saved, marriages coming back together, baptisms, and backsliders returning to their Lord. This was all due to the fact that the church people and the evangelist were serious about living their life as if the Lord could come at anytime.

The evangelist lives as the Lord provides and does not have charges for his services. All that they receive goes to "get by" and the rest is put back into the ministry. They live in trailers and log cabins to conserve on expenses at their home base.

2. Let us return to our question about the day off that I would like to give you. How do those things you wanted to do relate to the fact that Christ is returning at any moment, at any time? Would you like to be doing those things when Christ returns?

IN LIGHT OF CHRIST'S SOON RETURN, MIGHT WE WANT TO BE SERVING HIM TO THE UTMOST OF OUR ABILITY?

I WOULD THINK THAT THIS WOULD BE OUR DESIRE!

We believe in the immanent return of the Lord, but we practice the someday return of the Lord.

I have often used an illustration that might help you in your thinking. Most of us know who Mr. Spock is. The Vulcon on Star Trek that is the ultimate in logic. I often suggest that congregations and classes

think of a scenario which states that Mr. Spock is orbiting the earth and is observing the fundamental churches of the world trying to find out what Fundamental Christianity taught. Just what would he deduce logically from the facts that he observed. Might I take the liberty to just suggest a list of possible observations?

Fighting, arguing, division, materialism, segregation, arrogance, pride, lack of interest in spiritual things, lack of acting on belief systems, etc. Now, just what would Mr. Spock deduce? Would he ever think of the second coming of the Savior of this people?

I trust that as you consider the truth of the second coming that you will consider how you live. Are you living as if you could be gone tomorrow, or are you living like you are settling in for the duration of life?

07400

THE RAPTURE

Psalm two from the American Standard Version:

"Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing?

"The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, {saying},

"Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us.

"He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision.

"Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure:

"Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion.

"I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee.

"Ask of me, and I will give {thee} the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

"Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

"Serve Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling.

"Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him."

The Psalmist spoke of a time coming when the Lord would rule a kingdom on earth. There will be much said of this kingdom before the end of this study, however there is an item of prophecy which the Old Testament is silent on. Indeed, much of the New Testament is also silent on it. The rapture or the taking out of the church is the next topic of study.

As we begin, we want to make known that the term "rapture" is not found in the New Testament. It is a Latin translation of the term "caught up" in I Thess. 4:17 which means "seize" or "snatch". The Latin term is "rapare". (I Cor. 15:50-58; II Cor. 12:1-4; Rev. 12:5)

The Greek term is "harpazo" which is translated "take," "catcheth," "pluck," "caught away," and "pulling" in the New Testament. There is a bit of irony in this snatching away in that the meeting of the raptured saints both dead and alive will be in the air, the domain of Satan himself. (Eph. 2:2) The end result of this catching away will be "so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:17)

John 14:1-3 mentions that the Lord went to prepare a place for us and that he would return for us. It is that return for us that we are speaking of. He will come to take us home to be with him during the tribulation period, and then we will return with Him at the Second Coming to assist in the kingdom.

I Cor. 15:51-52 mentions that Paul shared a mystery with the believers at Corinth. "Behold, I show you a mystery:" A mystery in the New Testament is something that has not been revealed before. Rom. 16:25 shows that Christ is a mystery that was "kept secret since the world began,"

Our text shows that the living believers will be changed and the dead will be resurrected. The Old Testament saint knew about the coming resurrection, but what Paul shows here in I Cor. is something new. (Job 19:25, Is 26:19, and Dan 12:2 indicate that the Old Testament person knew of the resurrection.)

We need to look at some texts that may cause some confusion in the area of the rapture:

Acts 1:11 "...This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This is speaking of the 2nd Coming and not the Rapture, for the Lord will not return to the earth as such at the Rapture. It is mentioned that he will return in the air, but the second coming speaks of Him returning to earth.

Matt. 24:40-41 seems to be the rapture however it fits much better at the end of the tribulation when some will be taken in judgment and others are left on the earth to enter into the Millennial kingdom. The rapture relates to New Testament saints only, as is very evident in I Thess. 4:10, "in Christ".

One other text which may need clarification is I Thess. 3:13, "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." (Also I Thess. 4:14 is a similar verse.) These verses speak of the fact that the souls and spirits of the New Testament saints that have been in the presence of the Lord will return with Christ at the rapture and will be reunited with the new bodies, while the living saints will be changed. The great meeting of the saints will be in the air.

The question that is prevalent in most theologians minds is when does this occur? Some throughout history have attempted to set dates for the coming of the Lord. Recently the Sword Of The Lord printed the following about one of our popular evangelists. "Promoting his new A.D. 2000 - The End? video, Van Impe says, `For the first time in my life and ministry, I'm willing to declare that this decade of destiny will bring us into close proximity to the return of Jesus Christ.' He went on to say. `The year 2000 holds special significance in terms of time left for mankind!'" (Sword of the Lord, Vol. LVII, No. 22; October 25, 1991)

The scripture does not give us a time table for the end times so we must deduce when the different events happen. Scripture gives us a great deal of information which can help us to have a general picture of what is going happen, but we must not fall into the trap of setting dates for the beginning of these events. Indeed we should not assume, as some have, that we can bring about the beginning of these events by works that we can accomplish.

Rev 4:1 states, "After this I looked and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up here, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." Many believe this refers to the rapture of the church. The rapture will occur at this juncture in the chronology of Revelation even if you don't view this reference as speaking of the event.

INDICATORS OF A RAPTURE AS WE LOOK BACK TO THE SCRIPTURE:

1. Israel's prominence in the tribulation demands a rapture: Israel is the focal point of the tribulation time and there is no reason for the church to be present. (Rev. 4-20 shows the tribulation.)

Rev 4:1-2, mentions, "After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and [one] sat on the throne."

The first three chapters speak of the church and 4:1-2 is a transition to the tribulation period which is contained in the following chapters. Through out this section the Jews are in focus, though the gentiles are also present.

2. The distinction between Israel and the church demands a rapture: There is always a distinction between Israel and the church throughout the New Testament. Why would the church be mixed together with Israel for seven years through the tribulation? It does not seem sensible.

Points to ponder: a. There is no mention of the church in the tribulation. b. Would Christians worship in a temple? No. c. Rom 11 shows Gentiles being grafted in for a time, but also they will be set aside and the Jews grafted back in indicating the absence of the church as the Lord draws to a close His dealings with Israel.

3. The immanent return of Christ demands a rapture: The doctrine of the immanent return of Christ requires an unexpected return, not

one that is announced by seven years of trouble and destruction. (I Thes 5:1-2 shows the immanent return.) I Thes 5:11 tells the believers to encourage one another. If the tribulation was what they were to face, how could they encourage one another with the fact that terrible times were coming.

4. The government of the tribulation demands a rapture: During Daniel's 70th week the earthly government comes under the control of Satan. The New Testament teaches that the believer is to be subject to the government placed over them. (Rom 13) This would place believers under the control of Satan which is inconsistent with the teaching of the New Testament.

5. The silence of the New Testament demands a rapture: The New Testament writers never mention how the believer was to react to the terrors of the tribulation. The New Testament writers knew of the terribleness of that period of time. They knew texts such as, Joel 1-3; Jer. 30 7, and the other writings of the prophets. If they knew these terrible times were coming, why did they not help us understand what to do, and how to react to these times.

6. A promise of the Lord demands a rapture: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10 God through John promises deliverance to the church of Philadelphia from a ruff time, that was yet future. If he is delivering them, then He will most likely deliver all church age believers, unless you like the partial rapture theory.

7. God's actions demand a rapture: God always delivers the righteous before a judgment. Let me just list three examples of such delivery. Noah from the flood. Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah. Joshua and Caleb from death in the wilderness.

8. The removal of the Holy Spirit during the tribulation demands a rapture: Take a moment to read II Thess. 2:6-10. Most view the "he" in verse seven as the Holy Spirit, and He is to be taken out. In case you didn't know, where the Holy Spirit goes, I go, for my Bible tells me that the Holy Spirit is my guarantee of resurrection. It is illogical to think that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of this world, and the New Testament believers be left behind. This would contradict the

promises of Scripture that tell us that the Holy Spirit will indwell us always.

9. Christ's army demands a rapture: Rev. 19:11-16 tells of the second coming of the Lord with His army. Verse eight states of this army, "...arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Verse fourteen tells us, "...clothed in fine linen, white and clean." If you relate this terminology to the letters to the churches you will see a close similarity. (Rev. 3:4; 3:5; 3:18; Indeed 4:4 shows the elders in the same clothes, in heaven. That is another indication of a rapture before the tribulation.)

If the church is to come with Him at His second coming, then they must be removed at some time. The logical time would be before the tribulation when the trouble begins.

10. Our appointment to salvation, not wrath, demands a rapture: I Thess 5:9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." We aren't appointed to wrath, indeed why would God want to send His peculiar people through such a terrible time?

The question comes to mind, "Did Paul know of and teach the rapture, or did he understand only a second coming?" Reread the "rapture" texts of Paul's with this question in mind and see what you come up with. It may be that he saw a second coming and was teaching it, but at the same time, unknown to himself, was prophesying a rapture.

The Old Testament prophets wrote down many things they did not clearly understand, thus this would be consistent in Paul's case, and this does not detract from Paul in any way, shape, or form.

Indeed, did Paul even know of the tribulation? It would seem doubtful that he did. If he did, he certainly kept quiet about it. It would seem that had he known of such a mess coming, he would have mentioned it in some of his writings.

The rapture is seen from our vantage point, but I'm not sure it was from Paul's. Had he had revelation on the subject, I would think that he would have mentioned it.

The rapture and tribulation are really a revelation of Christ through John in the book of Revelation, though the events were prophesied previous to that revelation.

SOME TEXTS TO CONSIDER:

I Cor. 15:51-57: In reading this text, I wonder if Paul from his good Jewish perspective was looking at the second coming when the living would be translated, and the dead would be raised to serve with the Lord in the kingdom. His entire being was filled with the gospel of the kingdom. He was still preaching it in the last chapter of Acts (28:31), which was late in his career.

I Thess. 4:16-17: This verse mentions that we will meet Him in the air, indicating that the Lord does not come down to the earth. Zech. 14:5 shows Christ touching down on the earth. It would seem to some that Paul was speaking of some occurrence other than the second coming. I don't think there is any reason to feel that Paul was inconsistent with Zechariah, in that he just did not mention all of the details of the return. He is interested in the fact there is a resurrection and it will happen when the Lord returns.

John 5:25-29: May we observe several things here?

a. There is no indication of a time frame. We have no idea when John is speaking of. It could be the rapture, but he did not know of the tribulation until many years later when he was given the Revelation.

b. Since vs 28-29 mention righteous and lost both, it would seem that this is a general reference of the resurrections. Indeed we have judgment in the context, which would also indicate that this is a general statement of all that will go on in the end times.

c. It is a distinct possibility that this is a reference to the resurrection just prior to the Great White Throne. Many believe there will be some righteous that die in the Millennium and that this would be a fitting passage to show these righteous ones being raised with the lost of all time. Some to life and some to damnation.

d. Actually vs. 24-25 are speaking to the living that are lost when Christ was speaking and then He shifts gears to the judgment in the end time.

John 14:1-3: Christ will return for the apostles. When? Most view this dwelling place as the New Jerusalem which is in Rev. 21 1-2. The New Jerusalem comes down between the tribulation and the millennium.

Again if we see Paul speaking of a rapture we have some problems. It seems that John, when he wrote the gospel also viewed all things as centered on that second coming rather than a rapture. We see here a general statement of Christ coming for His own with no real statement of when in relation to end times events. Indeed it is quite possible that the New Jerusalem is ready at the rapture and that we will dwell in it till it descends.

OTHER REFERENCES THAT RELATE BUT DON'T HELP SHOW THE RAPTURE IN TIME:

Rom. 8:19-23; II Cor. 5:1-9; Philip. 3:11, 20-21; Heb. 9:28; II Pet 3:4.

Did Paul know of the tribulation and of the rapture? I suspect that he did not, even though there was an element of prophecy that related to these events in what he said in scripture.

We know, teach and understand the principle of progressive revelation, yet at times we fail to understand scripture in light of it. Adam did not know Christ. Adam did not know of the second coming. Adam did not know of the Church. They acted and lived under what they knew. Each dispensation lived as they had knowledge. Scripture was revealed over many hundreds of years.

Adam and Eve were the first drops of melting snow to form a pool in the mountains. Cain and Abel were the first trickle down the mountainside. Seth made it into a small stream running through the rocks. Noah made it into a small river running into the valley. Abraham made it into a river coursing through the land. Moses was a new river which merged into the main stream. Christ added another stream to the larger flow. Paul added another tributary. John was

the final addition to the flow of Scripture. He led the flow into eternity, the ocean.

What Paul knew may be questioned, but as you attribute information to him consider carefully the thought of progressive revelation and just what had been revealed to him.

Some conclusions:

- 1. Looking backward a rapture seems very evident.**
- 2. Looking forward from Paul's time the hope was a kingdom set up by the Messiah. The Messiah accepted!**
- 3. Paul, the apostles, and many Gentiles had accepted the Messiah. They wanted all to turn to the Messiah so that He would come to set up the Kingdom.**
- 4. Paul knew the Old Testament. He knew that the nation of Israel would have to turn to God for the kingdom to be set up. He was looking for the kingdom to come soon. He knew Zeph. 3:20 and its teaching of a regathering near the time of the kingdom. He was looking for a kingdom and looking for it soon.**
- 5. Believers of Christ were looking for a kingdom next. Acts 1:6**
- 6. The Jews that crucified Christ did so because He was claiming to be offering the Kingdom.**
- 7. Christ spoke of the second coming. Matt. 24:27-31**
- 8. The Corinthians and Thessalonians needed this soon coming concept for proper Christian living.**
- 9. Paul may have been knowledgeable of the rapture, or taking out of the Church, however this is doubtful for he taught doctrine. This would have warranted more writing had he known.**
- 10. Paul used the term "Church." Church is the Greek word ekklesia. Acts 7:38 uses the same term in reference to Israel as a group. Paul did not think of a building when he used "church." He**

was thinking of a group of God's people. Man has given Church the concept of building, of something special over and above Israel. We are a kingdom in mystery form (Matt. 13:11). Paul was shifting Judaistic beliefs to conform to a Messiah that had come. He did not switch from Judaism to some new concept of "Christianity." They are the same. One looks for Messiah and the other worships the Messiah come. There is a difference between the two in that the church will not have the physical blessing.

11. John was privileged to give us hint of a new prophetic occurrence in his construction of the book of Revelation through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

12. Paul may have put all of the Old Testament together and seen a need for coming trouble, then surmised that God would take the righteous out, however we do not have indication of this. Paul had in mind the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, to set up His kingdom.

I stated before that Paul's writings might have centered on the second coming yet held a prophetic aspect as well. Is there Bible basis for a prophecy - that is, a man talking of something in His own day, but also referring to other things future? Yes. Let's list some examples.

When Ezekiel mentions the king of Tyre and Isaiah mentioned the king of Babylon, most realize there was information concerning the Devil as well. (Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 14:4ff)

John's revelation to the churches of Christ's message, was of a certainty for his day, but he knew nothing of its obvious prophetic nature known now due to church history and hindsight.

In Ps. 16:8-11 David speaks from his time, situation and experience and it is identified as prophetic in Acts 2:24ff.

In Acts 28:26-27 Paul quotes the Old Testament (Isa. 6:9,10). Isaiah was giving prophecy to the Jews concerning their future. He did not know Paul. He did not know Paul would use this thought to apply to another generation of Jews in rebellion.

Job 19:25-26 Seems clearly to be looking to the end times yet Job was speaking to three men about the fact that he would be vindicated in the situation he was in - he would be proven righteous. Job did not have end times in mind, nor did he even know of the end times.

There is no indication that Paul taught the rapture, or indeed knew about it. Even the church fathers of the first and second centuries knew nothing of the rapture as far as I can see from history. Indeed compare Zech. 14:5-9 with I Thess. 4:13-18 and you see that the latter may have been drawn from the former.

If you are interested in the church fathers see **EARLY CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES**"; J.N.D. Kelley; Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1978, p 462 ff. See also **"THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES"**; by Louis Berkhof; Baker Book House; 1937; Grand Rapids.

Feel free to disagree, but if you do you must prove that Paul knew of the rapture, that he was looking for it, and then explain how we can tell what he was talking about, for there would be great difficulty in determining which coming he is speaking of in his writing if he spoke of both.

THE TRIBULATION

As we move on in our study of future events the next one on the horizon is the tribulation. There is much discussion as to the question of whether the church will go through the tribulation, yet there is little difference of opinion as to the fact of the tribulation.

The tribulation is a seven year period of time in which many dreadful things happen to the earth and the people living at that time. I am reminded of a cartoon that I saw once where two dogs outside a church have just heard of the coming tribulation. One says to the other, "That's 49 years of tribulation to you and me!" Even with only seven years of it, I think most will agree that it is not a time that a person would care to go through.

The information we have concerning the events of the tribulation are contained primarily in the book of Revelation chapters four through twenty. Other references relate to the time, however this is the most descriptive of actual occurrences.

We will look at the different ideas as to whether the church will go through this time or not. There are a number of positions that we will consider.

The pretribulation rapture position will follow immediately a brief introduction to the topic of the rapture. After this we will consider some of the other positions that have developed over the years.

The tribulation is a period of time during which God deals with national Israel to draw them back to Himself. It will be a terrible time of destruction and death upon the earth. The book of Revelation describes this time of trouble for us.

The time is called the tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble, and the seventieth week of Daniel. The time is divided into two time frames, each three and one half years long. Some describe the first period as tribulation while contrasting it to the final period which is entitled the Great Tribulation.

The tribulation as a whole is a time of God showing all of mankind that He indeed is over all and the display of destruction is quite convincing for men will call for the rocks to bury them so they can escape God. This does not seem to be a time for a person to desire to live through.

As we move on, we need to consider the teaching that the church will be taken out of the world before this terrible time on earth.

THE PRETRIBULATION RAPTURE POSITION

Those that hold this position believe that the church age saints will be taken from the earth before the tribulation period begins. The living saints will be translated as were Enoch and Elijah, the dead church age saints will be resurrected and united with those translated, in the air.

There is some discussion as to whether the translated go through death on their way up. There is a possibility there is a cessation of life as we know it today, but if there is it will be instant and not something that should be feared.

I suspect there is an instant change in the person. The fact that these people will be changed from flesh and bone to glorified bodies is evident. They are prepared for the spiritual realm and there will be a cessation of normal life. I do not feel that it will even be noticed by the believer.

This pretribulation rapture is based on the following line of thinking. Several of these will be similar to what we covered the last time, but the review will be good.

1. This belief is the position which allows for the closest to the literal interpretation method which most fundamentalists hold. The literal method of interpretation seems to be the most logical method.

2. Israel seems to be the focal point after Revelation 4:1 for there is no more mention of the church as such in the book. Daniel 9:24 also shows that the tribulation is a time for Israel. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people...." (God is speaking to Daniel of Israel.)

3. The tribulation is the wrath of God -- God wouldn't put us through it. The death of Christ frees us from judgment and the tribulation IS judgment!

