
a *Grace Notes* Bible Study

The Epistle to the Ephesians

study compiled by Warren Doud



Grace Notes

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Epistle to the Ephesians

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Preview to the Study of Ephesians

A reference book that is an essential in any study that involves the Apostle Paul, whether his epistles or his activities and speeches in the Acts of the Apostles, is the masterful history "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul", written in the 19th Century by the Rev. W. J. Conybeare, MA, and the Very Rev. J. S. Howson, DD.

For what it's worth, this is my all time favorite Christian publication! I have studied the book twice and read parts of it many times.

From the first paragraph of their introduction: "The purpose of this work is to give a living picture of St. Paul himself, and of the circumstances by which he was surrounded."

Actually, they did far more than that modest sentence indicates. Either Conybeare or Howson (or both of them) personally walked and sailed everywhere that the Apostle traveled! Their account is a great travelogue, an historical tour-de-force, and an insightful Christian analysis and examination of Paul's ministry. Included in the book are the authors' own translations from the Greek of Paul's inspired writings! The excerpt below will give you an indication to the depth of thought and careful consideration that went into all their writing.

New and used copies of "Conybeare and Howson" can be obtained from used book dealers online, and through Amazon.com or Barnes and Noble online book sellers.

Warren Doud

From "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul", by W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, pp. 702-705

These are Conybeare and Howson's introductory paragraphs to their translation of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

"We have seen that the above Epistle to the Colossians, and that to Philemon, were conveyed by Tychicus and Onesimus, who traveled together from Rome to Asia Minor. But these two were not the only letters with which Tychicus was charged. We know that he carried a third letter also; but it is not equally certain to whom it was addressed. This third letter was that which is not entitled the Epistle to the Ephesians; concerning the destination of which (disputed as it is) perhaps the least disputable fact is, that it was not addressed to the Church of Ephesus.

"This point is established by strong evidence, both internal and external. To begin with the former, we remark, First, that it would be inexplicable that St. Paul, when he wrote to the Ephesians, amongst whom he had spent so long a time, and to whom he was bound by ties of such close affection (Acts 20:17, etc.), should not have a single message of personal greeting to send. Yet none are found in this Epistle. Secondly, he could not have described the Ephesians as a church whose conversion he knew only by report (1:15). Thirdly, he could not speak to them, as only knowing himself (the founder of their church) to be an apostle by hearsay (3:2), so as to need credentials to accredit him with them (3:4). Fourthly, he could not describe the Ephesians as so exclusively Gentiles (2:11; 4:17), and so recently converted (5:8; 1:13; 2:13).

"This internal evidence is confirmed by the following external evidence also.

1. St. Basil distinctly asserts, that the early writers whom he had consulted declared that the manuscripts of this Epistle in their time did not contain the name of Ephesus, but left out altogether

the name of the church to which the Epistle was addressed. He adds, that the most ancient manuscripts which he had himself seen gave the same testimony. This assertions of Basil's is confirmed by Jerome, Epiphanius, and Tertullian.

2. The most ancient manuscript now known to exist, namely, that of the Vatican Library, fully bears out Basil's words; for in its text it does not contain the words 'in Ephesus' at all; and they are only added in its margin by a much later hand.

3. We know, from the testimony of Marcion, that this Epistle was entitled in his collection 'The Epistle to the Laodiceans.' And his authority on this point is entitled to greater weight from the fact, that he was himself a native of the district where we should expect the earlier copies of the Epistle to exist.

"The above arguments have convinced the ablest modern critics that this Epistle was not addressed to the Ephesians. But there has not been by any means the same approach to unanimity on the question, who were its intended readers.

"In the most ancient manuscripts no church is mentioned by name, except in those consulted by Marcion, according to which it was addressed to the Laodiceans. Now the internal evidence above mentioned proves that the Epistle was addressed to some particular church or churches, who were to receive intelligence of St. Paul through Tychicus, and that it was not a treatise addressed to the whole Christian world; and the form of the salutation shows that the name of some place must originally have been inserted in it.

"Again: the very passages in the Epistle which have been above referred to, as proving that it could not have been directed to the Ephesians, agree perfectly with the hypothesis that it was addressed to the Laodiceans. Lastly, we know from the Epistle to the Colossians, that St. Paul did write a letter to Laodicea (Col. 4:16) about the same time with that to Colosse. On these grounds, then, it appears the safest course to assume that the testimony of Marcion (uncontradicted by any other positive evidence) is correct, and that Laodicea was one at least of the churches to which this Epistle was addressed. And, consequently, as we know not the name of any other church to which it was written, that of Laodicea should be inserted in the place which the most ancient manuscripts leave vacant.