4. There are literal distinctions between Israel and the Church in Scripture so we must carry literal distinctions throughout the Bible. Other positions fog this distinction when end times are considered. You must have a mixing of Israel and the Church if you have the rapture anyplace but before the tribulation.

Israel was set aside during the Church age but as the tribulation opens God is ready to begin His dealings with them once more. Romans 11:13ff shows the Gentiles being grafted in after branches were broken off. Vs 25 shows Israel's blindness is only until the end of the Gentile age (the Church age). This also indicates the distinction between Israel and the church.

There is no need for the church to be present for this period of time. It would be strange for the Lord to ask us to place ourselves under a Jewish system of worship and life (the temple etc. will be a part of the tribulation).

5. The doctrine of imminence taught by the apostles requires that we can't know when the tribulation begins. The Revelation has gives great detail concerning events in the tribulation. If believers saw these events occurring they would know that the Tribulation had begun. If we knew the tribulation was upon us then we would know when Christ was coming. This is not an imminent return. (Titus 2:13 tells us to watch; Acts 1:6-7 mentions that the apostles were looking for Christ to come at any moment; I Thess. 5:1,2 teach imminence as well - it mentions the return will be as a thief in the night; John 14:1-3 where Christ mentioned that he would return.)

I would like to just recap some information from "THE RAPTURE QUESTION" by Walvoord, and suggest that you read pages 52 and those following for more detail.

Historically the church has held to the imminent return of Christ. That is, the sudden return of Christ, or the fact that His return could be at any moment. The apostle Paul was always looking for Christ's

return. Moffat quotes the early Jewish belief in the fact that some would not go through the tribulation. Clement of Rome (1st century) mentions, "Of a truth soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished as the Scriptures also bear witness, saying, 'speedily will he come, and will not tarry;' and, 'the Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Holy One for whom ye look.'" The Didache (120 A.D.) mentions to watch for the Lord. (Taken from the book, **THE RAPTURE QUESTION** by John F. Walvoord. Copyright 1979 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 52ff.)

There are indications that the early Church fathers did not grasp the details of the Lord's coming, but all seem to have been looking for the return at any time. Now, in light of all that, we cannot say they believed in a pretribulation rapture. They believed in the imminent return of Christ. They mention nothing of a tribulation, but of a sudden return.

This is an indicator! They had the revelation and would have understood something of what was being spoken of so, surely would have mentioned a tribulation if they were planning to go through it. I would guess they did not really understand the Revelation enough to see the tribulation as such, but saw only some things to be interpreted allegorically!

6. In Daniel's 70th week the earthly government comes under the control of Satan. (Rev 13 hints at it.) Romans 13 commands us to be under the authority of the government. This gives the believer a bit of a conflict if he is still living in that period of time and system of government. If the believer is going through the tribulation as the other positions dictate there would be a real problem. Some might mention the mark of the beast in this regard, however those refusing the mark will die, and if the saints all die there will be no one to rapture.

7. Let us consider an argument from silence. Never in the epistles is the Great Tribulation mentioned. If the church was going to go through such a horrifying time don't you think that the Lord would have warned us of the coming trouble through the writers of the New Testament.

8. After a study of the other positions, one is left with only one position that is logical and consistent - the pretribulational position.

9. The tribulation and the Day of the Lord are prophesied in both testaments. The translation, or rapture, of the church people is a mystery that is revealed to us (I Cor. 15:51-52). The two must be separate.

10. Revelation 3:10 states, "Because you have kept the word of my perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth."

11. Joel 2:28-32 seems to indicate that someone is to be delivered from the tribulation, but the church saints are the only ones that fit. Part of this prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, however it will have it's ultimate fulfillment in the end times. (V 32 mentions that those that call on the Lord will be delivered.)

12. Zephaniah 2:1-3 indicates that God saves some out of His anger. (Day of the Lord - tribulation)

13. God usually delivers Godly people before divine JUDGMENTS. (Noah from the flood; Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah; Moses and Israel from the loss of the first born; Joshua and Caleb were permitted to enter the promised land while the others were not allowed to enter.) The tribulation is certainly judgment and the Godly people will be taken out if God follows His usual pattern.

14. John 14:16 mentions that Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would indwell us forever. "...give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;"

II Thess. 2:6-10 shows that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the world. Verse 7 mentions the restrainer. The term is in the masculine and must be more powerful than Satan to restrain Satan and only God can fill this qualification. We must assume this is speaking of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit indwells us, if the Holy Spirit is going, then the believers must go also to keep John true to what is said.

15. If you hold to the interpretations that the 24 elders of Revelation are representative of any Old Testament or New Testament saints you must have a taking out of saints of one kind or the other before the tribulation (the elders are there). Some set forth the belief the elders are angels however the two classes are held as distinct in Revelation 5:11, "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders...." (Those holding to the twenty-four elders being representatives of the church, suggest the following as basis for their belief: a. The number is a representative number relating to the priesthood: I Chron. 24:1-19. b. Believers will wear white: Rev. 3:5; 4:4. c. Crowns and the term redeemed are related to New Testament believers: I Thessalonians 2:19, I Corinthians 6:20.)

16. I Thess. 4:13-5:10 indicates that the coming will be as a thief in the night (vs. 2) which indicates before the tribulation. The whole text seems easiest to interpret if it is pretribulation. Also, the only way it can be a surprise is if its before the tribulation.

17. The rapture in the New Testament speaks of church age saints only. The 2nd coming speaks of Christ's return to set up a kingdom. All Old Testament prophecy fits into two areas. Messiah the lamb or Messiah the King. His coming at the cross was as a lamb. He next will come as a king.

Question: Is the church ever promised a nation - land - kingdom on earth? NO!

Question: Is Israel promised these things? YES! All through the Old Testament. Israel is of prime interest in the end times.

18. The rapture does not see Christ on earth - only in the air. The 2nd Coming is when Christ touches down on Mt. Zion. This and number 17 show the rapture and the 2nd coming are two events. The 2nd coming is before the millennium thus the rapture needs to be before the tribulation. (Unless you have it very very close to the 2nd coming, as some posttribs do.)

19. The rapture is never spoken of as more than one taking out. There is no inference whatsoever that it is in waves as the partial rapture folks indicate.

20. Daniel 9:11 shows the tribulation to be the trouble of the Jews.

21. I Thess. 3:13 mentions that the saints will be coming with Christ at the 2nd Coming. They have to get up there before the 2nd coming some how and a pretrib rapture would make more sense than the posttribulation.

We want to look at some of the other thoughts concerning the time of the rapture.

THE PARTIAL RAPTURE THEORY: (G. H. Lang, G. H. Pember, J. A. Seiss and Austin Sparks hold to this thought.)

This position is one which teaches that only the worthy will be taken out before the tribulation and that the unworthy believer is left on earth to go through a time of purging. Indeed this sounds like the reformations answer to purgatory, the only difference being is that we know how long the tribulation is, while the Roman Catholic has no idea how long they will be in purgatory.

They base this position basically on Hebrews 9:28 which states, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Ira E. David indicates they will be raptured out as they are prepared to go. The indication is that those ready when the tribulation starts will go, and then there will be waves going every now and then.

Some suggest Paul was trying to catch the first boat over when he mentions: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Phil 3:10-12

Problems:

- 1. They do not tell you how many good works, or how pure you must be to make it in the first wave.**
- 2. They do not deal with I Corinthians 15:51 which says, "we shall all be changed".**
- 3. The church is termed the body of Christ. It would be of interest to know which part of the body, Christ is going to rip from the rest of the body when He takes part of His body to heaven.**
- 4. We see in this position, that old doctrine of works coming into the scheme of things. If I work hard enough, then I will please God!**

References they use.

Look to the context on these, and you will certainly fail to see any hint of a partial rapture.

Matthew 24:40-51 Speaking of two in the field and one taken. There are several possible explanations to this text. To begin with there is no indication of waves of believers going from time to time. There seems to be a set separation.

a. This could be prophetic of the rapture. It could be speaking in general of all mankind and the fact that some will be taken and some will not.

b. This would fit with the second coming when Christ comes with His armies and removes all of the lost from the face of the earth to set up His kingdom with all righteous Jews. Mark 13:24-26 indicates that Christ will gather the saints at His second coming. It may be that He gathers them into one spot, then deals with the lost on a world wide basis.

c. This would fit nicely with the end of the Millennium when there will be some that are taken by death at the great sweep of the lost from the kingdom.

Matthew 25:13 speaks of the ten virgins - some are taken and some are left. The context of this is given in 25:1, "Then shall the kingdom

of heaven be likened unto ten virgins...." This is a millennial text. To use this in relation to the rapture, you would have to be posttrib.

Mark 13:33-37 This asks the believer to watch, and not be caught sleeping. It is clearly speaking of living a life that depicts someone believing He were coming at any moment. This is a good imminence text. Stay awake! The context would again be speaking of the Second coming. Verse 24 mentions, "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Then v 26 mentions, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory."

Luke 21:36 Again the context identifies this as a text belonging to the kingdom. v 31, "...know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

I Thess. 4 13-18 If it is those that are watching, how can the dead be involved as this text tells us?

I Thess. 5:6 Again the thought of watching is the purpose.

II Tim 4:8 This speaks of reward for loving and watching for His appearing. Time nor waves are present in the thought of the verse.

Titus 2:13 The thought of looking and watching is prevalent.

Hebrews 9:24-28; Revelation 3:3; 12:1-6.

My over all question might be something like this. I know of people that are watching, but are doing nothing else. This seems illogical to say that the watchers will go and the workers will stay. Indeed, the people that set dates for the coming of the Lord are watchers.

I think the better idea is for us to be watching, looking and anticipating the day, but to labor in the fields that are white unto harvest until He comes!

MIDTRIBULATION VIEW OF THE RAPTURE

Norman B. Harrison states that the rapture occurs with the sounding of the 7th trumpet of Revelation 11:12 and the catching up of the two witnesses. He feels that the two witnesses represent the church.

The problem with this is that we have no indication that the two witnesses represent the church. Indeed it would seem there is evidence that the two witnesses are Old Testament resurrected saints. Malachi mentions Elijah coming back. (Mal 4:5)

The two witnesses are killed and this is not a very clear representation of the church.

He feels that the church must suffer tribulation. I suspect they use Acts 14:22 for a proof text. "...that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." They feel the last half of the Tribulation is the wrath of God. I Thess 5:9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,"

Rev. 6:16-17 mentions that "the great day of his wrath is come," and this is in the 6th seal. They need to place the trumps and seals in the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation. Thus, the church is removed before it.

The following was added to and adapted from the Rapture Question - Walvoord.

- 1. They are in truth pretribulation rapture people for the rapture is before The Great Tribulation.**
- 2. They reject the thought that all of Daniel's 70th week is tribulation.**
- 3. They at times call themselves pretrib and not midtrib.**
- 4. They view Revelation 1-10 as fulfilled, or being fulfilled today. Chapter 11 and on are yet future.**
- 5. They place emphasis on the trumps. The last trump of Rev. is the last trump of I Cor. 15:52. However, no scripture links the two trumps. The trump of Rev. is sounded by an angel but we don't know who sounds the I Corinthians trump. The Rev. trump is to wrath while the I Corinthians trump is to escape from the world. The Revelation trump is not the last LAST trump, for Matthew 24:30-31 says there is one at Christ's 2nd coming. "And then shall appear the**

sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Concerning trumps: In the Roman army there were three trumps sounded when they were striking camp. 1. Strike tents and prepare to depart. 2. Fall into line. 3. Last - march away. The church is marching away so to speak. This is the last trump for the church but may not be the last trump of the end times. You see, the last bell for a class period is not the last bell of the day.

Problems with the position:

1. If we can read Revelation then we can look for the events of the 7 trumps and first six seals and know when the rapture will occur. Has it occurred to you that this eliminates the possibility of an imminent return of Christ. We could indeed know and predict it if the rapture wasn't until half way through the tribulation.

2. They forget that the 70th week is to for dealing with Israel only. The church would not need to be present.

They argue that the temple was not destroyed until 70 AD so God mixes things also. However, Acts 10 seems to be a definite turning point where God began to work with Gentiles. (We have synagogues today but it isn't to say that God is working with both Israel and the Church today.)

3. Their thinking on the first 3 1/2 years is that it isn't really tribulation. Let's look at some of those non-tribulation events. Famine, 6:5-6; death for 1/4 of the world, 6:8; stars falling, moon turned to blood, mountains and islands moved (6:12-14). This isn't the wrath of God?

POST TRIBULATION RAPTURE THEORY (George Ladd (Taught at Fuller), Leon Morris, and Harold Ockenga hold to this thought.)

This theory views all living saints as going through the entire tribulation, and that the rapture is actually a part of, or very close to

the 2nd coming of the Lord, just prior to the Millennium. This is usually held by Amills and Postmills.

The people holding this position are normally split into two camps.

1. Those that hold to the theory that the present age is the tribulation. In Acts 8:1-3 there was a great persecution which was called tribulation in Acts 11:19. Therefore the tribulation started with the church age.

The term used here is also mentioned by Christ in Matthew 24:21, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

2. Those that hold to a seven year tribulation at the end of this present age, and prior to Christ's second advent.

Ryrie in a Survey of Bible Doctrine lists the following points of this theory. Following each point an answer will be given.

1. "The rapture and the second coming are described in the Scriptures by the same words, which indicates they occur at the same time (I Thess. 4:15 and Matt 24:27)."

Matt 24:27, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." I Thess. 4 15, "...the coming of the Lord..." Why do they have to be the same thing and at the same time? There is no proof.

Might I mention something about that word coming? It is Strong's number 3952 if you want to look it up. It is used in I Cor. 16:17 of Stephanus, and in II Cor. 7:6 of Titus. This is the term "parousia". It is even used in II Pet 3:12 of a coming day. Thus, the usage of the term in relation to two events does not require that the two events are one.

2. "Since saints are mentioned as present during the tribulation days, the church is present on earth during that time (Matt 24:22)." "...but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." There are "elect" in the passage which can relate to elect of any age. The Church need not be anywhere near.

3. "It is predicted that a resurrection will occur at the beginning of the millennium, and since it is assumed that this is the same resurrection as that which occurs at the rapture, the rapture will take place just before the millennium (Rev 20:4)."

An assumption which has very little basis. This would be the resurrection of all righteous dead and they would meet the living righteous in the air. All changed - glorified bodies. Only ones left to enter Christ's kingdom are glorified saints and lost from the tribulation. Problem: The entrance into the kingdom requires rebirth, thus the lost can't enter, and glorified saints can't be reborn, thus no one can enter the kingdom. There also is no one to produce children for population to rebel at the end of the Millennium if there are only glorified saints.

4. "The church can and will be preserved from the wrath of the tribulation period by supernatural protection while living through that time and not by deliverance from the period (as Israel was protected from the plagues while living in Egypt)."

Not one ounce of evidence to this thought is given in Scripture. Indeed Rev 6:9-11 shows that the righteous will be martyred in the tribulation. That is NOT supernaturally protected!

5. "The Scriptures do not teach imminency; therefore, the rapture can be after the known events of the tribulation."

A study to show imminency would be needed here, but it would seem that as a thief in the night indicates imminency!!!

6. "Posttribulationism was the position of the early church." So were several doctrines that more modern theologians have proven to be in error.

References that are used: Matt. 13:37-43 These verses show a gathering, but again the time is not mentioned; Matt 13:47-50 These verses also mention a gathering, however both saved and unsaved are mentioned - this is not so at the rapture; Matt. 24:4-14; John 14:3 This verse really has nothing to do with when but that He will return for us; I Thess 4:17; II Thess 2:1; Rev 8-16.

So, what do we do know that we've gone through these positions?

1. Take time in your future ministries to dig in, and see what some of the fundamental writers say on the subject of the rapture. Next study literal interpretation, dispensations and then the imminency of Christ.

2. When you have that firm in mind go to some of the other writers and see what they teach, and why they believe what they believe. Remember they mix terms that literal interpretation cannot. (Israel and Church)

3. I think that a good study of the subject will leave you feeling as I do - that of all the evidence and opinion, the pretrib position is the easiest to see in scripture. It fits well with the scriptural references that we have to deal with.

4. Study and think and consider. The questions are not answered solidly no matter what some may say. There are good and bad in all of the positions. The pretribulation position seems to present very few difficulties to me.

5. I am not sure that the subject has been studied as completely as it should be by any of the scholars. Many of our doctrines today were formed over hundreds of years of study and restudy. Men discussed and studied until they arrived at the best teaching involving all of the texts. Historically there does not seem to be any real statement on premillennialism.

The Trinity was not an established doctrine until A.D. 325. Human depravity wasn't a settled doctrine till the 5th century AD. The sufficiency of Scripture and the priesthood of the believer weren't settled until the reformation. So, we may not settle the end times discussion for many more years! I think that as years go by, we may see more definitive statements concerning the pretribulation rapture.

6. Realize that this is nothing that you are going to loose your salvation over! When we went through this in my first year of college I was on the skids for two or three months trying to figure out what I was. There was a much greater emphasis on prophecy at that time. I wasted a lot of time that I should have been using for study!

I am not saying it isn't important. I am saying, give it some good study and time for thought!

The thoughts that we have considered are basically a compilation of the thinking of several pretribulation men.

This may be an overstatement, however I don't think that it is. The pretribulation position fits into the literal interpretation that most fundamentalists hold to. To hold some of the other positions, you have to accept other forms of interpretation which are not consistent with historical fundamentalism, nor logical principles of interpretation.

The system fits well with what scripture states. The logical and scriptural arguments seem to be very consistent with the Word.

Dr. Pentacost states, "Pretribulation rapturism rests essentially on one major premise - the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures. As a necessary adjunct [something that accompanies] to this, the pretribulationist believes in a dispensational interpretation of the Word of God. The church and Israel are two distinct groups with whom God has a divine plan."

As I have studied the other positions I find it hard to believe that you can hold to any other position without doing damage to these four doctrines:

- a. Literal interpretation.**
- b. Dispensations.**
- c. Distinctions between the church and Israel.**
- d. Imminency of the return of Christ.**

Dr. Pentacost on pp 193-194 of THINGS TO COME, mentions that Allis one of the key Amillennialists of our day admits, GET THIS, that if one is to interpret scripture literally and not figuratively that one MUST BECOME a premillennialist. That is the proven end of literal interpretation. He further admits that if you hold to literal interpretation you must also become, as a result of your study of scripture a pretribulationist.

Dr. Pentecost of p 194ff details the pretribulation rapture position in great detail. I believe he hits most of the points that we have mentioned.

Concerning literal interpretation those taking other positions must spiritualize the texts concerning prophecy. Walvoord gives some examples in the following quote.

"Posttribulationists usually ignore the distinction between Israel and the church much in the fashion of the amillenarian school. The reason for this is that none of the tribulation passages in either the old or new testament ever mention the "church" or the ecclesia. In order to prove that the church is in the tribulation period, it is necessary to identify key terms as equivalent to the church. Hence, Israel becomes a general name for the church and in some contexts becomes an equivalent term. The term elect is taken to be equivalent to the church, regardless of the limitation of the context, and saints of all dispensations are considered as members of the true church. In order to make these various terms equivalents, it is necessary to take Scripture in other than a literal sense in many instances - the use of Israel as equivalent to the church being an illustration." (Taken from the book, THE RAPTURE QUESTION by John F. Walvoord. Copyright 1979 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission. p 57)

In short, I think what I am saying is this. Present a position other than the pretrib without damaging the doctrines of literal interpretation, dispensations, distinctions between Israel and the church or the imminent return of Christ and I will consider it!

I MAY BE WRONG, BUT I DON'T THINK IT CAN BE DONE!

07500

THE MILLENNIUM

Before beginning this study please read the following texts: Isa 65:17-25; Jer. 31:33-34; Ezek. 36:25-31.

Eusebius tells of a feast at the end of the Nicean Council as being really special. (He was an early church historian. The council was in A.D. 325)

"It felt as if we were imagining a picture of the Kingdom of Christ, and that what was happening was no reality, but a dream."

I think that we can draw from this that the Eusebius was not Amillennial, and that he viewed the kingdom as yet future and literal.

I would suggest a couple of items that we did not cover previously concerning the fact that the Lord was offering a kingdom while here the first time around.

Jn 1 41, "...We have found the Messiah which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Andrew viewed the Lord as the Messiah.

Jn 1 49, "Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

They viewed the Lord in more than a friendly way!!!

It is not easy to tell how much of the gospels we can relate to the kingdom. It would seem that much of the information would directly relate to the kingdom, in that the Lord was offering it, and preparing people for it.

Will there be healing in the kingdom? The healing and miracles were a sign of the Messiah's having come, so may not be. Yet, Luke 8:1-3 mention that the Lord was "...shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God...." The context mentions some that had been healed, and they were ministering to the Lord in a material manner. This may be a part of the millennial form of things.

The kingdom is yet future, due to the fact that the Lord has never returned to set it up. We certainly are not in a kingdom ruled by Christ now!

When He instituted the Lord's table, He mentioned that He would not partake of it until the kingdom (Lu 22 18). He is not partaking at present to my knowledge.

Lu 24 30 is of interest. It shows the Lord with the folks on the road to Emmmaus, and as they fellowshipped together He broke bread with them, but did not share of the cup.

Let us just list some topics of the mill. and their basis.

This is a brief look at things. The verses listed are only a sampling of many many more that you could use in preparing lessons, and sermons.

CHILDREN WILL BE BORN:

Jer. 30 20, "Their children...."

Isa 65 20 mentions children's death.

The children born to these godly parents will have opportunity to follow the God of their Fathers, yet it is evident that some will not. Indeed, the indications are that many will not.

CHRIST WILL RULE:

Isa 2 4 mentions judging

Isa 11 3-4 mention that He will judge righteously.

Jer. 23 5-6 tell that He will be king. His name will be "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Ps 72 6-11 mentions that all the kings of the earth will bow before Him.

He will be here, and in control of all that is going on. He evidently will have help in ruling, which we will see later.

DAVID WILL RULE:

Isa 55 3-4 indicates it.

Jer. 30 9 states it. "But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."

Hos. 3 5, "...and seek the Lord their God, and David their king...."

Ezek. 37 24-25 This text mentions David as their prince, and also shows him as the servant of God.

Let us set our progress aside for a moment and consider this problem of both Christ and David ruling.

Some have suggested that "David" is equal to, or the same as Christ. Since Christ came from the line of David and there was a promise of a Davidic king, then Christ was the fulfillment of that.

Some see the branch coming from David in the prophets as a literal son of David's line that will be born in the end time. There is no real proof of this thinking. That would add to the confusion, for the texts state David will reign and now we would add a son of David along with Christ and David himself.

The easiest, most literal interpretation, would fall along these lines. Christ will rule for it is His kingdom, yet David will rule. In Biblical times it was not uncommon for co-regents to exist. One being the actual king in office and name and the other in practice of ruling under the guidance of the king. Christ may use David as a ruling regent. Ezek. 37 24-25 may indicate this in that David is shown as the servant of God, and the Prince of the people.

It might also be suggested that Christ will reign over all the earth from the heavenly sphere, or possibly the New Jerusalem, while David is over Judah proper.

I don't think that it would hinder prophecy one bit to limit David to ruling over Israel, while having Christ ruling over the whole earth.

DEATH:

Isa 65:20, "...for the child shall die an hundred years old...."

Though there is death in the kingdom, there is indication in this same verse of long life. This long life will lead to a quick population growth, which would allow for many rejectors at the end of the kingdom.

EVIL DOERS WILL BE CUT OFF:

Ps 37 9-11 shows the evil doers will be cut off and the context seems to be similar to the beatitudes. "...the meek shall inherit the earth...." (vs 11)

HEALING IS INDICATED:

Isa 35 3-6, "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing...."

Ezek. 34 16 mentions, "...will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick...."

HOLY SPIRIT WILL BE FOR EVERYONE:

Joel 2 28-32, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh...." (28a)

Though the kingdom will have many aspects in which it is similar to the OT way of things, there seems to be some new parts as well.

It would be an interesting study to see if the cross wasn't the difference between the OT saints not having the Holy Spirit and the

church/kingdom believers having Him indwell them. It certainly seems logical.

JERUSALEM WILL BE A CENTER OF HOLINESS:

Zech. 14 21, "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts...." The same verse goes on to say there will be no Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts, indicating there will only be Jews.

The Jew of Christ's day saw Jerusalem as the center of the earth, but now in the millennium this will be fact. All roads will lead to Jerusalem, so to speak.

JERUSALEM WILL BE THE CENTER OF GOVERNMENT:

Isa 2 2-4 states this.

JOY:

Isa 9 3-4, "...they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil."

Isa 12 3-6

Indeed, anywhere the Lord is there certainly should be joy!

There will be many attributes of Christ that will rub off on the kingdom. The joy, the love, the glory, the peace etc.

LAND:

Ezek. in the later chapters goes into great detail as to the divisions of the land.

Ps 69 35-36 indicates a continuing possession of the land.

LANGUAGE:

Zeph. 3 9 indicates a universal language, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent.

That should reduce culture shock for missionaries. HA!

LONG LIFE:

Isa 65:20

OFFERINGS:

Ezek. 42 13

We don't know what the significance of these offerings will be. They may just be symbolic in some manner, or they may be a memorial to things of the OT.

PEACE:

Isa 2 4, "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

The Sermon on the Mount - (The Beatitudes) would indicate the life in the kingdom will be very peaceful.

Isa 65 25, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock...."

PRIESTS:

Ezek. 42 14

RULE WILL BE WITH A ROD:

Isa 11 4, "...and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." This is the context of Him being the judge.

Ps 2 9, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

SACRIFICES WILL BE OFFERED:

Ezek. 42 13

SAFETY FOR JERUSALEM:

Jer. 33 16, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely...."

SAINTS ONLY:

At the beginning. It seems there will be offspring due to the fact there are lost at the end when things are coming to a close.

Matt.18 3, "...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Jn. 3 3, "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jer. 31 33-34;

Some feel there may be some gentile believers from the tribulation that enter into the Mill. We have no text to show this, yet there is that possibility. Many feel that the gentile believers will be martyred in the Trib. and come with the church at the second advent.

Since the Mill is primarily an Old Testament concept and the gentiles of the Trib. would be in the Old Testament concept this might be a possibility. This might well account for the nations that seem to be present in the Mill.

SAINTS WILL REIGN:

II Tim 2 12, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him...."

Rev 5 10 also.

Some suggest that the apostles (Matt 19 28) and the church (I Cor. 6 2-3) will reign and rule in the Mill. This may be so, however these texts show them judging and angels are involved in the Cor. text, thus it would seem better to say they will judge in some manner.

Whether this judging is in the Great White Throne, ruling, or some area that we aren't aware of we don't know.

I would personally assume that we will be judging in some manner. This may be in the area of reigning with the Lord, in the idea that as we see wrong we will take care of it.

SATAN BOUND:

Rev 20 1-3 HAVE SOMEONE READ IT.

SIN:

It exists: Zech. 14 17-19

It will be judged quickly: Zech. 14 17-19

It will be judged justly: Isa 11 4, "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smit the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

TEMPLE:

Ezek. 41ff

Zeck. 14:20 mentions the pots of the Lord's house.

THE EARTH'S TOPOGRAPHY WILL CHANGE:

Zech. 14 4-10 shows some major changes. There will be fresh water going out from Jerusalem. Indeed, it is indicated they will flow into the Dead Sea. ("hinder sea")

Ezek. 47 9-10 show that the Dead sea will once again live.

Engedi in verse ten is near the Dead sea and fishermen will be there.

UNIVERSAL WORSHIP OF GOD:

Zeph. 3 9, "...that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

This would not include those that will not be converted, though it would indicate they may outwardly worship until the end of the Mill when they rise up in rebellion.

WAR WILL NOT EXIST:

Isa. 2 4 speaks of the beating of swords into plowes.

IT SHOULD BE A GREAT TIME!

Miscellaneous Millennial texts: Ps. 24:7-10; Hos. 6:1-3 seems to indicate that the Lord would have set up the kingdom immediately upon Israel's turning, after their rejection. The turning has never been forthcoming so this prophecy still awaits its final fulfillment.

THE MILLENNIAL POSITIONS:

I would like to begin with a quote from Boettner in Tan's book (Tan, Paul L.; "THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY"; Rockville, MD: Assurance Publishing, 1974, p 269-270) "'There is a logical connection between Premillennialism and Dispensationalism. Most of those who take Premillennialism seriously and become enthusiastic about it go on to adopt Dispensationalism. Conversely, we believe that most of those who becomes convinced of the errors of Dispensationalism proceed to throw Premillennialism overboard to.'" (Boettner/MILLENNIUM p 158)

PREMILLENNIALISM (as we see it)

A. The Basis: The basis of premillennialism is found in the Old Testament Covenants given to Israel. The premillennialist sees these covenants as yet unfulfilled. These covenants will find their complete fulfillment during the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.

"Premillennialism insists that all the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant must be fulfilled since the covenant was made without conditions. Much of the covenant has already been fulfilled and fulfilled literally; therefore, what remains to be fulfilled will also be fulfilled literally. This brings the focus on the yet-unfulfilled land promise." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 457. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

B. The definition: "Premillennialism is the view that holds that the second coming of Christ will occur prior to the Millennium which will see the establishment of Christ's kingdom on this earth for a literal 1,000 years. It also understands there will be several occasions when resurrections and judgments will take place. Eternity will begin after the 1,000 years are concluded. Within premillennialism there are those who hold differing views as to the time of the Rapture." (Reprinted by permission: Ryrie, Charles C.; "BASIC THEOLOGY"; Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, p 450/Ryrie has a brief

history of premillennialism on p 451-452. "BASIC THEOLOGY" is now printed by Moody Press; 1999. They have kindly given permission to use this quote.)

C. The System:

- 1. They believe in a literal historical grammatical system of interpretation.**
- 2. They believe that today is not a golden age. (Corruption is the norm in our day and things are not getting better and better. We are pessimists according to the present day lingo - 1990.)**
- 3. There is a definite distinction between Israel and the Church.**
- 4. Prophecies concerning Israel were fulfilled literally to this point and will one day be completely fulfilled - literally.**
- 5. They hold to a literal, visible, bodily and glorious return of Christ in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.**
- 6. They hold to a literal Abrahamic Covenant which was extended into the future.**
- 7. They recognize the Church as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Gal 3:29**
- 8. They recognize the difference between physical and spiritual seed of Abraham. Rom. 9:6-8**
- 9. The Abrahamic covenant was unconditional.**
- 10. They use a Dispensational approach to Scripture.**
- 11. The Church was formed separate from Israel. (Although early Christians were Jews.) I Cor. 10:32 and Rom. 11:26 shows this distinction between the two.**
- 12. An overview of the system's teaching. They hold to the following points:**

a. Soteriological program (God is in the process of providing salvation for accepting mankind.) Gen. 3:15

b. Promises given to Abram that were to find fulfillment in his life and his people. Gen. 12

c. Palestinian Covenant Deut. 30:1-10

d. Davidic Covenant II Sam. 7:12-16

e. New Covenant Jer. 31:31-24

f. Kingdom prophesied by the Old Testament Prophets.

g. Kingdom offered and rejected by Christ at His first advent. Matt. 10-12

h. Church was indicated in Matt. 16 -- Church was started in Acts 2

j. God will again deal with Israel. (They are only set aside at this time. This is national Israel. Individual Jews may and do come to the Lord for Salvation through the Messiah that has come.)

k. The Millennial kingdom is yet future. (Rev. 20:1-6 and Old Testament references to future kingdom)

l. Final resurrection and judgment. This will follow the kingdom and will deal with all unsaved of all time. Rev. 20: 11-15

D. Problems of the system (from those outside the system)

1. Premillennialists are accused of not being scientific in their study of the Scripture. This would have reference to the not using of the liberal's methods of criticism and interpretation. To this the premill suggests, they lack of knowledge of the system.

2. Premillennialists base their whole system on one text, Rev. 20:1-7. The fact that Scripture mentions a 1000 years is disputed by the other positions. Some feel that the 1000 years is not to be taken as a literal 1000 years, but rather be viewed as a period of time. They would suggest that we are in that period of time now. The truth is that this

text fits only to the Old Testament Kingdom when you use a literal framework of interpretation. John The Baptist and Christ came on the scene preaching a kingdom, but never defined it or told the Jews what it was. The only kingdom they would know about is the promised Davidic kingdom of the Old Testament. The whole of the New Testament is a continuation of the Old and its program. God did not dump the Old Testament kingdom, just postponed it and mentioned it through John to allow people to know that it is still coming.

3. They are inconsistent in their literal interpretation. (We are not literal literalists.) This refers to the fact that the premillennialist allows for the allegories, etc. of the Old Testament. They charge that if we are going to be literal, then we should be literal in all passages. In other words when the Psalmist mentions that David was the apple of God's eye, we should see this as God having an apple in His eye named David.

Premillennialists recognize types, signs and other language oriented quirks that literal interpretation would require.

4. They hold to a reinstatement of sacrifices and this contradicts Heb. 8:8-13. Yes, we see sacrifices in the Millennial kingdom because the Bible prophesies this. We do realize there is no need for sacrifice for sin, however there are other sacrifices, and these sacrifices in the Millennium may be similar to the Lord's Table in meaning. They may have commemorative value.

The problem is that the objectors probably misinterpret Hebrews, and ignore that the premill. always mentions that the Millennial sacrifices are a memorial or some other form, rather than the sin sacrifices that are no longer needed.

5. They interpret the Old Testament and fit the New Testament into it. Amen. Since we believe in progressive revelation, we would certainly look at the oldest and understand the new in light of that knowledge. This is only logical and correct.

6. A future work with Israel (kingdom) is inconsistent because Jew and Gentile are one now. Eph. 2:14-16 They do not see any distinction between Israel and the Church, so this is a charge that is to

be expected. The two entities are separate and the Bible is clear on this.

They wrongfully mix Israel and the Church. They also wrongly interpret the Eph. text along with all of the texts which show that the two are different and distinct.

7. Literal interpretation is not a valid method.

This concept should turn their own minds to the illogical and profane. How can we understand a message given to us unless we use the literal method? If they were to receive a telegram from their Aunt Tilda, wouldn't they use literal interpretation to understand it? God wanted to communicate with man thus the literal method is the only logical method.

8. A difference between Israel and the church is inconsistent with Rom. 11:11-24.

On the contrary, this text depicts clearly, if interpreted literally, the distinction between Israel and the Church. They have a misconception of the Romans illustration.

9. The New Testament doesn't interpret the Old Testament literal so why should the premillennialists? James spiritualizes Amos 9:11 in Acts 15:14-17.

True the New Testament writers do not always use the Old Testament literally, however they do use it literally at times. They drew information from the Old Testament to use for their own day much as we do. A spiritualizing does not remove the need for a literal fulfillment. Peter in His first sermon in Acts mentions the fulfillment on the day of Pentecost as a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, however that prophecy was not literally, completely fulfilled. It will have a complete literal fulfillment yet future.

10. Premillennialists ignore Matt. 21:43 when Christ removed the kingdom from Israel.

How can we have a millennium if God is not dealing with Israel? This is the crux of the system. God is not dealing with Israel today, but will

one day resume His dealings with them. We do not ignore the removal of the kingdom from Israel, we view it as a literal occurrence. Indeed, the Matthew text is a precursor of the Romans 11:11ff text. The removal of the kingdom is not ignored, it is recognized and this is an integrated part of the system.

11. Gal. 3:28,29 says there is no difference between Jew and Greek. Premillennialists should apply Jewish truth to Gentiles.

True, there is no difference, but this is speaking of the spiritual realm and not the physical. (Rom. 9:6-8 show a difference between the two.) In this age there is no difference between Jew and Gentile within the church and indeed, within the need of salvation and its availability to all of mankind. The phrase "in Christ Jesus" limits the thought to believers.

The whole problem of problems is that we cannot answer them adequately enough to convince the other side. We can find no arguments strong enough to convince them. We have no text good enough to stir their solidarity in their position Why? Because they interpret differently than we do. If they accept literal, historical, grammatical interpretation then they must, by their own lips, accept Dispensational Premillennialism. They realize that the Dispensational premillennial position is the end product of the literal method of interpretation. We realize their position is due to their method of interpretation, thus there is a great gulf fixed that no man can cross (unless he changes his method of interpretation).

COVENANT PREMILLENNIALISM

A. Basis: This system is based on the Old Testament Covenants which are now being fulfilled in and by the Church.

B. The System:

Tan defines the system as follows: "A system of eschatology which attempts to reconcile premillennialism with covenantism while avoiding dispensationalism and pretribulationism. (P 364; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.)

He mentions (p 269) that, "They want what one writer describes as 'amillennial covenantism with a premillennial topping.'"

They view the program as beginning at Genesis 3:15 in the promise of one that will overcome evil. From that point forward there is a kingdom rule by God, over man. This rule takes different shades of meaning as time passes. In the Old Testament it was a direct rule through the judges, kings, and prophets. When Christ came to earth and died, then ascended to the Father the Kingdom took on a spiritual aspect. He is now reigning from heaven and will continue to do so until the end times. At the end, there will be a literal kingdom over Israel, yet they do not see it as an all Jewish kingdom.

It seems that they view much of prophecy allegorically, yet when it comes to Revelation 20 and the 1000 year kingdom, they turn to literalism.

The position views the second coming as the introduction to the kingdom on earth. The Devil will be bound during this time of the kingdom while Christ will be ruling here on earth. They view the church age as a kingdom which is ruled from heaven. The tribulation also occurs prior to the kingdom.

They would view the kingdom in the book of Matthew as this spiritual kingdom. They would view all the book as applying to that kingdom - today. This has been taught in many churches over many years. I was raised on this idea in a church where the Gospel was seldom taught. I have heard it taught in Evangelical churches as well.

It seems that they view things very similarly to us, however there is one distinction. They believe that the covenants are being fulfilled in the church today. They want to have covenantism but remain premillennial.