"Still, it must be obvious, that this does not remove all the difficulties of the question. For, first it will be asked, how came the name of Laodicea (if originally inserted) to have slipped out of these ancient manuscripts? And again, how came it that the majority of more recent manuscripts inserted the name of Ephesus? These perplexing questions are in some measure answered by the hypothesis advanced by Archbishop Ussher, that this Epistle was a circular letter, addressed to not one only, but to several churches, in the same way as the Epistle to the Galatians was addressed to all the churches in Galatia, and those to Corinth were addressed to the Christians 'in the whole province of Achaia.'

"On this view, Tychicus would have carried several copies of it, differently superscribed, one for Laodicea, another, perhaps, for Hierapolis, another for Philadelphia, and so on. Hence the early copyists, perplexed by this diversity in their copies, might many of them be led to omit the words in which the variation consisted: and thus the state of the earliest known text of the Epistle would be explained.

"Afterwards, however, as copies of the Epistle became spread over the world, all imported from Ephesus (the commercial capital of the district where the Epistle was originally circulated), it would be called (in default of any other name) the Epistle from Ephesus; and the manuscripts of it would be so entitled; and thence the next step, of inserting the name of Ephesus into the text, in a place where some local designation was plainly wanted, would be a very easy one. And this designation of the

Epistle would the more readily prevail, from the natural feeling that St. Paul must have written some Epistle to so great a church of his own founding as Ephesus.

"Thus the most plausible account of the origin of this Epistle seems to be as follows. Tychicus was about to take his departure from Rome for Asia Minor. St. Paul had already written his Epistle to the Colossians at the request of Epaphras, who had informed him of their danger. But Tychicus was about to visit other places, which, though not requiring the same warning with Colosse, yet abounded in Christian converts. Most of these had been heathens, and their hearts might be cheered and strengthened by words addressed directly to themselves from the great Apostle of the Gentiles, whose face they had never seen, but whose name they had learned to reverence, and whose sufferings had endeared him to their love.

"The scattered churches (one of which was Laodicea) had very much in common, and would all be benefited by the same instruction and exhortation. Since it was not necessary to meet the individual case of any one of them, as distinct from the rest, St. Paul wrote the same letter to them all, but sent to each a separate copy authenticated by the precious stamp of his own autograph benediction. And the contents of this circular epistle naturally bore a strong resemblance to those of the letter which he had just concluded to the Colossians, because the thoughts which filled his heart at the time would necessarily find utterance in similar language, and because the circumstances of these churches were in themselves very similar to those of the Colossian church, except that there were not infected with the peculiar errors which had crept in at Colosse.

"The Epistle which he thus wrote consists of two parts: first, a doctrinal, and, secondly, a hortatory portion. The first part contains a summary, very indirectly conveyed (chiefly in the form of thanksgiving), of the Christian doctrines taught by St. Paul, and is especially remarkable for the great prominence given to the abolition of the Mosaic Law. The hortatory part, which has been so dear to Christians of every age and country, enjoins unity (especially between Jewish and Gentile Christians), the renunciation of heathen vices, and the practice of Christian purity.

"It lays down rules (the same as those in the Epistle to Colosse, only in an expanded form) for the performance of the duties of domestic life, and urges these new converts, in the midst of the perils which surrounded them, to continue steadfast in watchfulness and prayer. Such is the substance, and such was most probably the history, of the Epistle.

[End of quotation.]

Ephesus

These materials on the history and geography of Ephesus were compiled from the following sources:

Unger, Merrill F., Bible Dictionary

Encyclopedia Britannica

Bean, G. E., "Aegean Turkey: An Archaeological Guide"

Conybeare and Howson, "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul"

Ephesus, the most important Greek city in Ionian Asia Minor, the ruins of which lie near the modern village of Selcuk in western Turkey (near the city of Izmir).