1. Their system views the Church as spiritual Israel. Rom. 9:24

2. Abraham is the Father of all believers. Rom. 4:11

3. They view Jer. 31 as fulfilled in this age. They see the Hebrews 8 passage as contradictory to the thought of a religious system for the Jews in the kingdom future.

- 4. They do accept a literal Israel. Rom. 11:26**
- 5. They do differ with premillennialism about the prophesied sacrifices of Ezek. 40-48. They view them fulfilled by Christ completely with no future fulfillment. Heb. 8**
- 6. They believe in a literal national future salvation for Israel.**
- 7. A literal 1000 years is recognized, however this is not taught in the Old Testament or the Gospels, only Rev. 20:1-6. It is some new kingdom that was never mentioned, or indicated prior to Rev. 20.**
- 8. Christ preached a salvation message. He was not preaching a kingdom message.**
- 9. Today we are in the mystery or spiritual form of the kingdom. Matt. 13**
- 10. Christ reigns in heaven today, but on earth during the 1000 years.**
- 11. The covenants and the kingdom find their fulfillment in this mystery form of the kingdom today.**
- 12. The kingdom was promised in the Old Testament. This would be the mystery form - the church.**
- 13. The kingdom is being fulfilled today.**
- 14. The kingdom will be concluded at the 2nd return of Christ for a 1000 year earthly reign.**
- 15. They hold to a resurrection of the saved premillennium, and unsaved post millennium for judgment.**
- 16. It would seem that they reject a literal tribulation.**
- 17. Tan submits that they affirm, "that the church and Israel are somewhat blended, though not fully amalgamated." (p 246; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.)**

C. Problems of the system.

- 1. They deny the dispensational system yet operate within one. They view different governing relationships between God and man thus accepting one of the basics of dispensationalism.**
 - 2. They improperly view Rom. 9:24 and see the Church as spiritual Israel.**
 - 3. They reject literal fulfillment of Ezek. 40-48 because of not viewing Heb. 8 properly. They feel there cannot be a new temple in the future because the Lord's sacrifice in the heavenly tabernacle was once and for all.**
 - 4. They fail to relate the Rev. 20:1-6 1000 years to the Old Testament Kingdom. It is hard to conceive why they would find a new - unrevealed kingdom in the book of Revelation. The easiest and most logical view is that this is the kingdom prophesied.**
 - 5. They spiritualize most of the Bible's prophecy yet take Rev. 20 literally.**
- Tan in THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY, mentions that they spiritualize the 144,000 to be the church while holding to a literal 1,000 year kingdom. He terms their interpretation as "selectively inconsistent" (p 268).**
- 6. Someone that believes Satan is being plundered today has a problem. A look at any city newspaper will show the decadence of our society and world. To say that Satan is bound in this age is to attribute all evil that goes on to God and his kingdom that is being ruled from heaven by Christ. Satan and evil are free and active in this present age.**
 - 7. They see no distinction between the Kingdom and Soteriological programs. The kingdom is a program in and of itself to bring man to God.**
 - 8. Their system requires a non-chronological book of Revelation. Passages showing saints in heaven will be out of sequence if it is chronological in their system.**

9. They mix Israel and the Church.

AMILLENNIALISM

A. The Basis: Amillennialism is based on the Old Testament covenants which were transferred over to the Church for fulfillment.

B. The System:

In a nutshell the position views the world ruled by the one that is in a position to do so. Adam was the ruler until his fall into sin when the Devil took over the rulership of the earth. He ruled throughout the Old Testament period. His rule was interrupted when the Lord came to earth to setup His kingdom. Not only did Christ set up His kingdom - the millennium - the Davidic kingdom - the 1000 years - but He also bound Satan for the duration of this new kingdom.

Their view of Daniel is that the kingdoms that are mentioned are Satans kingdoms here on earth (Babylon, Media Persia, Greece). The 70th week, or tribulation is past and it ended in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem.

Christ is now ruling from the heavenly Jerusalem. When Christ returns to earth at the second coming he will introduce eternity in which the Old Testament will be fulfilled.

Tan suggests that amillennialism is, "A system of eschatology which, among other things, interprets the millennium as symbolical of present life in heaven." (P 363; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.)

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SYSTEM:

- 1. The seed of Abraham is equal to all of God's people. Israel and the Church age people are one.**
- 2. God dispensed with the Land and Promise. The promises are no longer to be considered. This is due to the following: a. The Jews have lost their lineage; b. The promise was fulfilled literally in the**

past; c. The promises were conditional and Israel didn't meet the requirements.

3. The promise was for any group of God's people in any age. (If this is correct, then why don't we go claim Israel for the Christians in the United States?)

4. Israel lost their promises and the Church inherited them. (Church = Israel)

If the promises have been dispensed with, how can any group of God's people claim them? Illogical.

5. They see no justification for a total literal interpretation of Scripture.

6. They agree with Covenant Premillennialists that Rev. 20:1-6 is the Millennial Kingdom, but disagree as to what it is.

7. They feel Rev. 20:1-3 is today. Satan is now bound. (He can't prevent spread of the Gospel however.)

8. Rev. 20:4 is speaking of martyred saints.

9. Christ reigning literally 1000 years is not required. This would indicate that the millennial kingdom to them may be quite different from the kingdom of the Old Testament.

10. The Old Testament Kingdom came in Christ's time. Matt. 12:28

11. They do allow for a future phase of some sort. (This would be the Revelation Millennium, even if they don't define what it is.)

12. Overview of their teachings.

- a. Satan has a series of kingdoms Dan. 9 (Babylon, Medio-Persia, Greece and Rome)**
- b. God's kingdom takes over. (Fall of Rome)**
- c. Satan cast out of Heaven at the cross.**
- d. Satan bound at fall of Rome.**
- e. Kingdom offered by Christ.**

- f. Kingdom set up A.D. 70. (fulfilled at fall of Rome.)**
- g. Resurrections and judgment just prior to eternity.**
- h. Jesus reigns in Heavenly Jerusalem Gal. 4:26.**
- i. The book of Revelation deals with the fall of Jerusalem and fall of Rome.**
- j. The 1000 years is only representative of an ideal time.**

C. Problems:

- 1. They interpret literally in theology but allegorically in prophecy. Any system that switches between methods of interpretation should be suspect of interpreting to show their position rather than to see what God has to say. The person who believes in allegorical interpretation is much more honest in what he is doing.**
- 2. All prophecy is fulfilled in this current age. Anyone reading through the Old Testament would realize that some prophecies are not fulfilled, and a look around our world would show that this is not a golden age.**
- 3. Today is a golden age with Satan bound. How can anyone believe Satan is bound today.**
- 4. They reject dispensations even though they have them in their system. Any system that does not offer blood sacrifices today is a quasi-dispensational system. They must realize there are differences in how the Lord deals with man.**
- 5. Their arguments are very weak, and their textual interpretations are very stretched.**
- 6. They admit Scripture doesn't say the Promise was conditional, but they assume that it was. To assume that something is true where the Bible is silent opens us to any man's assumption as truth. I might well assume that I am free to murder since the Scripture does not state, "Stanley shalt not kill." I could easily say that the "thou" of Scripture is everyone except myself.**
- 7. They make no difference between Israel and the Church. This does an injustice to the Scriptures.**

8. The land and promise are not out of the picture. Israel has never occupied the total promised land. All this is yet future when the Lord returns to his dealings with Israel.

9. Basically the whole system is a problem in that it is not consistent with literal interpretation.

10. They tend to stretch your imagination. (Acts 1:6 Christ's answer to disciples' question is turning their attention from a Kingdom that is already set up to their coming responsibility of witnessing. To premillennialists he is saying the millennium is yet future.)

Among the amillennialists is the Roman Catholic Church.

COVENANT THEOLOGY

A. The system defined: Tan suggests: "A system of theology which, among other things, explains all relationship between God and man from the beginning to the end of time under the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Grace, and (sometimes) the Covenant of Redemption." p 364; THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.

B. The system explained:

The system operates on the basis of two covenants. The first is the covenant of works which ended at the fall of Adam. Genesis 3:15 is the second covenant in cryptic form. The covenant is the covenant of grace. This covenant covers all of time since the fall.

Some add a third covenant of redemption which is introduced at the cross, but it is viewed as an integrated part of the covenant of grace.

The people holding to this position interpret Scripture very differently than we do. They use figurative, or allegorical views of Scripture and find new, deeper meanings behind the words of the Scriptures.

They see two covenants neither of which appear in Scripture. The covenant of works and the covenant of grace. The covenant of works carried mankind all the way to the fall.

The verse they use to show the covenant of works is Rom. 2:7-9, "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek." (It is strange that they give a New Testament reference to back up a system that occurred hundreds of years before.) They also use Psalm one as proof text. (This is at least a little closer in proximity.)

The covenant of grace was given in cryptic form in Gen. 3:15. At the time of Abraham, God instituted the covenant of grace which has other covenants or administrations within it. A Covenant has three elements to it: Parties, Promises, and Conditions.

The covenant of works, I gather, is the fact that Adam and Eve could live in the garden as long as they worked in the garden and kept their noses clean. This is also called by other names such as, Edenic covenant, and covenant of life.

This covenant had three stipulations. THE EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY, lists them as follows: "(1) a promise of eternal life upon the condition of perfect obedience throughout a probationary period; (2) the threat of death upon disobedience; and (3) the sacraments of paradise and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Elwell, Walter A. Ed.; "EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984, p 279)

The covenant of grace is really poorly named because it is actually a second covenant of works. God in this new covenant requires obedience to His revealed will. As He sees obedience, then He will bless the person. This covenant is between God and the elect, for it is God's promise to save the person who believes.

As you can see, the Covenant Theologian is required to mix the Church and Israel into one large group of God's people where there are no distinctions. The mixing of Testaments can be seen in the fact that they use Rom. 2:7-9 to show the covenant of works which ended at the fall. All of Scripture as now complete is the basis for their system. It would seem to me that no person prior to the completion of

Scripture could really know what God wanted because all Revelation was not given.

In keeping with this they would view all promises of both testaments as theirs for the choosing. A further mixing of the testaments results in some cases with infant baptism. The rite of Old Testament circumcision for babies is carried over into the thought of baptism. Both being a sign of the covenant. (A note of interest: Circumcision was a male right, so how can it be a precursor for baptism, a male and female right?)

Ryrie quotes Allis's book "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH," "The law is a declaration of the will of God for man's salvation." They feel that we are to be obedient to the revealed will of God so that He will bless us.

Amillennialists and their books:

Jay Adams, "THE TIME IS AT HAND"

O. T. Allis, "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH"

William E. Cox, "AMILLENNIALISM TODAY"

Floyd E. Hamilton, "THE BASIS OF MILLENNIAL FAITH"

As I understand their thinking, the first covenant was given to carry man through time, but Adam blew it. Finally God found Abraham, a man that would obey, and so God set the second covenant, out of His grace, another covenant of works to carry man through.

Some see a third covenant, a covenant of redemption -- I have not done any research on those that present this. Elwell in his "THE EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY"; p 279-280, shows this covenant to be as follows: "According to covenant theology, the covenant of grace, established in history, is founded on still another covenant, the covenant of redemption, which is defined as the eternal pact between God the Father and God the Son concerning the salvation of mankind."

"The Father loves the Son, commissions him, gives him a people, the right to judge, and authority over all mankind... the Son loves the Father, delights to do his will, and has shared his glory forever...."

"On this foundation covenant theology affirms that God the Father and God the Son covenanted together for the redemption of the human race, the Father appointing the Son to be the mediator, the Second Adam, whose life would be given for the salvation of the world, and the Son accepting the commission, promising that he would do the work which the Father had given him to do and fulfill all righteousness by obeying the law of God."

POSTMILLENNIALISM

A. The system defined: Tan suggests: "A system of eschatology which, among other things, sees the millennium ushered in through a gradually Christianized world. Christ comes at the end of this 'millennium.'" ("THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY" P 367)

In recent days there have been many taking on this line of thinking. Ten years ago Boettner and J.M. Kik were the only men alive that seemed to hold this position. In recent days many in the Charismatic movement have been accepting this thinking and teaching it. They see the Church as the power to bring in the Millennium.

They see that the Church is responsible to reach all peoples of the earth with the Gospel and then the kingdom will be set up. Rev. 7:9a is used to help show that the earth must be reached before the Kingdom can come into existence. You will be seeing more and more about this in the future. This is behind many of the evangelism movements of our day.

They are calling this the "Kingdom Theology." Some fear that this theology is playing into the hands of the New Age Movement which is teaching a very similar philosophy. They feel that the new Christ is about to be revealed and that he will soon set things right here on earth for his rule over man.

We will have a serious look at Kingdom Theology in a future section.

PRINCIPLES OF THE SYSTEM:

- 1. The preaching of the Gospel to the world will bring mass world wide conversions which will usher in the 1000 years of peace. Sound like any recent evangelism push? 2000 for example.**
- 2. Christ will return at the end of the 1000 years of peace.**
- 3. There is one large general resurrection of all the dead of all times.**
- 4. There will be a general judgment of all those raised and those living at the coming of Christ.**

In the past the main deterrent to this position was the advent of the World Wars. Prior to the wars there seemed to be a peace coming, and people were coming to the Lord. Since the wars this position had little to offer. It may well be that the new crumbling of communism and the appearance of peace over the earth will bring forth a new movement toward this system of thought.

They deny Christ's reign on earth, and spiritualize the tribulation information. The idea of world evangelism was not a possibility until the 80's when the kingdom theology came into focus.

Many evangelical groups have taken up the 2000 concept which teaches that we will reach the world by the year 2000. Many have spent millions on strategy and labor to accomplish this goal. There is nothing wrong with the labor and investment of money to evangelize, however the goal of 2000 is foolish at best. When we evangelize the world, Christ can come according to the ologies of today. God will, however choose that time, not man, not man's plans, not man's efforts!

There is a real redefinition in world evangelization becoming popular today because of this thinking. They are now saying that if a people group has one church in it, then that people group has been evangelized. Based on this misconception they have announced that world evangelization is nearing a reality. Imagine, if there is one church in the Afro-American people group then that group of millions is considered evangelized!

"This viewpoint teaches that the second coming of Christ will occur after (post) the millennium. Postmillennialists look for a utopian state

on earth to be brought about through the efforts of the church, and during this golden age the church, not Israel, will experience the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham and David. The kingdom will be on earth, but it will be a "church kingdom" not a Jewish kingdom, and the King, Christ, will be absent from the earth, not present on it. He will rule in the hearts of the people and return to the earth only after the millennium is complete. then will follow a general resurrection of all the dead, a general judgment of all people, and eternity will begin.

"Postmillennialism conceives of the unfulfilled Abrahamic promises as being fulfilled by the church and, of course, not in any literal sense. Its method of interpretation is generally to spiritualize prophecy." (Taken from: "A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE"; Ryrie, Charles C.; Copyright 1972, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 162-163.)

POST TRIB PREMILLINARIANISM

Men holding to this position that I have run across are: George Ladd, Mr. Krouse, and Mr. Kromminga.

Ladd wrote "THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM AND PRESENCE OF THE FUTURE." Walvoord has a review of this book and says that the premillennial position was totally left out and that he believes Ladd is closer to being Amillennial. Ladd says no to this. (The review was in Dallas Seminary's theological journal, Bib Sac. July 1974.)

They view the Rapture and 2nd Coming as one event between the Tribulation and Millennium. The believers are resurrected and the living unrighteous are judged at this point in time. This introduces Christ's literal rule for 1000 years on earth. At the end of this time there is a general resurrection and the unrighteous are judged. The righteous enter eternity.

They make no distinction between Israel and the Church. They feel that God's Soteriological program is the Kingdom program. They feel literal historical interpretation is wrong, thus arrive on the scene as Post Tribulational Premillennial.

Another group of posttribulation people are the Seventh Day Adventists. The 7th dayers got into trouble, predicting the second coming because they were posttrib and saw the Roman Church as the end times culprits. They figured up with their trusty calculator and decided on 1844 and blew it. (They viewed worship on Sunday from Rome and calculated the end of the spiritualized tribulation that they were living through.)

REVISED DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLINARIANISM

This position seems to be a cross between dispensationalism and Covenant Theology thus the name that has been given to them. There is little written on their position that I have been able to find.

This view doubts the view which we have set forth, that Christ and John the Baptist were offering a literal 1000 year kingdom. (Millennial kingdom of the Old Testament.)

As I understand the view they see the dispensational approach, but instead of viewing the church as parenthetical they see it as a grafting of the gentiles into the kingdom that is ongoing in God's plan. When the gentiles were grafted in they became the kingdom. The kingdom is one ongoing program with God and there has just been a slight change in clientele during the church age.

They view a pre-millennial return of Christ to fulfill the promises of Israel in a 1000 year reign of Christ. I do not know what they do with the tribulation for it does not appear on the charts I have seen.

There is strong reaction to the idea that Christ offered a kingdom and that it was rejected. They feel that it was Christ's person that was rejected rather than His kingdom. (We would agree that His person was rejected as was His kingdom.)

They view the sermon on the mount and other teachings prior to the rejection as the spiritual intent of the Mosaic law and that they are for this age as well as the kingdom to come.

They make a very valid point to the thinking of some pre-trib. people. They take issue with the thought that the church is a parenthesis. A period which God Super Glued in, to fill the gap till the 2nd Coming.

Some almost make it appear that God didn't know that the kingdom was going to be rejected. This is consistent with what has been presented in this work. The church is a part of the ongoing program of God that was planned before the foundation of the earth. The church is the kingdom in mystery form. In this they would agree with our view.

Indeed, God did know the events coming, and had planned the church age all along. He had just not revealed it as yet.

They see Christ's offer of a kingdom as a spiritual kingdom (salvation) not the Davidic kingdom.

I'm not sure they are that far removed from Posttrib Premillennialism. They see the church age as a phase of the kingdom - which seems to be consistent with things. They keep Israel and the church separate except that we will be with Israel in the tribulation if there is one.

Their disagreement with our position would be basically two fold. They would believe that we are in a spiritual phase of the kingdom now and that Christ was not offering the Millennial Kingdom when He was on earth.

That concludes our brief look at some of the other views of the end times. It might be asked, "Does it matter what we hold?"

Yes, it does matter. If you are going to live life and declare that the Bible is your guide to faith and practice, then you must look at what It says and believe it.

When interpreted literally the Bible shows the Premillennial position very clearly. The system fits the facts given. If you reject literal interpretation, then you will find yourself in some other belief system. True, all systems lead to righteous living and that is to be admired in all that believe in any system.

The key in all of this is God's message. Did He deliver it in obscure hard to understand methods, or did He deliver it in a very understandable form? The latter seems most logical.

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ULTRADISPENSATIONALISM

I would like to include a short study on what is termed ultradispensationalism. It is the dispensational system taken a few steps further.

Among these people there are a number of variations. The variety comes from the fact that they place the beginning of the Church at different places in time. This will automatically determine how they view the Lord's table, Baptism and their use of Biblical books.

The positions:

Some view the church as beginning at Acts nine, the conversion and commission of Paul. (Mr. C.R. Stam, "THINGS THAT DIFFER"; Chicago: Berean Bible Society, 1959/ He also wrote, "THE FUNDAMENTALS OF DISPENSATIONALISM")

Some view the church as beginning at Acts thirteen, when Paul and Barnabus were sent out on their first missionary journey. (Mr. O'Hair)

Others see the church beginning as late as Acts 28, as the ministry of Paul closes out. (Mr. Knoch)

Though I have not run across anyone holding to this position, I suspect there may be some that view the Church beginning with Acts ten when the gentiles were allowed into the picture. (The conversion of Cornelius and his house.)

Among their beliefs are the following: Some reject the Lord's table, some reject baptism, some reject both, some reject the ordinances and hold only to Paul's epistles, and some go even further and reject all of the New Testament except Paul's prison epistles.

Mr. Knoch believes there are four dispensations between Christ and Paul's prison ministry.

Most of these men view the Great Commission as to the Jews only and not incumbent upon the Church.

Another variation is the thought of Mr. C.F. Baker. He believes that one church began at Pentecost, but that Paul was sent and was writing to another, separate, church body. (Baker, C.F., "DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY"; Grand Rapids: Grace Bible College Publ., 1971)

I THINK that all of these men would be pretrib/premill men and that they would hold to a literal Millennium. Some of them are very straight doctrinally. Indeed, IFCA, at one time, accepted a hyperdispensational man into their fellowship. This would require proper belief in many areas of doctrine.

KINGDOM THEOLOGY

I would like to introduce this section with two quotes from a man that preached a similar type theology. The quotes will set the stage for our discussion.

"He [Christ] could have come back five hundred years ago. If we evangelize the world in this generation, He can come back in this generation. Everything depends on our obedience. We can hasten His coming by giving His Gospel to every tribe, tongue, people and nation."

"When the last nation gets the Gospel and there are some in the body of Christ from every nation, tongue and people, then, and then only, will God's plan be consummated. Only then can the Age end and Jesus Christ return to take over the reins of government." (Smith, Oswald J., "THE CRY OF THE WORLD"; London: Marshal, Morgan and Scott, no copyright)

You can see clearly from this that the Church, and the Church's efforts will bring about the return of Christ. Christ must wait upon us to do our job. He cannot return until we allow it. Now, I trust that you have seen the error of that already. How can we control Almighty God? We cannot!

Variations of this thought have come to us in a number of different groups, theologies and belief systems. Some that we will look at briefly are: Kingdom Theology, Dominion Theology, Reconstruction theology, Theonomy, Restorationism, Restitutionism, Third Wave, Latter Rain, and Kingdom Now.

Gary North divides the theological peoples of our day into two categories. The eschatological pessimists and the eschatological optimists. Simply put the pessimists see gloom and doom, and the optimists see vivaciousness and victory. The pessimist views the world situation and Biblical end times as declining until the Lord comes. These people are the dispensationalists.

The optimist views the world scene as getting better and better until the Lord comes. The world getting better comes from the activities of the believers. Those holding this are usually linked in some manner with Post millennialism.

Most agree that many of these people have simply adopted the old Postmillennialism and tacked on a new name with some new trimmings. DeMar does not seem to reject the title Postmillennialist when used of him. ("THE REDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO DAVE HUNT"; Gary DeMar and Peter Leithard; Dominion Press; Ft Worth; 1988, p XXXV) He quotes Isa 11 9-10 as something that relates to what believers can do today. (in Reduction, p X) "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

To prove their teachings they state that Satan has developed counterfeits. Because their teachings follow closely the teachings of cults and isms, they state that their teachings are the true ones that the cults and isms are counterfeiting. Their teaching has been compared by some to the New Age movement. The New Agers believe that the true Christ is coming shortly, as soon as they can get the earth ready for him. The Kingdom Theology simply are looking for Christ's second coming when they can get the world cleaned up.

The following points are a compilation of information gleaned from the following books: "THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW" Pollock; "SEDUCTION THE BIBLICAL RESPONSE"; "PARADISE RESTORED", Chilton.

1. They view man as God: We can become god and create our own destiny. This is based on several things. First, they believe the church is divine - we are the body of Christ. This is the misuse of literal interpretation! We are not the literal hands, feet etc. of Christ - we are a body of people that belong to Christ and a body that Christ controls. The Scripture nowhere indicates that we are divine beings, nor that the church is divine. Relate the church at Corinth to this teaching. If the church is divine then we have divinity involved in immorality and many other sins. Intolerable!

Their thinking stems from Eph 4:11-16 and Matt. 5:48. They mistake maturing with becoming divine and perfect. We cannot in this life become perfect. We may become more mature and more pure, but never perfect. We may not in any life become divine. God alone is divine and He alone in all of eternity will be divine.

2. They view the church as taking dominion over the world before Christ returns: The Corinthians text is speaking of activities of the Lord in the end and have nothing to do with what the church is going to do. This is the context of the resurrections, not the church age. The Ephesians text is also speaking of the Lord and not the church. Verse twenty two and three mention that Christ is head over the church, but does not show that the church did all that is in the preceding text.

Even the lost understand the program. In the 1992 presidential campaign one of the "religious right" was introduced by a newsman as one that believes that the Christians should take over government and set up a theocracy in the United States. This is what they want to do.

I dislike being lumped in with them by the media as part of the religious right. It seems the media takes the most controversial of a group and label all others that are related to that one controversial belief. The media related all of evangelical Christianity to the religious right that wants a theocracy. I personally believe that only the Charismatic end of the spectrum wants the theocracy yet evangelicals, fundamentalists etc. are lumped with them.

3. All believers will become rich: Prov. 13:22 "...wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." They teach that the riches of the world will come to the church and this will assist in taking dominion of the world. This is the prosperity teaching of today. This concept is teaching that all believers should be rich and have all that they ask for.

My brother attended one of these churches in Washington. The pastor and his wife (both pastors in the church) both drove Mercedes and the ushers took up the offering in five gallon plastic buckets. If the offering wasn't enough, they would pass the buckets again.

4. The Church will evangelize the world, then Christ can return: Rev. 7:9 "After this I beheld and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues," This text simply states that there will be believers from all nations etc. in heaven. It does not state that the church must accomplish this before the Lord returns. The how of this is up to God, not man.

One final thought in refuting their thinking. Lu 18:8 seems to show that the righteous may not be in the majority when He comes. "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The teaching that we are studying requires that the believers overtake the world, not as this verse indicates dwindle to the point that it is questioned whether there will be faithful or not when the Lord returns.

SOME OF THE PLAYERS

I would like to list some of the different groups that I have run across and comment on their teaching. Some of the groups, I have found no information on so comments will be limited.

LATTER RAIN: A revival broke out in 1948 in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada. This was likened to the outpouring of the spirit upon those at the Azuza street church when the modern Charismatic Movement was born. (The Azuza street meetings were the foundation of the modern Charismatic movement. People were gathered and they were involved in an outpouring of the Spirit and speaking in tongues.)

Out of this revival came revelations that told the leaders that the church had completely misunderstood the great commission and the end times scriptures. This group later gave way to the Manifest Sons Of God.

MANIFEST SONS OF GOD: They were a pentecostal group in the 40's and 50's. They preached a victorious gospel. Involved in their thinking was the beginnings of the Prosperity theology.

They felt that they could come to a point where they could think as God thinks, and operate at the same level of faith as God operates. If the above is true then you will have all that you want and lack nothing. They feel by the use of prosperity and bringing people to righteousness we will bring in the kingdom.

They are not reconstructionists as such. They felt that they could Christianize through prosperity, rather than reforming society and government.

Their new revelations were viewed as equal to, if not above the Scriptures.

KINGDOM NOW: Earl Paulk is the leader and has appeared on the PTL club (Jim Bakker's show). His church is the Kingdom Church. He has been appointed a Bishop by a group of Charismatic churches.

He mentioned in a newsletter called "The Omega Letter" that God wants Christians to be the vehicle by which all kingdoms of the world are brought to be the kingdoms of God. He called for the establishment of the Kingdom Of God now in this time.

He mentioned that Christians would begin taking public office in all levels of government. I might mention that this is a great idea, in that we as believers ought to be involved in our government. Indeed, we might be useful in helping turn this country around spiritually. I would disagree that God wants us to set up the kingdom and create a theocracy, however.

COALITIONS ON MORALITY: A gathering of very dissimilar groups for a common cause, such as abortion. One such group is CAUSA which was set up by Sun Myung Moon (Unification Church).

We have seen fundamental Christians beginning to work with Roman Catholics against abortion even though they have very dissimilar backgrounds.

THEONOMY: DeMar seems to tie theonomy and reconstructionism together in that he uses men from both to back up one of his statements in a footnote. ("THE REDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY

A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO DAVE HUNT"; Gary DeMar and Peter Leithard; Dominion Press; Ft Worth; 1988, p 31-32)

I would like to just adapt some information from an article in Bib Sac. The article was written by Robert P. Lightner. (Jan-Mar 1986)

WHO: Lightner mentions that they are from the covenant-Reformed, Westminster tradition. (P 26)

WHAT: They hold to the postmillennial position and preach that the Mosaic law is for our day. (p 26)

DEFINED: Theonomy comes from two Greek words. One meaning God and one meaning Law.

AIM: Basically they want to set up the theocracy that we have already mentioned. They want to institute the Mosaic law as the civil/religious law of the land. They feel that the Church should impose the religious upon all of society. Sounds like the Roman Church in Europe some centuries ago. (p 29)

PESSIMISTS: That's the good guys. Everything is getting worse until the end times when it will be the worst and Christ will come to restore the heavens and earth to the glories of God.

A listing of DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISTS might be in order. D.L. Moody, C.I. Scofield, Alva McClain, Herman Hoyt, Charles Ryrie, Dwight Pentecost, Hal Lindsey, H.A. Ironside, John Walvoord, and many many others.

DeMar includes Jimmy Swagart and David Wilkerson in this camp as well. Some of the writings of Jimmy Swagart indicate that he may be in this camp even though he would disagree in other areas. I have not read nor checked out David Wilkerson.

DOMINION THEOLOGY: DeMar suggests that Christ has a dominion. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Believers are co-heirs with Him so they should also have dominion with Him. This dominion is a bit premature and possibly overstated. The Scripture is plain that we will reign with Him and be with Him in the kingdom

and eternity, however there is no indication that this ruling will occur before He comes to set up His kingdom.

They feel that as the world sees the believer living within His dominion they will see what the believer is like and the world will begin to change and improve, not by oppression, but by service to mankind. I THINK MOST WOULD AGREE THAT THE BELIEVER LIVING LIKE HE SHOULD WOULD HAVE A TREMENDOUS EFFECT ON HIS WORLD.

Adam was given dominion in the garden, but blew it when he fell. All now is a work to restore dominion. The believer is to work toward restoring dominion to man in every area of life and they do this through Christ. This by the way is part of the reason that Charismatics believe that women should pastor and preach. They are attempting to get the world back to the pre-fall days when Eve was EQUAL to Adam.

Chilton uses a quote by Spurgeon on the back of his book. (Chilton, David; "PARADISE RESTORED"; Ft. Worth: Dominion Press)

"It would be easy to show that at our present rate of progress the kingdoms of his world never could become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Indeed, many in the Church are giving up the idea of it except on the occasion of the advent of Christ, which, as it chimes in with our own idleness, is likely to be a popular doctrine. I myself believe that King Jesus will reign, and the idols be utterly abolished; but I expect the same power which turned the world upside down once will still continue to do it. The Holy Ghost would never suffer the imputation to rest upon His holy name that He was not able to convert the world."

I've attempted to locate this quote but have not been able to at this point.

I'm not sure that Spurgeon meant what the Dominionist means, but there is a lot of truth in what he said. We would agree that at the present rate the world cannot merge into the kingdom as a righteous body of believers. We would agree that the Holy Spirit could transform the world into a Christian world, however this does not mean that He is going to do it to bring in the kingdom.

He also quotes other big names and indicates that they were in agreement with his thinking. A study of each man's belief systems would be required to prove that they indeed, were in agreement with Mr. Chilton. He quotes John Milton, St. Athanasius, and others.

They suggest that man in salvation is resorted to his original state which assures that he will fulfill his calling and purpose. (Chilton, David; "PARADISE RESTORED"; Ft. Worth: Dominion Press, p 25)

They see the cross as the final and ultimate judgment on the Devil and that he is of no problem to the believer today.

He gives a lot of information that is not footnoted and as such very suspect to me. Example: He mentions that Columbus was not only looking for a new route to the Indies but that his journal was full of references from Isaiah that prove that he was interested in expanding the kingdom to the Indies. This may well be. I might suggest that he was looking to expand the Roman Church kingdom by seeking riches for the Queen. In fact the American Indians call him a very greedy person based on his desire to enrich the Queen. (1992 Columbus day celebrations were hampered because of demonstrations against Columbus.)

Chilton identifies solidly with the postmillennial position thus identifying dominionism with reconstructionism.

DeMar, on the other hand, seems to give the reconstructionist the stance of not using politics as a part of their movement.

Some question where Pat Robertson stands. He seems to feel that reform through government is right. This was the reasoning behind his running for president of the United States.

As I see it in my study, the postmillennialist, dominionist, reconstructionist, are all the same with the Manifest sons of God. I don't know if they would hold to the "new" revelation of the Manifest sons or not. (The Omega letter classes Pat Robertson as a reconstructionist.)

KINGDOM THEOLOGY: DeMar suggests that the terms kingdom theology and dominion theology are used by some interchangeably.

The two are very similar in nature. Kingdom theology is an intellectualization of the dominion theology. The dominionist has the belief, and is working toward fulfilling that belief, while the kingdomist is doing all this plus trying to figure out when the kingdom is. Is it now, is it future, is it real, is it spiritual.

Both seek to gain good in the world by works of the believer.

TRANSFORMATION THEOLOGY: They believe that God is involved in saving the whole person, body/soul/spirit/social/etc., and that he is doing this in this life.

This is some information from a paper published by the Fellowship Of Missions. (The article was "Transformation Theology") "The term 'social transformation' was lauded as one that could include both the spiritual and the social aspects of the Church's duty and thereby a wholistic expression of its mandate."

In speaking of redemption, they don't "'...see the mission of the Church as the saving of disembodied souls to go to heaven' out there.' Rather, this statement is based on the premise that God intends to redeem whole persons...body, mind and soul, and God intends to redeem His creation bringing into being a new heaven and a new earth."

RECONSTRUCTION THEOLOGY: The following are some that I have seen listed as being in the movement:

R.J. Rushdoony	Greg L. Bahnsen
James Jordan	Ray Sutton
David Chilton	George Grant
Gary DeMar	Peter Leithard
Dr. Gary North	Abraham Kuyper
American Vision	Chalcedon Foundation
Geneva Ministries	Institute for Christian Economics
Counsel of Chalcedon	

They follow their roots at least back to the Puritans, but some indicate the current movement finds its beginnings in the 60's. They feel that the humanistic world order is in error, but that there is a Biblical world order that is to be brought in by the reconstructionists. The

Biblical world order is founded in the Old Testament, in that the Old Testament was God's plan for the entire world and not just the faithful. The whole world is to follow the Old Testament ways to the restoration of the Biblical world order. This determines that the Church will be victorious over the world system of the Devil. The Churches victory will come through social reform or reconstruction.

The Church will not only be victorious over the world order, but over all of the isms of the day including the New Age movement. It should also be observed that they are attempting to put down even pessimism - the dispensationalist.

They see the transformation in all areas of life including such things as Ecology, mandating lower taxes and governmental change. I assume by governmental change that he has in mind a reconstructionist government. Can you show me anywhere that the Lord desires of us to take over governments and set up our own?

DeMar charges that Hunt in "THE SEDUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY", correctly shoots down the new age movement, but that he offers nothing in place of it. Reconstructionism, however replaces the error of the new age with the truth of reconstructionism. My first thought was that both new age and the reconstructionist feels that by faithful work of their followers they can bring in a utopia. If I were a reconstructionist I would feel very uneasy with being identical in goal and method with the new age movement.

They hold to hold that the Old Testament law is for use today. They seem to follow the philosophy and thinking of VanTil, however I don't think that VanTil was a reconstructionist. They view the entire world as ultimately coming under the authority of the Lord through their efforts.

Kuyper held that Calvinism related to every area of life and this led to the thought system of VanTil. Though they follow VanTil and Kuyper they differ in that VanTil did not hold to their thinking and Kuyper was an Amillennialist. He did not see the church as being ultimately victorious.

There are a couple of articles concerning this topic that might be of interest. Christianity Today, Feb. 20, 1987, Democracy as Heresy,

Rodney Clapp. Voice (IFCA's Magazine), July/August (don't know the year), The Lure Of Reconstructionist Theology, Jarl K. Waggoner.

COALITION ON REVIVAL: This seems to be a coalition of both sides. They attempt to find common ground on the real meaning of the Kingdom of God.

People:

Gary North	R.J. Rushdoony
Bob Weiner	Bob Mumford
Ed McAteer	R. E. McMaster
Dr. James Kennedy	

The following are on the steering committee listed on their letterhead.

Dr. Gleason Archer Ph.D	Gary DeMar
Dr. Duane Gish Ph.D.	Dr. James Kennedy Ph.D.
Mrs. Beverly LaHaye	Dr. Tim LaHaye D.Min.
Dr. Harold Lindsell Ph.D.	Rev. David P. Mains
Dr. Josh McDowell D.D.	Bob Mumford
Dr. Gary North Ph.D.	Dr. Raymond Ortlund D.D.
Dr. J.I. Packer Ph.D.	Dr. RJ Rushdoony Ph.D.
Dr. Robert Saucy Th.D.	Mr. Franky Schaeffer
Dr. Jack Van Impe Ph.D.	Brother Andrew

SOME CONCLUSIONS TO THE END TIMES POSITIONS: To draw the end times positions to a close, I would like to recap some items that need to be understood in the multiple views of how God will end His present age.

- 1. The people we have been discussing are believers for the most part, if not all of them.**
- 2. We need to treat one another as such, even though we disagree.**
- 3. All are dispensationalists of some sort, even though some of them deny it. None of them bring sacrifices to the church and most see different governing relationships between God and man.**

4. When you have a new thought introduced to you or a new interpretation, take time to study that verse or the thought. Check several commentaries. Try it in relation to other verses you know relate. Check it out. Accept, reject or hold for further thought. When verses are used, be sure that you consider the context of the passage. Most of these varying positions misuse Scripture to arrive at their interpretations.

5. If you don't know if something is true - don't present it in a lesson or sermon. If you are fairly sure you have the truth and you've checked your thinking with some knowledgeable men - teach it.

6. The pretrib/premill position is:

The most logical position. If God is trying to communicate with us, the literal method of interpretation would be the best method for Him to use. We have seen that this type of interpretation leads to pretrib/premill.

This is the most trouble free position. You have few problem passages to deal with. All verses that relate to prophecy seem to fit into this system easily.

The system presents hope to the Church in that we will not have to go through the terrible time of tribulation that is coming to the earth. I might qualify that statement. The position offers more hope than any of the other systems that believe in a tribulation. Some of the systems just ignore the fact that there is going to be one. They spiritualize all of that prophecy and say that we are going through those problems today.

Lastly, what good, what purpose and what result would come from having the Church go through the tribulation? As I have studied the positions I have never seen an author that stated a need for, nor a purpose for the church being in the tribulation.