In Roman times it was situated on the northern slopes of the hills Coressus and Pion and south of the Cayster (Küçükmenderes) River, the silt from which has since formed a fertile plain but has caused the coastline to move ever farther west. The Temple of Artemis, or Diana, to which Ephesus owed much of its fame and which seems to mark the site of the classical Greek city, was probably on the

seaboard when it was founded (about 600 BC), one mile east by northeast of Pion (modern Panayir Daghacek). In Roman times a sea channel was maintained with difficulty to a harbor well west of Pion. By late Byzantine times this channel had become useless, and the coast by the mid-20th century was three miles farther west. Ephesus commanded the west end of one great trade route into Asia, that along the Cayster valley, and had easy access to the other two, along the Hermus (Gediz) and the Maeander (Büyükmenderes) rivers.

History

Ephesus enters history in the mid-7th century BC, when it was attacked by the Cimmerians. Unlike its neighbor, Magnesia, it survived the attacks. For part of the early 6th century the city was under tyrants. Though allied by marriage to the kings of Lydia, its people could not hold back the Lydian Croesus, who asserted a general suzerainty over the city. He did, however, present many columns and some golden cows for a new and splendid rebuilding of the Artemiseum (Temple of Artemis).

At this time, according to Strabo, the Ephesians began to live in the plain; and to this period, too, should be allotted the redrafting of the laws, said to have been the work of an Athenian, Aristarchus. Ephesus soon submitted to Cyrus of Persia. Early in the Ionian revolt (499-493 BC) against the Persians, Ephesus served as a base for an Ionian attack on Sardis; but it is not mentioned again until 494, when the Ephesians massacred the Chiot survivors of the Battle of Lade. The massacre may have occurred because Ephesus was a commercial rival of the chief rebels, Chios and Miletus. Ephesus maintained friendly relations with Persia for about 50 years: in 478 Xerxes, returning from his failure in Greece, honored Artemis of Ephesus, although he sacked other Ionian shrines, and left his children for safety in Ephesus; and

Themistocles landed there in the 460s on his flight to Persia. But after 454 Ephesus appears as a regular tributary of Athens. Great Ephesians up to this time had been Callinus, the earliest Greek elegist (mid-7th century BC), the satirist Hipponax, and the famous philosopher Heraclitus, one of the Basilids.

Ephesus shared in a general revolt of 412 BC against Athens, siding with Sparta in the Second Peloponnesian War, and remained an effective ally of Sparta down to the end of the war. Threatened by Persia after 403, Ephesus served in 396 as the headquarters of King Agesilaus of Sparta. In 394 the Ephesians deserted to Conon's anti-Spartan maritime league, but by 387 the city was again in Spartan hands and was handed by Antalcidas to Persia. There followed the pro-Persian tyranny of Syrophax and his family, who were stoned to death in 333 on Alexander the Great's taking the city. After 50 years of fluctuating fortune, Ephesus was conquered by the Macedonian general Lysimachus and resettled around Coressus and Pion (286-281 BC). Lysimachus introduced colonists from Lebedus and Colophon and renamed the city after his wife, Arsinoe--a name soon dropped. This was the beginning of Ephesus' Hellenistic prosperity. It became conspicuous for the abundance of its coinage.

After the defeat of Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, by the Romans in 189 BC, Ephesus was handed over by the conquerors to the king of Pergamum. Attalus III of Pergamum bequeathed Ephesus with the rest of his possessions to the Roman people (133 BC). Thenceforth, Ephesus remained subject to Rome, except for a brief time beginning in 88 BC, when, at the instigation of Mithradates the Great of Pontus, the cities of Asia Minor revolted and killed their Roman residents. The Ephesians even killed those Romans who had fled for refuge to the Artemiseum; notwithstanding which they returned in 86 BC to their former masters. Their claim, preserved on an extant inscription, that in admitting Mithradates they had merely yielded to superior force was rudely brushed aside by Sulla, who inflicted a very heavy fine. Although it twice chose the losing side in the Roman civil wars and although it was stoutly opposed by Pergamum and Smyrna, Ephesus became under Augustus the first city of the Roman province of Asia. The geographer Strabo wrote of its importance as a

commercial center in the 1st century BC. The triumphal arch of 3 BC and the aqueduct of AD 4-14 initiated that long series of public buildings, ornamental and useful, that make Ephesus the most impressive example in Greek lands of a city of imperial times.

Meanwhile the Christian Church began to win converts. A famous protest in the theatre against the teachings of St. Paul, described in Acts 19, is dated about AD 57. According to local belief Ephesus was the last home of the Virgin Mary, who was lodged near the city by St. John and died there. The tradition that St. Luke also died there seems to be less strongly supported. Ephesus was one of the seven churches of Asia to which the Revelation to John was addressed.