God seems in all ages to have a plan and a purpose. If there is a no purpose for the Church in the tribulation, if there is no profit for the church in the tribulation, then why would God allow the Church to go through such a horrible time?

Related to this - there is no proof text that says the Church will be in the tribulation. Indeed, to have the Church present in the tribulation would be an argument from silence.

07700

HEAVEN

The classic story concerning death and graveyards is the question, "Why do they have fences around graveyards?" People are just dieing to get in. In reality, people ought to be dieing to accept the Lord so they can enter into heaven.

Heaven, when I was a child was that which religious leaders talked about, and that place which I assumed that I would go to. It was in my mind a place, rather than an existence. It was up there somewhere above the clouds and beyond the stars, where God had prepared a beautiful utopia for those of us that were to go.

Heaven in reality is much more than a place. It is eternity, it is eternity with our Lord and Savior, it is eternity with all the saints of all time, and it is eternity with peace.

We might make mention of one other fact that was long in coming to light in my foggy mind. All of mankind, past, present and future have eternal existence! The quality of that existence is the problem. Some have eternity in all that is good, while others have eternity in all that is bad! We will spend eternity in one existence or the other! The choice is up to the person!

LENGTH OF ETERNITY:

Hendrick Van Loon a Dutch historian in a book called, "THE STORY OF MANKIND", suggests that eternity is something like this: "High up in the North, in the land called Svitjod, there stands a rock. It is one hundred miles high, and one hundred miles wide. Once every thousand years, a little bird comes to this rock to sharpen its beak. When the rock has thus been worn away, then a single day of Eternity will have gone by!" (Tan, Paul L.; "THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY"; Rockville, MD: Assurance Publishing, p 358)

Tan suggests another illustration:

"When a baby is born, he is -- 0 YEARS OLD. If properly cared for, he becomes -- 10 YEARS OLD. If very properly cared for, we add another zero -- 100 YEARS OLD. Now, suppose we continue to add zeros: If we should fill the remaining pages of this book with zeros, and cover the earth and universe with zeros - and then comprehend its total value - we shall have discovered the length of one day in Eternity."

AND, WE ALL KNOW THAT THE ILLUSTRATION IS NOT EVEN ACCURATE, FOR WE CANNOT COMPREHEND THE VALUES LISTED, NOR CAN MAN FATHOM THE LENGTH OF A DAY IN ETERNITY. Indeed, it could be 24 hours long!

REALITY IN AMERICA:

Newsweek March 27, 1989 had an article that listed some statistics of interest. It detailed the fact that many do not believe in a literal hell, and that many do not believe in heaven. That should key us into some thinking about how we witness! If many Americans don't believe in Hell, then we ought to use this concept in our witnessing to people.

CHANGING VIEWS OF HEAVEN: The article has some interesting information.

Roman Catholic: Since Vatican II much literature has been set forth from the church, yet nothing has been mentioned about hell. The Newsweek article mentioned a Catholic Theologian, James Burtchaell, that feels that eternity is underway at this point in time. What you do here determines your relationship with God as you go forward in eternity. You will change modes of existence somewhere along the line.

I would agree in thought to the fact that eternity is now going on - that when we change modes of existence we will have a set relationship with God. The difference between us would be that his relationship seems based on works while the Bible requires that the relationship be based on the person of Jesus Christ.

Evangelicals: The article mentions that the evangelicals are changing their thinking about heaven and hell. This is evident in the fact that they don't talk about hell anymore. The author suggests that some

are having a hard time stressing the Christ only method of salvation. They struggle with good men like Gandhi spending eternity in hell.

UNCHANGING VIEWS OF HEAVEN:

Fundamentalists: The author mentions that the fundamentalists still have a strong belief in heaven and hell. I suspect that they may be wrong, however because many do not preach about hell anymore.

The article also gives some other views of hell that might interest you if you can find the magazine in a library.

Let us consider some facts about heaven:

1. There will be many mansions. Jn 14 1-3

2. We will recognize others. Lu 16:19-31 tells of the account of the rich man and Lazarus, and the rich man recognized those on the other side of Sheol. The transfiguration would indicate this fact of recognition as well.

3. We will have eternal life. The New Testament is full of references to our eternal nature with God. One we might mention is I Thess. 4:16-18. Vs. 17 mentions, "...and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

4. Some view Romans 8:22-23 as proof there will be animal life in eternity. The whole of creation was affected by the fall. There were animals before the fall, all creation was affected by the fall so the restoration of things should include animals. We know there is plant life in eternity, and there are animals in the millennium, so there may be animal life in eternity. I'm not saying, folks, there will be a kitty and puppy heaven, but there may be animals. We might mention the fact that Christ returns on a horse, thus possibly indicating animals in eternity. Rev. 19:11ff You must remember there will be 1000 years between this occasion and eternity, so it may not indicate animals in eternity.

4. We will have new bodies. Philippians 3:21

5. We will be with Christ. Jn 17:24, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me...."

6. We will have pleasure. Ps 16:11, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

7. We will have joy. Ps 16:11. The contrast of pleasure and joy would be the tortures of torment.

8. It is a specific place. I Pet 1:4 tells us that something can be stored there.

9. It will be with God. Lu 11:2

10. It will be with the angels. Matt 22:30

11. We will be like Christ. I Jn 3:2. Some heavy thoughts there! Be like Christ. See Him!

12. It is far better than this life. Phil 1:23

13. It will be beautiful. Rev 21 This describes the new Jerusalem.

LEST SOMEONE EMBARRASS YOU, MAY I RELATE THERE IS ONLY ONE STREET OF GOLD. (There may be more, but the Revelation only mentions one.)

14. There will be worship. Rev 19:1

15. There will be rewards. Rev 22:12

16. The light will be from Christ. Rev 21:23

17. It will be a holy place. Rev 21:27

18. There will be no tears/death/sorrow/crying/pain! Rev 21:4

19. There will be no curse. Rev 22:3

20. Based on our being like Christ and what we know of His post resurrection body, we assume the following will be true. Capacity to eat, if we want to. Capacity to move through walls. Some physical features - the wounds of the cross and lance. Communication skills.

21. It is up. Acts 1:9, in speaking of Christ being taken it states, "...he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."

22. Misc. items: Created by God, Gen. 1:1; Everlasting; High, Ps 103:11; God's dwelling place - Matt 6:9.

Eyewitness accounts of heaven:

1. Christ: He spoke of it, as one that has first hand knowledge in that it is his eternal home, both past, present, and future.

2. Paul mentions it: II Cor. 12:1-9 He mentions being caught up to the third heaven.

3. John: Rev 4:1-2 mentions him being caught up. He saw the throne scene of God.

4. Old Testament saints: Isaiah and Ezekiel both observed the throne scene.

I assume that heaven will be the complete opposite of the place of torment. This would mean that heaven will be as peaceful as torment is without peace. This would mean that heaven will be as beautiful as torment is dark. This would mean that heaven will be as neat as torment is terrible. This would mean that heaven will be everything that torment is not.

AT ANY RATE, TORMENT IS NOT A PLACE TO DESIRE TO BE!

I would guess that a study of torment would give a real appreciation for what we will have in eternity with God. We will have a study on hell next.

In the practical area we might consider:

1. We will be able to accept ourselves as God accepts us.
2. We will be satisfied for the first time in our existence.
3. We will totally enjoy every moment of all of eternity. Never bored!
4. We will have total and free access to Christ and all the other saints of all times. Imagine those potlucks!
5. It will mean never having indigestion.
6. It will mean having hair, or not having hair - depending on which is really heavenly. If there is hair in the spiritual realm.
7. Never having those problems with the dentist.
8. This list could go on forever. **INDEED, IT WILL!!!!**

Heaven should be a glorious thought to the believer, not something to be shunned or avoided in preference to worldly things, activities nor desires. A couple of quotes will show how some believers have reacted to the thought of heaven.

"HEAVEN

"Origin of 'Sweet By-and-By

The origin of the familiar hymn, 'In the Sweet By-and-By,' is given by a writer in *The Christian Advocate*, and it is a story of unusual interest. Sanford F. Bennett was a New Englander with a gift of writing verses, who in 1836 removed to Elkhorn, Wisconsin, where he conducted a drug store. Joseph P. Webster, also a New Englander who had come to Elkhorn, had some musical skill, and Bennett and he became intimate friends. Webster, who was subject to moods of depression, one day in 1867 went into Bennett's store and stood at the stove without speaking to anyone. Bennett saw he was depressed, and here the story runs as follows: 'Seeing that something was wrong, the latter asked, 'What is the matter now?' 'It is no matter,' Webster replied. 'It will be all right by and by.' Like a flash the idea of the hymn came to Bennett, who exclaimed, 'The Sweet By-and-By. Would not that make a good hymn?' 'Maybe it would,' returned Webster

indifferently. Bennett turned to his desk and in a few minutes handed Webster the paper containing his verses. Meanwhile two friends, N. H. Carswell and S.E. Bright, had entered. They watched Webster as he read the words. Bennett said: 'As he read it his eyes kindled, his whole demeanour changed. Stepping to the desk he began writing notes rapidly. Presently, taking a violin, he played the melody. In a few moments more he had the notes for the four parts of the chorus jotted down.' It was not half an hour from the time Bennett began writing before the four men were singing the hymn in the form in which it was afterward published in the 'Signet Ring.' It was while they were singing it that R.R. Crosby came in, and after hearing the song, cried out, with tears in his eyes, 'That hymn is immortal.'"

"It was in 1876 that I wrote 'Beulah Land,' said Mr. Stites. 'I could write only two verses and the chorus of 'Beulah Land' when I was overcome and fell on my face. I could only weep and write no more. That was on Sunday. On the following Sunday I wrote the third and fourth verses and again I was so influenced by emotion that I could only pray and weep. The first time it was sung was at the regular Monday morning meeting of Methodist ministers at 1018 Arch Street, Philadelphia. Bishop McCabe sang it to the assembled ministers. Since then its story is known wherever religious people congregate.'" (Lawson, James Gilchrist, "Best Sermon Pictures"; Chicago: Moody Press, No copyright.)

Might I challenge you to come to a place in your life when you shed tears of joy over the thrills of eternity with the Father, but at the same time be able to shed tears of sorrow over the torment of the lost!

This study should not end without comment on what has been termed near death or after death experiences. These experiences are related to us from people that have died and then been brought back to life, or people that were very near death.

The experiences vary around the basic, seeing of bright light down a long corridor and a being at the end calling them. These people are certain they were on their way to heaven to be with God.

A couple of thoughts that you might be able to use in relation to this discussion. First, the fact that this is almost a universal experience with the near death people, leads me to believe they would have us

believe that all people that die are going to heaven. The Scripture is quite definite on the falseness of that theory.

Second, in recent days doctors are finding out that the people that were pronounced dead, may not have been really dead. They have found that people with no pulse, may have a pulse so weak that the doctor cannot feel it with his finger. Research in such cases with new technology have proven that in some cases the pulse is there, but is very weak. The pulse is large enough to keep blood going through the brain, which would allow for impressions of light etc. to be retained in the memory. Indeed, this bright light may well be that viewed through their closed eyelids and the voice may well be that of doctors or friends.

To accept these experiences as real and allow them to contradict the clear teaching of Scripture is foolish. We must take such experiences as suspect, but truly the experience of the person.

We might well be glad for the usual change of life for the better in the people that have had these experiences.

Heaven will undoubtedly be a picture of all that God is and all that He can do, so we can only hint at what it might be like.

07750

HELL

Hell is a subject that is very much misunderstood by many people, both saved and lost. As this study progresses some of these mistaken concepts will be mentioned.

We don't have a lot of information about the eternal state of the lost person, yet we have enough facts to give the thinking person reason to consider carefully the Lord's work on the cross for them.

Many today suggest that we shouldn't scare people into hell. To this I ask, "Why did Christ talk so much about it for then?" I have heard many many testimonies of people that accepted the Lord because they had heard of hell and did not want to go there. Fear of the Lord may well involve the fear of his judgments and justice!

Let us begin with a story. A man died and found himself near a large entry way. He was ushered into a large mansion, and was told that all that he desired would be presented to him. He began asking for the many things that he had enjoyed on earth. All these items were delivered immediately. He began to ask for things that he had never had on earth, and these as well were delivered.

He realized after a time that all of the items he had desired had grown common and uninteresting. He requested to see the earth again, and this was granted. He gazed upon the sickness, poverty and war. His return to his mansion and things left him yearning for something more.

The man finally asked if he could have a peek into the place of torment - hell. The man standing before him asked, "So where do you think you are?" (adapted from Woodson, Leslie H., "HELL AND SALVATION"; Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1973, p 35)

Many in our day question the existence of hell. It has been reported that someone said to Hugh Hephner, the publisher of Playboy magazine, at a party, "If there is a hell - I'd sure hate to be you!"

VIEWS OF HELL:

There are four major schools of thought concerning hell.

1. IT IS EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT:

Some that have defended and preached this position: Tertullian, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Wesley brothers, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Wyclif, Savonarola, Whitefield, Edwards, Spurgeon, Moody , and many others.

Some creeds and works that have proclaimed this position: Athanasian Creed, Augsburg Confession, The City Of God by Augustine, Summa Theologica by Lombard, Institutes of the Christian Religion by Calvin, Paradise Lost by Milton, and Pilgrim's Progress by Bunyan.

Simply put the position views hell as an eternal torment for the lost of all ages. Hell is a general term for the place. It is also known in the eternal state as the lake of fire. In the pre-resurrections era it is termed Sheol.

Some view hell as a place where the lost go, but never realize that Sheol and the Lake of Fire are also involved.

2. IT IS ANNIHILATION:

This position holds that God and good are eternal, but that Satan and evil are temporary and will be destroyed in the end. This translates into the lost being annihilated in the end.

Some of those holding this thought: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Richard Wahatley, Richard Tothe, Albert Ritschl, Horace Bushnell Franz Delitzsh, and Henry Drummond.

3. UNIVERSALISM:

This view believes there is a remedial effect to hell, and that God is trying to turn His erring children around.

Some that teach the position: Origen, Charles Chauncy, Immanuel, Kant, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Alfred Tennyson.

4. SECOND CHANCEISM:

This view sees that during this time before eternity that the rejectors are in torment, but this is only till the end at which time all will be given a second chance. Turn, and the torment is over. Indeed, I think that the Mormon's view that all will turn or be destroyed. When doing door to door evangelism in Colorado Springs years ago I was witnessing to a Mormon and he told me that he believed that hell was for the purification of those that did not believe in this life. All would one day accept Mormon teachings of God or be destroyed.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SEPARATION IS UNIVERSAL IN GOD'S PLAN:

1. This can be seen in the nature of the soul. Man was created in the image of God. From the beginning of a soul it must be eternal toward the future to be in the image of God. If an eternal soul is not in a fit condition to be with God, then there must be a place for that soul to reside throughout eternity.

2. Separation is a principal of life and nature. The dead are separated from the living. We separate the criminals from the good citizens. (At least in most countries. I'm not sure about the US anymore.) Garbage is separated from good food. Trash is separated from good items. Lepers were separated from healthy people before there was a cure for the disease. Christ will separate souls, the good from the bad. "Those who refuse life in God become 'refuse' in character sooner or later, and in the nature of things must be removed to a place apart." (Dixon)

3. From the principle of Consequence. No consequence - no restraint. That's why God gave capital punishment - to deter killing. He gave hell to deter sin and rebellion. This has a very strong effect on those that believe in hell or eternal punishment. Many religions have very strong - good behaviour due to their teaching of torment.

4. History tells us that a place of torment is a universal concept. All peoples have tried to please the gods to escape future punishment.

They have all had some concept of good place/bad place. The burial crypts of the world give evidence of a belief in an afterlife. The ancient civilizations placed food and water in containers so the person could have them in the next life. Indeed, some of them buried the wife and servants for the man to enjoy in the next life. Most peoples have served gods of one sort or another out of fear of displeasing the god involved.

5. Luke 16:21 and context show there is existence after death.

6. All of Scripture declares a place of punishment.

THE TERMS:

In the New Testament there are three Greek words translated Hell.

1. "Gehen'na" (gheh'en nah) Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 394,395) "...a deep, narrow glen to the south of Jerusalem, where the Jews offered their children to Moloch (II Kings 23:10; [Verses 13,14 show it was a burning place for corpses (Josiah did this. Also II Chr. 33:6] Jer. 7:31; 19:2-6). In later times it served as a receptacle of all sorts of putrefying matter, and all that defiled the holy city, and so became the representative image of the place of everlasting punishment, especially on account of its ever-burning fires; and to this fact the words of Christ refer when he says 'the fire is not quenched.'"

In Christ's day this dump burned day and night. This is probably the final resting place and probably is equal to the lake of fire in Revelation.

2. "hades" This word is indicative of the intermediate state for the Old Testament dead, and since Christ the dwelling place of the unrighteous dead.

Things to be learned from this term. a. Lost of Old Testament are in misery from death. b. Lost of New Testament are in misery from death. c. Saved of Old Testament were there until the resurrection of Christ, but now are gone. (Luke 16:19-31 shows the two sides of

hades. Acts 2:27 shows David was to be there for a time. David was looking forward to Christ's resurrection when he spoke of hades. Verse 31 shows he was taken out at Christ's resurrection.)

Revelation 20:13 shows hades giving up the lost souls at the end. Rev. 20:14 mentions that hades is cast into the lake of fire. This term is also translated grave. I Cor. 15:55, "Oh grave, where is thy victory."

The joy of the study is that Hades cannot hold the redeemed, for it could not hold Christ.

3. "Tar taro'o" This word is only used once. II Pet. 2:4. Angels cast into hell to await judgment. This may be the name for the great gulf that is mentioned in the Luke 16 passage. Most feel that II Peter is speaking of this location.

THE LOCATION:

I once heard a young Methodist theologian mention that hell was, "Southern California." I don't think that this would be a provable fact, and YES, he was joking.

I would like to just list some references and some information that we can draw from them. Num. 16:30,33 indicates that it is below the surface of the earth in the Old Testament times. Luke 16:23 indicates that it was still below in the New Testament period of time.

As to the lake of fire which will be the eternal dwelling place of the lost, we are not told in scripture just where it is. Some feel that Isa 66:22-24 speaks of the redeemed being able to view the lost in the eternal state. Rev 14:9-11; Rev 22:15 also indicate this as a possibility. If this be true, then there is a possibility that it is just outside the New Jerusalem as the original hell of Christ's time was. That city dump of the New Testament day.

BASIS OF OCCUPANCY:

Just who will occupy this place of torment, and why. The Scripture teaches that all mankind will be judged according to his or her works. Within this concept is one special consideration and that is the decision for or against Christ. The decision to accept Christ places

the person in eternal joy, while a decision to reject Christ places the person in eternal torment. After this decision is made there is still a principle of being judged according to the works of the person.

Indeed, the Great White Throne shows there will be levels of torment in that they are judged according to their works. The redeemed receive a varying reward, thus it would also be logical that the lost would also receive a varying degree of torment.