The Goths destroyed both city and temple in AD 262, and neither ever recovered its former splendor. The emperor Constantine, however, erected a new public bath, and Arcadius rebuilt at a higher level the street from the theatre to the harbor, named after him, the Arkadiane. A general council of the church, held at Ephesus in 431 in the great double church of St. Mary, condemned Nestorius and justified the cult of the Virgin as Theotokos (Mother of God). A few years later, according to legend, the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (a group of 3rd-century Christian martyrs) were miraculously raised from the dead. They too became the object of a famous cult. The emperor Justinian built the magnificent basilica of St. John in the 6th century. By the early Middle Ages, the city was no longer useful as a port and fell into decline; late Byzantine Ephesus, conquered by the Seljuqs in 1090, was merely a small town. After brief splendor in the 14th century, even this was deserted, and the true site of the Artemiseum remained unsuspected until 1869.

Excavations and extant remains.

J. T. Wood, working at Ephesus for the British Museum between 1863 and 1874, excavated the odeum and theatre. In May 1869 he struck a corner of the Artemiseum. His excavation exposed to view not only the scanty remains of the latest edifice (built after 350 BC) but the platform below it of an earlier temple of identical size and plan subsequently found to be that of the 6th century BC, to which Croesus contributed. The sculptured fragments of both temples were sent to the British Museum. In 1904 D.G. Hogarth, heading another mission from the museum, examined the earlier platform and found beneath its center the remains of three yet older structures. In its earliest known phase the temple was apparently a small platform of green schist, containing a sealed deposit of primitive coins and other objects. These date from c. 600 BC.

It is impossible to assign the various architects named by ancient authors to the respective phases of the temple. At best, Chersiphron and Metagenes can be tentatively assigned to the Temple of Croesus, Chirocrates or Dinocrates to that of the 4th century. There had perhaps been some repairs toward 400 BC, associated with the architects Paeonius and Demetrius and with the prize-winning dedicatory hymn of the famous musician Timotheus. The Artemiseum passed rapidly through three phases before c. 550 BC. The Temple of Croesus (the fourth phase) was remarkable for its great size (it was more than 300 feet long and 150 feet wide), for the carved figures around the lower drums of its columns (*columnae caelatae*), and for the smaller but elaborate figured friezes along its roof gutter (*sima*). Croesus' temple seems to have been burned down in 356 BC. The new temple built shortly afterward copied the old in its *columnae caelatae*, one of which was by Scopas; but the new *sima*, instead of small, crowded figures, had a more conventional, if vigorous, rinceau ornament. The cella contained, among other great works, the Amazons of Polyclitus, Phidias, and Cresilas.

Lysimachean Ephesus has been continuously excavated since 1894 by the Austrian Archaeological Institute, but so solid and extensive is the Roman town that by the early 1960s the Austrians had rarely penetrated to Hellenistic levels.

On the hill of Ayasoluk (Hagios Theologos) is Justinian's church of St. John the Theologian, built around a shrine variously associated in the early Middle Ages with the death or bodily assumption of St. John. The church, uncovered since 1922, is a noble structure but badly restored. On the hill there is also a beautiful Seljuq mosque dedicated in 1375.

The public buildings of the city are arranged in a rectangular street pattern going back to Hellenistic days. They include the theatre, capable of seating nearly 25,000 spectators and completed in its present form under Trajan; the agora (marketplace), surrounded by stoas (sheltered promenades), dating from the time of Severus; the library of Celsus, also Trajanic and well known because of its facade; and an immense array of baths and gymnasiums.

All these buildings are to the west of Pion. On its north side is the stadium and north of this the gymnasium of Publius Veditius Antoninus, relatively small but very complete and with a notable chapel for the cult of Antoninus Pius. South of Pion were the odeum--another gift of Veditius--a roofed semicircular theatre to hold 1,400 persons; also a series of fountains and aqueducts, notably the aqueduct of Gaius Sextilius Pollio, which crossed the valley from Coressus. The unmortared city wall along the crest of Coressus appears to be that of Lysimachus.

Of the early Byzantine city, besides the stretch of curtain wall on Panajir Dag, there remain the ruined church of the Seven Sleepers to its east and the long double basilica of the Virgin, the scene of the council, to its west. This basilica was rebuilt several times; it was largely around this building, between the great gymnasiums and the stadium of the classical city, that the early Byzantine Ephesians gathered.

Ephesians, Chapter 1

Ephesians 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:"

Paul: the author of the letter.

Topic: PAUL

an apostle of Jesus Christ from (**apostolos**), meaning "special messenger" or "one sent with a message. Paul belongs to Jesus Christ.

Topic: APOSTLESHIP

by the will of God: not merely the permission of God, but Paul is clearly under the authority of God's clear purpose. God the Father has directed Paul to undertake the ministry of apostleship.

Therefore, Paul writes with authority. He has God's truth, so he can be dogmatic, authoritative.

to the saints - "holy ones"; "set-apart ones"

Christians are saints by position, not by personal merit. Christians are set apart in many ways: we are members of God's royal family, we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit. God's grace picked us up when we were lost and helpless and made us members of His royal family. But we don't deserve any of it.

It is important to remember, however, that although we are saved by grace, we are called to live separated lives, lives of godliness. Sainthood is not the attainment of a select few, but it is the privilege and responsibility of every Christian. Eph. 2:10 states that we are "...created unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."

Salvation by grace is not "easy believe-ism". The Christian life is very demanding in terms of personal character, behavior, and Christian

service. The book of Ephesians (and Colossians, and Titus, and Romans, etc.) demonstrates that every Christian is in full-time Christian service, that 100% of one's time, talent, and treasure belong to God and His service on this earth. Nevertheless, all of the power and resources required for us to carry out God's plan for us is provided by God by means of grace.

READ Colossians chapter 3

(at Ephesus): the letter is written either to the large church at Ephesus or to a group of churches in Asia Minor including Ephesus. The letter circulated widely and many churches in Asia Minor had copies.

and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: those who have faith in Christ, in God's Word, and who show fidelity to the Lord; those in union with Christ.

The doctrine of Union with Christ (Positional Truth) will be dealt with when we study Eph. 1:7.

Ephesians 1:2,3

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings:"

Topic: BLESSING [Study this topic before proceeding.]

How did Paul and Barnabas use the concept of general blessing to evangelize people who were totally ignorant of God?

Acts 14:8-18

Acts 17:16-29

Ephesians 1:4

According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him:

according as (kathos): "in the manner that; how; in what manner"

he has chosen us (eklego), "to choose or select; to choose out as the recipients of special favor or privilege". This word indicates the purpose for which the choice was made.

1 Pet. 2:9,10; James 2:5; Matt. 24:21-31; Rom. 8:28-39; 2 Thess. 2:13,14

in Him: a Christian is in union with Jesus Christ. We are "members of His body."

Topic: UNION WITH CHRIST (Positional Truth)

before the foundation (kataboleis): "foundation; beginning"

God the Father was thinking about us even before the creation. In His omniscience, He loved us and He knew our wretched fallen condition. So by His grace He made provision for our salvation by making it possible for us to be united with His Son, Jesus Christ.

of the world (kosmos): "the world; the universe; all things"

Matt. 25:31-34; John 17:24-26

that we should be holy (hagios): "set apart; sanctified"

A Christian has been set apart (sanctified) by God. The purpose clause here shows that by being chosen in Christ we began our Christian lives as "set apart" individuals. God intends for us to stay in fellowship, to keep apart from the world we live in, to be separated from kosmos doctrines, to be yielded, etc.

Rom. 12:1,2; Ex. 19:6; Lev. 19:2-4; Luke 1:74,75; Eph. 4:22-32

Topics: GODLINESS, PURITY

and without blame (amomos): "without blemish; faultless"

Phil. 2:13-16; 1 Thess. 3:12,13; Eph. 5:26,27; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19; Jude 24; Rev. 14:5

before Him: "in His presence"

In these verses we are beginning the study of the concept of Christian holiness and blamelessness as part of the Christian way of life. We see in Eph. 1:4 that a believer is chosen in Christ to be "holy and blameless".

This brings up the concept of positional holiness: the righteousness we have because we are in Jesus Christ. We are not holy because of our behavior or good character, but because we have been united with Christ, the Holy One. He took our sin upon Himself, so that we could be freely given the righteousness of God.

2 Cor. 5:21 !!

We were losers: God in His mercy made it possible for us to be winners by accepting Christ and receiving righteousness as a free gift.