For the saved, works will determine the amount and type of rewards. The lost will be tormented according to their works. Lost is lost, yet there will be levels of being tormented it seems. (Rom. 2:5,6, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds:"; Matt. 11:20-24 mentions that it will be more tolerable for some cities than others in the judgment/Matt 10:15 is a similar idea; Luke 12:47,48 I don't like to base things on parables, yet this one seems to indicate our point; Rev. 20:12,13, vs 13, "...and they were judged every man according to their works.")

Even some of the isms of our day teach this concept of works being a part of judgment. Zoroastrianism for example teaches that the person must pass a bridge of judgment. If his good works outweigh his bad the bridge is wide and easy to cross. However if his bad works outweigh his good the bridge becomes narrow as a blade as he reaches the middle and he slides into hell. Hell is a temporary place for these souls, but while there they are tortured beyond belief. This torture is according to their lives and how they lived. I ran across an illustration of the type of torture. A man that had committed adultery was placed in a boiling pot, but because he had killed many dirty creatures with his foot, the foot was left out of the pot so it would not suffer. (From Persian Mythology; John R. Hinnells; Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited; London; 1973) P 66)

There won't be any complaint about final punishment it seems. Luke 16:29-31 tells us that the rich man did not complain about anything. His only desire was to keep his brothers from the same fate.

DURATION:

We have already seen that some believe that this is a forever situation while others see it as a temporary situation. Forever or annihilation is

the question. The word for eternal seems to be eternal in nature at all times. "That the 'second death' ('Lake of Fire') or gehenna is not annihilation is shown clearly by Rev. 19:20 and 20:10. After 1000 years in the Lake of Fire the Beast and False Prophet still exist there undestroyed." (Taken from: "UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY"; Unger, Merrill F.; Copyright 1957, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago; Moody Press. Used by permission. pp 394,395) Rev.19:20 states that the Beast and False Prophet into Lake of Fire; 20:3 sets time before Millennium; 20:10 shows that the Devil is cast in 1000 years later and the Beast and False Prophet are still there.)

There are a couple of other indications that would show that the condition of the lost is not annihilation. The angels in hell do not seem to be annihilated either. (II Pet. 2:4) We have seen that Rev. 20:13 and others show punishment is according to works. Why judge according to works if all are to be consumed?

The fallen angels, including Satan will be in the lake of fire, and they are ever living spirit beings. When man dies, they become a spirit being, thus by deduction man also would be an ever living being as well.

Eternal hell is the easiest interpretation you can find. Any other interpretation is forced and causes doctrinal problems. Since the same term is used of God and hell, to have one mean the stopping of existence and another usage to show continuing existence is illogical.

LIVING CONDITIONS:

I will just list some conditions with references and some comments.

DARKNESS: Psalm 49:19 "never see light"; I Sam. 2:7-9 they will be silent in darkness (same word) as in Gen. 1:4 God divided light from darkness.

If you go into a seemingly dark room you will find after awhile that you will be able to see something. But deep darkness is not so. While in the Navy I needed a part to repair the radar. We were with a number of other ships during a war games situation, so the radar was needed right away. During such operations the ships run under what is called "darken ship" condition. This means that all outside hatches

are closed and no light is allowed out on deck. The parts area was not accessible to me from the radar room by going inside the ship, so I was forced to go out on deck. Remember - no light - none - and it was very cloudy on top of everything which meant no star or moon light. Dark is the term! Imagine trying to walk outside on the deck unable to see anything - groping with your hands - hoping nothing is in your way - the ship pitching and rolling slightly - just enough to make it hard to keep your orientation. When you finally see light there is such an overwhelming relief.

Imagine - eternity - ever in darkness - in fear of what's around you. How many of you were afraid of the dark when you were small. I used to get just as scared as Ichabod Craine did in the Legend of Sleepy Hollow. Ichabod was riding on a dark lonely road. Fear was already in his mind. "Suddenly he heard a groan - his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle; it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him." He sees an unknown rider in the shadows. I won't continue with the story because of its length, but I think that you get the idea.

I trust that you have some concept of what the lost will go through in everlasting darkness. Matt. 8:12 mentions outer darkness as well.

BINDING: Those that say they'll be shaking hands with friends may be wrong. From Matt. 22:13 we see they will be unable to use their hands and feet. If this is true then the muscular discomfort will be tremendous. We went to a service in a home. The service was in the basement. The service ended in a time of prayer. We kneeled for prayer. The room was crowded and there was little room to kneel. I only had room to get down on one knee. Before it was over my legs were giving me fits. I was very near tears because of the pain in my knees.

The armed forces have developed ways of placing people in a completely immobile state. They are floated in a body of water for prolonged periods of time. This is with no sight and sound - it is very disorientating.

What could you do in a motionless state? You could think about things - dream - worry - etc., but sooner or later the inactivity would begin to wear heavy on a person mentally.

SEPARATION: Have you ever stared at the stars and just let your mind wonder - how far away they are, how lonely they seem. The lost will be separated from one another.

Imagine never using eyes, hands, feet. Total separation from everything but torment and thoughts. The voice will only be used for cries of torment. There will be no one near enough to talk to, or hear you. Jude 13 mentions wandering stars which indicates a separation. At any rate it is a certainty that it is a separation from God and all that is good.

MEMORY: Luke 16 pictures the rich man as remembering his brothers that have not died. (NO HOPE, Isa 38:18; Prov. 11 7, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth."

FIRE: There will be fire. The type of fire has been questioned over the years. Since there is darkness, there cannot be light from fire, which leads some to believe that it will be a very hot and pure fire. (Jude 7 "...eternal fire...."; Matt 5:22; Mk 9:44.)

QUESTIONABLE COMPANIONS: Rev 21:8; Rev 22:15.

LUST AND DESIRE: Rev 22:11.

PAIN AND TORMENT: Luke 16:23 "...being in torments...."; Luke 16:24 "...I am tormented in this flame."

CONCLUSIONS:

Maybe now when we talk about the lost you will have a more concerned attitude. Christianity needs a healthy dose of the Hell fire and brimstone preaching of yester year to stir their hearts. Men, women, boys and girls are going to hell everyday. Our responsibility is to tell them of the saving power of Christ.

The Lost! Think about their state. God has prepared for Christians a mighty, glorious abode. A city of mansions. A city for His own people. I have no doubt that hell will be just as horrible for the sinner as heaven is glorious for the saint.

As I've said, "Hell is only a four letter word." But remember its home for the lost for eternity and that makes it a mighty important word. The next time you ask someone where they're going and they reply, "To hell if I don't change my ways.", will you still feel like laughing?

Hell must, by proper interpretation of Scripture be a place, a place of torment, a place of eternal torment run on a system of levels so that the damned can be judged according to their works.

The only escape route from this horrible destiny is through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. So what, some would say. Let me illustrate. In the Navy we had to go through fire fighting training. They had a large oil pond they would set afire. We had to move in with an umbrella spray unit that protected us from the heat. As we were fairly near they shut the water off (which was protecting us from the heat) for just an instant. The heat was tremendous - our faces were in immediate pain though we weren't burned. They did this to show us how dangerous fire could be when it was that large. If you've experienced great heat you'll have some idea of what the lost are enduring now and what the living lost face.

As a child I used to think that pain was mind over matter. I used to love to swing higher and higher, but to go high you had to work at it. I used to wear blisters on my hands. I always tried to put the pain out of my mind, but never succeeded. This is only a trifle when compared to the pain and flame of hell. Can you imagine having to suffer that pain forever?

As you cannot imagine how glorious heaven is going to be you cannot imagine how horrible hell is going to be. If the demons were in fear of Hell and torment it must be bad.

Another point to ponder. Scripture does not teach that God gives you a second chance. Some teach today that God will hold up judgment long enough to give everyone a second chance to accept Christ. This is false hope and false teaching. As breath leaves your body your

eternity is sealed - your destiny is set. Getting to your final dwelling place is only a very brief formality.

Hell - a four letter cuss word now, but the most significant word of all to the lost. Consider Hell as you witness. It might put a little fire into your witnessing.

I would suggest reading some of the old time sermons from Moody, Spurgeon etc. to get a feel of some of the preaching on hell. Many of the great revivals were based in part on the clear preaching of hell. Don't be afraid to preach on hell today. I have ventured onto this limb a number of times and the response has been very positive. Indeed, some have been saved, even in the 80's and 90's with such preaching.

Christ spoke often of hell and the conditions there, so we as His followers ought to preach of the same.

07800

THEOLOGY - CAN'T FAIL QUIZ

This is a test I have given to classes on eschatology before the study begins. It is a study that will show you what you know or don't know, as the case may be. Feel free to leave blanks or guess to your hearts desire. As you progress through the study you will be able to check your answers.

List the following items on the time line provided below.

- Tribulation**
- Church Age**
- Kingdom**
- Eternity**
- Lake of Fire**
- Resurrection of the dead Church age**
- Translation of the living church age**
- Resurrection of the Jews**
- Resurrection of the lost**
- Great White Throne**
- Judgment seat of Christ**
- Satan's captivity**

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Define the following terms:

1. The Rapture:

2. Partial rapture:

3. Tribulation:

4. The Great Tribulation:

5. Midtribulationism:

6. Posttribulationism:

7. Millennium:

8. Amillennialism:

9. Premillennialism:

10. Postmillennialism:

11. Kingdom Theology:

12. Covenant Theology:

13. The Great White Throne:

14. The Judgment Seat of Christ:

15. Heaven:

16. Hell:

17. Allegorical interpretation:

18. Literal interpretation:

07850

WHERE DO THEY STAND?

This is a listing of books, authors, and positions. I trust that these are placed in the proper theological positions. I have listed the men and their books as I or some other author has viewed them. I trust that if there are errors in judgment in any of these listings that the men involved would contact me so that any mistakes can be corrected in future copies. The original list that I worked from is found on pages 123-126 of Prophecy In The Ring by Robert P. Lightner, however I have added to this list over time.

AMILLENNIALISM:

**Adams, Jay. "THE TIME IS AT HAND"
Allis, O.T. "PROPHECY AND THE CHURCH"
Cox, William E. "AMILLENNIALISM TODAY"
Hamilton, Floyd E. "THE BASIS OF MILLENNIAL FAITH"**

POSTMILLENNIALISM:

**Boettner, Loraine. "THE MILLENNIUM"
Kik, J. M. "MATTHEW TWENTY-FOUR REVELATION
TWENTY"
Warfield,
Orr, James
Snowden, James H.**

PREMILLENNIALISM:

**Fineberg, C. L. "PREMILLENNIALISM OR AMILLENNIALISM?"
McClain, Alva J. "THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM"
Pentecost, J. Dwight "THINGS TO COME"
Ryrie, Charles C. "THE BASIS OF PREMILLENNIAL FAITH"
Walvoord, John F. "THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM"**

COVENANT PREMILLENNIALISM:

Ladd "CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

MIDTRIBULATIONISM:

Harrison, Norman B. "THE END"

PARTIAL RAPTURISM:

Brubaker, Ray. "THE PURPOSE OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION"

Lang, G. H. "THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST"

POSTTRIBULATIONISM:

Gundry, Robert H. "THE CHURCH AND THE TRIBULATION"

Ladd, George E. "THAT BLESSED HOPE"

Payne, J. Barton. "THE IMMINENT APPEARING OF CHRIST"

Reese, Alexander. "THE APPROACHING ADVENT OF CHRIST"

PRETRIBULATIONISM:

English, E. Schuyler. "RE-THINKING THE RAPTURE"

Walvoord, John F. "THE RAPTURE QUESTION"

Wood, Leon J. "IS THE RAPTURE NEXT"

ANTI-DISPENSATIONALISM:

Bass, Clarence B. "BACKGROUNDS TO DISPENSATIONALISM"

Cox, William E. "AN EXAMINATION OF DISPENSATIONALISM"

Kraus, C. Norma. "DISPENSATIONALISM IN AMERICA"

DISPENSATIONALISM:

Barndollar, W. W. "THE VALIDITY OF DISPENSATIONALISM"

Chafer, Lewis Sperry "DISPENSATIONS"

Ryrie, Charles C. "DISPENSATIONALISM TODAY"

Darby

Kelley, William

Gaebelein

Torrey, R.A.
Scofield, C.I.
Ironside, Harry

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Ramm, Bernard. "PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION"
Tan, Paul Lee. "THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY"

GENERAL BOOKS:

Clouse, R. G. "THE MEANING OF THE MILLENNIUM: FOUR VIEWS"

THEOLOGICAL POSITIONS

SYSTEMS OF	MILLENNIAL	TRADITIONS	
EVANGELICAL			
INTERPRETATION	VIEW		
GROUPINGS			
	AMILLENNIALISM	CATHOLIC	

C		
YOUNG		
O		
EVANGELICAL		
V T		
E H		
N E		
A O		
N L		
T O	LUTHERAN	
G		
Y		
	POST	
	MILLENNIALISM	
ESTABLISHED		
	ANGLICAN	
EVANGELICAL		(the
old, "New		
Evangelical")		
D		

I		
S		
P		
E		REFORMED
N		
S		
OPEN		
A		
FUNDAMENTALIST		
T		
I		
O	PRE	
N	MILLENNIALISM	
SEPARATIST		
A		ANABAPTIST
FUNDAMENTALIST		
L		
MILITANT		
FUNDAMENTALIST		

SOME THOUGHTS ON HOW TO PROPERLY INTERPRET THE GOSPELS

The importance of how you interpret a text was brought home to me many years ago in a graduate class where the professor would assign a text for study and then bring us together for a discussion. He was an expert at forming the class into the different positions that came from the study, and then pitting those groups against one another to show how poorly we had studied. He once assigned the text of Job 19:25-26 and asked us to determine what the text was about. The discussion went on for three class sessions before he taught the proper interpretation. There were three different views that seemed very good, yet all three groups failed to determine the context of the passage. Once the context was set before us we realized the meaning of the passage.

So it is in the gospels when you determine to interpret. The context, the audience and the speaker all go together to determine what age the information is meant for. There are some texts that are definitely for those living under the law, there are texts that are definitely for those that were going to live in the kingdom that Christ was offering, and there are texts that are for the coming church age. The question is, just which are which.

We submit the following as a guide to begin your interpretation of the gospels with.

1. Pay close attention to the context: For example Luke 10:1-3 is not for the church, but Matthew 28:16-20 is. Look at the context to determine.

2. Pay close attention to the recipient: If Christ was speaking to Jews, then the information is for Jews. If he was talking to Old Testament saints then He was not talking to you, however there may be some application to you since you are a saint. Just one outrageous example would be the account of the rich man and Lazarus. Lazarus wound up in bliss while the rich man ended in torment. Now, would we

apply the rich man's situation to ourselves - believers and the position of Lazarus to the lost of our day? NO!

3. Determine whether the principle is stated elsewhere in the New Testament: For example some might suggest because of Matt 10:9,10 we should have no material possessions. "...provide neither gold, nor silver, nor copper in your purses, nor a bag for your journey neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff...." This is not a principle for our day. It is not mentioned as a lifestyle anywhere in scripture. Indeed, Christ contrasts this Himself to another lifestyle for those in a different situation in Luke 22:35-36.

Don't claim promises blindly. Look at the context, recipient and whether it is taught in the epistles before applying it to yourself. The epistles are for church use and we have no question about them, so they can assist us in determining other texts.

If the truth fits the general tenor of the epistles then it probably is usable for today. Christ spoke of meekness in the sermon on the mount which is definitely kingdom information.

The fruit of the Spirit seems to give that principle validity in our day so that meekness should be desired by the church age believer. The problem is that the meek shall inherit the earth (Matt 5:5). Do the epistles mention that the church will inherit the earth? No, and indeed we will not inherit the earth. This is not a promise for us though we can draw the principle of meekness from it.

4. Determine what dispensation is in view: Christ made quite a promise in Matthew 6:33. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all of these things shall be added unto you." See, he will give me everything I want. That is the usual misinterpretation. First the context speaks of those needs of living that we have and not desires. Second, the promise is to the one that seeks His kingdom. The kingdom in Christ's mind was the Jewish kingdom that He was offering - the Millennial kingdom. So, if you are seeking the millennium, He will see to your needs.

This text is for those looking for the kingdom and no one else. This is not a promise for me today. However, there is an application for me in this day. As I seek His righteousness and His future, I know that

He will supply all that I need. This is a general principle throughout scripture. God always takes care of His people.

5. Realize that God's revelation is progressive: The gospel record is information for that day and time, while the epistles were meant for a later day and time. The information given to Moses was not meant to be carried forward to the church age. An example of this is the sacrificial system. It is no longer needed because Christ completed the sacrifice for sin on the cross. The Old Testament may relate to our day. The writer of Hebrews uses many of the people of that age in Chapter Eleven to produce the great text on living by faith. This shows that the information is not specifically for us, yet we can find application to our lives in those specifics.

The idea of examples of men is also related by Paul in Phil 3:17 and II Thess 3:9. Christ when he cleansed the temple was not telling us to cleanse the churches, we disagree with, though we can apply His action by being indignant at wrong activities.

There may be a truth for only one dispensation, or the truth may be a universal truth. John 3:3 mentions, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is a limited truth in that it was given in the context of the kingdom that is to come. A person cannot enter the kingdom unless he is born again. This proves that all at the beginning of the kingdom will be believers. There is also a universal truth in that if you personally want to be a part of the kingdom you must be born again.

Remember that all Scripture is beneficial. II Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction, thus we need to search the gospels for information that can help us know our God and live rightly before Him. The danger is in applying before studying.

Let us draw some conclusions then.

1. If it's not for your dispensation, if it's not for your nationality (gentile), if it's not for your circumstance, THEN it's not for you!

2. If the same principle is restated elsewhere in the New Testament epistles then it's for you.

3. If it's a valid principle universally in scripture then it's for you.

4. If it's a spiritual quality of personality, life, or holiness then it's for you.

5. Primarily the synoptic gospels were written by men still looking for the kingdom to be set up shortly thus the specific information is meant for the kingdom. One should not weigh heavily on the gospels nor the book of Acts for church age promises.

It is hoped that this will be helpful in your use of the Gospel accounts of the life of our Lord and Savior in your own life.

07950

THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM

DEFINITIONS:

The Church: The church is a living organism composed of all believers of the church age. The believers are the body, and Christ is the Head of that body. (In this study we will be looking at the universal church and not the local church.)

Eph 1:22-23; I Cor. 12:13

The Kingdom: The earthly reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth for one thousand years. It includes the following:

A king, A land, A people.

Luke 1:31-33; Gen. 15:18; Zech. 14:9; Matt 25:31-34

The church and kingdom compared:

THE CHURCH

THE KINGDOM

**A mystery to the
Old Testament people.**

**The kingdom is the emphasis
of the Old Testament.**

**Eph 3:1-9
Col 1:26-27**

**Isa 9:7
Psa 145:11-13
Dan 7:14
Obadiah 21**

**The church has a heavenly
emphasis.**

**The kingdom emphasis is
the earth.**

Phil 3:20

**Gen 12:1
Deut 28:7,13**

**The church was planned
before creation.**

**The kingdom promised
to Israel.**

Eph 1:4

The church has heavenly characteristics.

**Gal 3:26ff
Col 3:9-11**

The church involves spiritual blessings.