1 Pet. 2:9,10

Ephesians 1:5

In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself"

in love: (en + agapei): mental love; soul love.

(While the words "in love" appear at the end of verse 4 in the KJV, other versions, and many commentators, believe the phrase belongs at the beginning of verse 5.)

This is an impersonal love which has no romantic connotation. Here "love" refers to the love of God the Father as that which motivates Him to execute His plan. This love led God to arrange Propitiation for our sins so that He could associate with us without His perfect character being compromised.

having predestinated us (proorizo): "to predesign; to predetermine"

Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:28,30; 1 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2

Topic: PREDESTINATION

unto the adoption of children: (huiiothesia): "placing as an adult son; the recognition of maturity".

Rom. 9:4; John 1:12 (**teknon**); Rom. 8:15,23 (**huiiothesia**) + Gal. 3:5

Topic: ADOPTION

by Jesus Christ: Union with Christ makes the Adoption a reality.

unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will: indicates that the Lord pleases Himself in providing Adoption.

Luke 10:21; Eph. 1:5,9; 2:13

Ephesians 1:6

to the praise of the glory of his grace, whereby He has made us accepted in the Beloved."

to the praise: (**eis + epainos**): "leading to praise; for the purpose of praise"

Rom. 8:29; 13:3; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 8:18; Eph. 1:6,12; Phil. 1:11; 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:7

of the glory: (**doxa**): "glory"

Psalm 9:11; 22:23; 33:2; Matt. 5:16; John 15:8; Rom. 15:6; 1 Pet. 2:9

Topic: THE GLORY OF GOD

Comment:

- The believer continues on earth after salvation as a definite part of the Father's predetermined plan and provision of Grace.
- Grace provision demonstrates the Father's ability to protect, preserve, and bless the believer in Satan's domain.
- The ultimate in living on the earth as a Christian is to live as a mature believer to the maximum praise of the Father's glory.
- The Father is glorified as the growing believer functions under Grace provision.

of His grace: (**charis**): "graciousness; kindness; good will"

Topic: GRACE

Comment:

- We are designed in eternity past for the "glory of God." Our life is to be lived in perfect compatibility with God's essence and character. Since God is perfect, everything He produces in us is good by His standards, divine good (gold, silver, precious stones). Since we are human and have an OSN, the best that we can produce is human good (wood, hay, stubble).. Isa. 64:6; Tit. 3:5.
- Human good is incompatible with God's plan. Human works were rejected at the Cross. And human good in the believer's life is rejected at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Isa. 64:6
- The question, therefore, is "How, in principle, can I become a producer of divine good rather than of human righteousness?" The answer, in a word, "GRACE." God's plan of Grace provides the Christian with every asset needed to produce works acceptable to Him in this life. Eph. 2:8-10

wherein: "in which; according to which"

Thus, "in which grace He has made us accepted..."

He has made us accepted: (**charisto**), aor. act. ind. 3s: "to bestow favor; to give a gift; to make an object of favor; to visit grace upon."

God has made Christians the object of His favor, in the realm of His plan of Grace.

Comment:

- Human social acceptance is based on the perceived worth of the individual in the eyes of others.
- But, we are accepted because Jesus Christ is accepted. We are accepted because of who Christ is, not because of who we are.
- One important result of this viewpoint is that the believer can relax; there is no need for bucking for position and favor

under some system of legalistic behavior.

in the Beloved: (**agapao**), “in the one having been loved”

This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased...”

Comment:

- In eternity past ("before the foundation of the world"), God the Father loved God the Son with an infinite amount of love. Christ is the Beloved One.
- At the time of salvation we enter into union with Christ (ROM. 6:3). He is seated at the right hand of the Father; and He is the recipient of the infinite love the Father has for Him. We are “in Christ”, so we are also receiving that love from the Father.
- 1 John 3:2 **
- Very important: God loves every believer with the same perfect love, even the most unlovable and obnoxious among us.
- A Christian without doctrine can live his whole life without being aware of God’s love to any great degree. The Bible is the only source of this information.
- When someone says “I love you”, the value of the statement depends upon the character of the one who says it. Sometimes, when you know a person well, it is very thrilling to hear those words. Sometimes, though, it is a question of how much distance you can put between you.
- A love relationship with a person of character can be wonderful. With an unstable person it can be anything but pleasant. The point is, love is no stronger than the character of the person expressing it.
- God’s character is perfect. When He says “I love you” we can immediately

begin to enjoy a full relationship with Him without fear.