Eph 1:3

The church is built up by the saints.

Eph 2:19-22

Christ is the head of the Church.

**Eph 1:22-23
Col 1:18**

The church began at Pentecost and will be raptured before the tribulation.

**Acts 2:1-4
I Thess 4:16-17
Eph 3:20-21**

Matt 25:34

The kingdom has earthly characteristics.

**Matt 8:11
Zech 14:16-21
Zech 8:22-23**

The kingdom involves material blessings.

**Gen 12:1-3
Gen 24:34-35
Deut 8:7-9**

The kingdom will be set up.

Dan 2:44

Christ is the king of Israel and will reign on the earth.

**Isa 9:6-7
Luke 1:31-33
Rev 19:11-16
Zech 14:9**

The kingdom will begin at the coming of Christ.

**Luke 19:11-27
Dan 7:9-14
Rev 11:15
I Cor 15:20-28**

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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN/KINGDOM OF GOD REFERENCES

The listing of references that speak of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. Read each reference and see if you can find out if there is a difference between these two kingdoms and if so what that difference is. Also try to determine what the kingdoms are.

KINGDOM OF GOD

Matthew 6:33
 12:28
 19:24
 21:31
 21:43

Mark 1:14
 4:11
 4:26
 4:30
 9:1
 9:47
 10:14
 10:23-25
 12:34
 14:25
 15:43

Luke 4:43
 6:20
 7:28
 8:1
 8:10
 9:2
 9:11
 9:27
 9:60
 9:62

10:9
10:11
11:20
12:31
13:18
13:20
13:28-29
14:15
16:16
17:20
18:16-17
18:24-25
19:11
21:31
22:16
22:18
23:51
John 3:3
3:5
Acts 1:3
8:12
14:22
19:8
20:25
28:23
28:31

Romans 14:17

I Corinthians 4:20
6:9-10
15:50

Galatians 5:21

Colossians 4:11

II Thessalonians 1:5

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Matthew 3:2
4:17
5:3
5:10
5:19-20
7:21
8:11
10:7
11:11-12
13:11
13:24
13:31
13:33
13:44
13:47
13:52
16:19
18:1
18:3-4
18:23
19:14
19:23
20:1
22:2
23:13
25:1
25:14

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World Wide Publications, 1966**

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GENERAL INDEX

Abraham	07050
Absolute dualistic	02300
Absolute metamorphic	02300
Absolute semi-metamorphic	02300
Adam	04150
His fall	04100, 04150
His responsibilities	04150
His temptation	04150
Adoption	05050
Adultery	06950, 06970
Agnosticism	01050
Allegorical interpretation	04150
Amillennialism	07050, 07100, 07550
Amyraldianism	01750
Angels	00250
Characteristics of	03450, 03600
Ministries of	03600
Angel of the Lord	02400
Animation	00550
Animism	01050
Anthropological	01000
Anthropology	03900, 03950
Anthropomorphism	01100, 07200
Application, principles of	00750
Apocrypha	00350
Apollinarianism	02200
Archangels	03650
Argumentum a posteriori	02050, 01000
Argumentum a priori	02050, 01000
Arianism	02200, 05250
Arius	02200, 02750
Arminian theory of sin	04600
Arminius	05500
Arts	00150
Athanasian Creed	01900

Athanasius	02200
Atheism	01000, 01050
Atonement	05450, 05500
Attributes	00950, 01150
Augustinian theory of sin	04600
Authenticity	00200 ,00400
Authority of Scripture	00400
Baptism	04950, 06200, 07600
Baptism of the Spirit	03050
Baptismal regeneration	02950
Baptisms	06650
Baptists	06600
Being	00950
Belief	04900, 05300
Biblical Theism	01100
Bibliology, Introduction to	00200
Body	04100
Body of Christ	05800
Booklist	08050
Bride of Christ	05800
Calling	02900, 05400
Calvin	05250, 05500
Canonicity	00350
Cerinthianism	02200
Chalcedon Creed	02250
Charismatic movement	03000
Chastisement	04700
Cherub/cherubim	03650
Christ	00250
Acension of	07350
Attributes of	02050
Baptism of	01850
Birth of	02450, 07050
Body	02250
Conception of	02450
Death of	01250, 07050
Deity of	02050
Essence	02250
Historical view of	02500
Humanity of	02100
Immanent return of	07350, 07450,

	07500
Impeccability of	02350
Incarnation of	02150
Introduction to study of	02000
Modern religious views of	02200
Need of humanity	02100, 02150
Natures of	02250
Old Testament view of	02400
New Testament look at	02500
Preexistence of	02000
Resurrection of	02600
Second advent	07350
Second coming	07350
Compared to rapture	07350
Sonship of	02400
Soul	02250
Spirit	02250
Substance of	02250
Temptation of	02350
Wills of	02250
Christ, names of	
Christ	02000
Christ Jesus	02000
Emmanuel	02000
I Am	02000
Jesus	02000
Jesus Christ	02000
Last Adam	02000
Lord	02000
Master	02000
Messiah	02000
Rabbi	02000
Savior	02000
Second Man	02000
Son of Abraham	02000
Son of David	02000
Son of the Highest	02000
The Lord Jesus Christ	02000
The Son of God	02000
The Son of Man	02000
The Word	02000

Christian anthropology	03900
Christian sin	04650
Christological	01000
Church	07950, 07050, 07150
A constitution	06450
Aspects of	05750
Defined	05750, 05800
Discipline of	06350
Conclusion to church	06400
Contrasted with Israel	07150, 07950
Government of	05850, 05900
Introduction to	05700, 05750, 05800
Leadership, qualifications of	05950, 06000
Leadership, qualities of	06050
Local	05800
Membership	05800
New Testament pictures of	05800
Ordinances of	06100, 06150, 06200
Organization of	05900
Physique of	06250
Pictures of	05800
Purpose of	05800
Time of beginning	05800
Universal	05800
Universal/local distinguished	05750
What it is	05800
Coalition on Morality	07650
Coalition on Revival	07650
Codex	00700
Communication	00800
Communion (See Lord's Table)	
Compassion	01300
Confirmation	04950
Congruity	01000
Conscience	00250, 04100
Constantine	02200
Contrition	04900
Convicting	02700

Conviction	02900, 03400, 04850
Cosmological	01000
Council of Antioch	02200
Council of Nicaea	02200
Covenant Premillennialism	07550
Covenant Theology	07050, 07550
Creation	07050
Creation, theories of	03900, 04000
Creationism	03900
Criticism	00700
Biblical	00700
Higher	00700
Historical	00700
Lower	00700
Method of	00700
Daniel's vision	07100, 07500
David	07050
Day	
Of man	07350
Of Christ	07350
Of God	07350
Of God Almighty	07350
Of the Lord	07350, 07500
Of the Lord God	07350
Deacons	05900
Deaconesses	05900
Dead Sea Scrolls	00350
Death	04750
Decree/s	00950, 01750, 05500
Deism	01050
Demons	03550
Denominations	05750
Departed Spirits	07050
Depravity/total depravity	04550, 05500
Devil (See Satan also)	02150
Dichotomy	04100
Dionysius Bishop of Rome	02200
Disobedience	04500
Results of	04700

Discipline, church	06350
Dispensationalism	07050, 07150
Divorce	06950, 06970
Docetism	02200
Dogma, dogmatics	00150
Dominion Theology	07650
Dreams	00250
Dual nature	04550
Dualism	01050
Dynamism	01050
Ebionism	02200
Ecclesia	05750, 05800
Eden, garden of	04350
Election	05400, 05500
Elders	05900, 06500
Elders, twentyfour	07450, 07500
Empowerment	02700, 03400
Errantists	00650
Error	04500
Eschatology	07000, 07050, 07100
Eschatology book list	07850
Essence	00950, 02250
Eternal generation	02400
Eternal punishment	04700
Eternity	07050
Ethics	01600, 04250
Eusebius of Caesarea	02200
Eusebius of Nicomedia	02200
Eutychanism	02200
Evil	04500, 04750
Evolution, theories of	03900, 04000
Exegesis	00500
Extra-Biblical anthropology	03900
Faith	04900, 05200, 05300
Fall of man	04150, 07050
Genesis account, validity of	04150
Fasting	06100
Fatalism	01250
Fear of the Lord	01950

Federal theory of sin	04600
Fetishism	01050
Filling	02700, 03400
Firstfruits	04950
Foot washing	06100
Forgiveness	04500, 04650, 05050, 05350
Divine forgiveness	04500, 04650
Human forgiveness	04500
Foreknowledge	05400
Free will	05500
Freedom	01550
Future, an overview	07050
Gabriel	03650
Garden of Eden	04350
Genuineness	00200
Gifts (see spiritual gifts)	
God	07050
Activity of	01200
Arguments for	01000
Attributes of	01150
Benevolence of	01600
Compassion of	01300
Consciousness of	01250
Decrees of	01750
Defined	00950
Emotion of	01300
Eternality of	01350
Faithfulness of	01700
Freedom of	01250
Gifts of	01500
Goodness of	01600
Greatness of	01350
Grief of	01300
Hate of	01300
Holiness of	01600
Infinity of	01500, 01550
Immensity of	01500
Immutability of	01400
Incomprehensibility of	01550
Independence of	01550

Intelligence	01150
Jealousy of	01300
Judging	01200
Justice of	01650
Knowability of	01550
Knowledge of	01450, 01500
Laughing of	01300
Living	01150
Love of	01650
Mercy of	01650, 01700
Names of	01800
Omnipotence of	01450
Omnipresence of	01400
Omniscience of	01450
Our similarity to	01150
Overview of the doctrine	01100
Perfection of	01500
Personality of	01150
Plan of	01200
Proofs of	01100
Purpose of	01200
Rejoicing of	01300
Self-consciousness of	01250
Self-existence of	01350
Spirit being	01300
Sympathy of	01300
Truthfulness of	01600
Ubiquitousness of	01400
Unchangeableness of	01400
Unity of	01350
Veracity of	01600
Views of	01050
Way of	01500
Will of	01500
Work of	01500
Wrath of	01300
Good works	04950
Grace	02900, 03400, 05200, 05300, 05500
Common grace	02900

Efficacious grace	02900
Prevenient grace	02900
Great White Throne	07050
Grief	01300
Hamartiology, an introduction	04400
Hate	01300
Heaven	07700
Hell	07750
Henotheism	01050
Hermenutics	00500
Holy Spirit	00250, 07550
Activities	02750
Associations with God	02750
Attributes of	02750
Baptism of	02700, 03050, 03400
Blaspheming	03350
Comfort of	03200, 03400
Communion of	03200, 03400
Deity of	02750
Empoerment of	03400
Filling of	03100
Future of	03200
Gifting of	03250, 03400
Grieving	03350
History of the doctrine	03300
Insulting	03350
Introduction to study of	02650
Leading of	03200, 03400
Lying to	03350
Ministries of	03200
Names of	02650, 02750
New Testament view of	02850
Offending of	03350
Old Testament view of	02850
Overview of the doctrine	02700
Personality of	02800
Praying of	03200, 03400
Promise of His coming	02650
Purpose of His coming	02650
Quenching	03400

Resisting	03350
Restraining, reproving	02900
Sealing	03000, 03150, 03400
Teaching of	03200, 03400
Types of	02650
Humanism	03900, 04250, 04300
Hyperbole	07200
Hyper-dispensationalists	05800
Hypostatic union	02250, 02350
Idealism	01050
Idolatry	01050
Ignatius of Antioch	02200
Illumination	00450
Immaculate conception	02450
Immanent	01150
Immaterial man	04100
Impeccability	02350
Implication	07200
Imputed sin	04600
Indwelling	02700, 03000, 03400
Independence	01550
Inerrancy	00650
Types of	00650
Inerrantists	00650
Infallibility	00650
Infra-lapsarian	01750, 05500
Inheritance	04950, 05050
Iniquity	04500
Inspiration	00300
Theories of	00300
Conceptual	00300
Degrees	00300
Dictation	00300
Dynamic	00300
Illumination	00300, 00450
Intuition	00300
Limited	00300
Mystical	00300

Natural	00300
Neoorthodox	00300
Partial	00300
Verbal plenary	00300
Intellect	01150, 04150
Intelligence	
Creative	01150
Ethical	01150
Intuitive	01150
Reflective	01150
Interpretation	00500
Allegorical	00500, 04150, 07050, 07200
Literal	00450, 07050, 07200
Advantages of	07200
Guides to use of	07200
Of the Gospels	07900
Semiallegorical	00500
Semiliteral	00500
Theological	00500
Intra-Biblical anthropology	03900
Intuition	00950, 01000
Irenaeus	02200
Israel	05750, 07150
Jealousy	01300
Jerusalem	07550
Justice	01650
Justification	04950, 05050, 05200, 05300, 05350
Kenosis	02300
Kethubhim	00350
Kingdom (See millennium also)	07950
Mediatorial	07300
Millennial	07050, 07300, 07550
Of heaven	08000
Of God	08000
Offered	07100
Theology	07050, 07650

Universal	07300
Kingdom Now	07650
Knowledge	05300
Lake of Fire	07050
Latter Rain	07650
Lawlessness	04500
Leading	02700
Lectionary texts	00700
Lord's table	04950, 06150, 06900, 07600
Love	01650
Love, types of	01650
Lucifer	07050, 07550
Lust	04200
Man	
Created in God's image	04100
In innocence	04150
Origin of	04000
Sinfulness of	04500
Study of (Anthropology)	03900
Under sin	04600
Manifest Sons of God	07650
Material man	04050
Material things and pastors	06550
Materialism	01050
Mediate theory of sin	04600
Megilloth	00350
Membership	04950, 05800
Memory	04100
Mercy seat	05000
Metaphor	07200
Metonym	07200
Michael	03650
Midtribulationalism	07050, 07450, 07500
Millennial Kingdom	05750

Millennium	03200, 07500, 07550
Minuscule texts	00700
Miracles	00250
Missions	05450
Monism	01050
Idealistic	01050
Materialistic	01050
Pantheistic	01050
Monolatry	01050
Monotheism	01050
Mysticism	00150
Nature	00950
Nestorianism	02200
New creature	04550
New Jerusalem	04750
New man	04550
New nature	04550
Occult	03700, 03750
Glossary of terms	03750
Old man	04550
Old nature	04550
Omni-sapience	01450
One another	06700
Ontological	01000
Oppression of believers	03550
Ordinances	06100, 06150, 06200
Ordo salutis	02950
Origen	02750
Orthodoxy	00150
Panentheism	01050
Pantheism	01050, 01250
Papyrus	00700
Partial rapture theory	07450, 07500
Pastor teacher, gift of	06800
Peccability	02350
Pelagian theory	04600
Penance	04900
Person	00950
Personal sin	04450

Personality	00950, 01150
Personality, characteristics of	02800
Personification	07200
Pessimists	07650
Pity	01300
Pluralism	01050
Pneumatology	02650
Polytheism	01050
Positivism	01050
Post-millennialism	07050, 07100, 07550
Post-tribulationalism	07050, 07450, 07500, 07550
Praying (Holy Spirit)	02700
Predestination	05200, 05400
Preservation	00250, 00600
Presuppositions	00150
Pre-millennialism	07050, 07100, 07550
Pre-tribulationism	07050, 07450, 07500
Pride	04200
Prolegomena	00150
Prophets	00250, 07050
Propitiation	05000, 05300
Providence	00250
Pseudepigrapha	00350
Punishment	04700
Purpose	01200
Rapture	07050, 07350, 07400, 07500
Compared to 2nd coming	07350
Conclusions to study	07650
Rationalism	00150
Realism	01050
Reason	00950, 01000
Rebirth	02950
Reconciliation	05000, 05050, 05100
Reconstruction theology	07650
Redemption	05050, 05200

Reformation	04900, 04950
Regeneration	02700, 02950, 04950
Remarriage	06950, 06970
Remission	05350
Repentance	04900, 05350
Restrainer	07500
Resurrection	05200, 07050
Resurrections	04750
Revelation	00250, 00950
Characteristics of	00250
Contrasted to illumination	00450
In nature	01100
Natural	00250
Progressive	00250
The living Word	00550
Types of, general	00250
Types of, specific	00250
Ways of viewing	00250
Revised dispensational premill	07550
Rhetorical question	07200
Rock, the	02400
Romanism	00150
Salvation	04800
Salvation, a glossary of terms	05650
Sanctification	04950, 05150
Satan	03450
Characteristics of	03450
Effect on the Church	03800
Fall of	03500
Names of	03550
Relation to man	04200
Saul	07050
Sciences	00150
Scourging	04700
Scripture, history of	00900
Sealing	03150, 05050
Sebellianism	01900
Security	01450, 05250, 05500
Sensebility	01150, 04100

Seraphim	03650
Sheol (See departed spirits)	
Simile	07200
Sin	02900
Approaches to the study of	04400
Christian	04650
Contrasted to evil	04400
Defined	04500
Imputed	04600
Nature of	04500
Origin of	04450
Personal	04450
Unpardonable	04500
Why God allowed it	04400
Sin nature	04550
Single nature	04550
Sinless perfection	04500, 04550
Skeptism	01050
Sociology	03950
And the believer	03950
And the pastor	03950
And the missionary	03950
Solomon	07050
Sonship	02400
Soteriology, an introduction	04800
Soteriology, a conclusion	05600
Soul	04100
Creation of	04100
Spirit	04100
Creation of	04100
Spirit baptism	03050, 05800
Spiritism	03550
Spiritual gifts (see gifts)	02700, 03250,
	06300, 06750
Standing	05550
State	05550
Sub-lapsarian	01750, 05500
Substance	02250
Supernatural	00200
Supernatural origin/Scripture	00850
Supra-lapsarian	01750, 05500

Swedenborgianism	01900
Synod of Antioch	02300
Teaching	02700
Teleological	01000
Temptation	04200
Tertullian	02200
Test your knowledge	07800
Theism	01000, 01050
Biblical	01000, 01050
Natural	01000
Theistic evolution	04000
Theologian, requirements of	00150
Theological positions chart	07850
Theology	00150
Can't fail quiz	07800
Divisions of	00150
Limitations of	00150
Necessity of	00150
Present day thoughts on	00150
Types of	00150
Theonomy	07650
Theophanies	00250
Theosophy	02200, 03550
Tradition	00950, 01000
Traducian theory	04100
Trances	00250
Transcendent	01150
Transformation theology	07650
Transgression	04500
Trials	04700
Tribulation	03200, 07050, 07150, 07400, 07450
Trichotomy	04100
Trinitarianism	01900
Trinity	01900
Tritheism	01050, 01900
Trumps	07450
Trust	05300
TULIP	05500
Ubiquitous	01400

Ultradispensationalism	07600
Unbelief	04500
Uncial texts	00700
Unitarianism	01900
Unity	01350, 02200
Unity of believers	03050
Unity of man	04000
Unity School of Christianity	03550
Unpardonable sin	04500
Variants	00700
Reasons for	00700
Virgin birth	02150, 02450
Visions	00250
Volition	01150
Water witching	03850
Wesley	05250
Westminster Confession	02250, 05250
Wickedness	04500
Will	04100
Works	05300
Wrath	01300
Zoomorphism	07200