- In Heaven we will have resurrection bodies and no sin nature; we will have a perfect capacity for appreciating and responding to God’s love for us. There will be no more sorrow, pain, tears, sin, or death, so the love of God will enter into a fantastic aspect. But God says, “I’m not going to wait until you get to heaven to show you how I love you. My love for you now is the same as it will be in Heaven”

Ephesians 1:7

In whom we have redemptions through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace."

in whom: "whom" is a relative pronoun referring to Jesus Christ.

We have been redeemed, not because of who and what we are, but because it has been provided through Christ.

Topic: UNION WITH CHRIST

we have: present active indicative of (**exo**): “we have and keep on having”

redemption: (apolutrosis): a ransom paid to purchase a slave or set someone free.

Topic: REDEMPTION

Comment:

- God pays the ransom for a slave and frees him absolutely.
- A longtime slave will think like a slave. A freed slave needs to stop thinking like a slave and develop a free man’s mental attitude. The Emancipation Proclamation made citizens of slaves. However, for many of the newly freed people, it was a long time before they began to think and act like free citizens.
- A slave cannot free a slave. False cults and religion try to do this. All they do is try to make the slave feel happy inside,

to think he's not a slave. Religious legalism is Satan's effort to delude slaves into thinking they are really free.

through His blood: the payment made at the Cross.

Topic: BLOOD OF CHRIST

Comment:

- Sometimes, both in the NT and OT, there is no accompanying reference to the price paid for redemption, and the word simply has the primary sense of release.

Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:23; Heb. 9:15

- Paul's mind often dwelt on the thought of the costliness of redemption. 1 COR. 6:20
- Redemption includes freedom during our lifetime. The believer has the freedom to represent Christ as an ambassador, the freedom to be in full-time Christian service, the freedom to be a priest, the freedom to be indwelt and filled by the Holy Spirit, the freedom to be indwelt by the Person of Jesus Christ, the freedom to be in union with Christ and to be His representative.

the forgiveness of sins: (afesis): "the loosing of a person from that which binds him" cf. Rev. 20:12-15

according to the riches: speaks of the inexhaustibility of divine capital; the wealth of God's grace, mercy and glory.

Eph. 1:8; 2:4,7; 3:8,16; Rom. 2:4; 9:23; 11:33; 2 Cor. 8:9; Col. 1:27; 2:2; Phil. 4:9

of His grace:

Topic: GRACE

Ephesians 1:8

Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;"

wherein: "in which", reference to the grace mentioned in verse 7.

God, in His grace, has provided everything that is needed, and more, to make the plan of God work for any believer.

he has abounded: (perisseuo): "to exist to the maximum; to be furnished beyond what one needs; to have an overabundance of quality; to possess in abundance; enough and to spare"

The word "abound", which expresses the superabundance of God's grace, is also used to refer to the quality expected in the Christian's manner of life.

I Thess. 3:12 **; 4:4 **; 4:11

A believer can have all of the riches of God's grace that he wants. Ignorance of God's Word and carnality prevent a Christian from having these riches.

in all wisdom: (sophia): "insight; discernment; divine viewpoint"

Compare Eph. 5:15, **asophos** (unwise)

and prudence (phroneisis): the practical outworking of wisdom. Doctrine applied to experience.

Compare 2 Cor. 11:1, 17, 21 (**aphrosunei**), "foolish"

The wisdom of God is not merely intellectual or academic. It is not a higher philosophy which the Gnostics in the early church claimed to possess. It is the source of understanding of the details of daily living.

Phil. 1:9-11

Jesus Christ give men the ability to see the great ultimate truths of eternity and to solve the problems of daily living.

Col. 1:9

Ephesians 1:9

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself."

having made known: (ginosko): aorist active participle: "to make known in such a way that the information becomes a part of you"

Some things are learned which do not become a part of a person. (Passing friends; casual ideas).

But God's Word is communicated so that it can become part of life's foundation.

unto us: refers to Christians. The pronoun is in the dative case indicating that it is to our advantage to have divine communication.

Advantages of having the mind of Christ made known to us:

- edification
- reduction or elimination of personality kinks
- freedom from mental attitude sins
- a knowledge of God's will
- a relaxed attitude toward people, situations, events.
- All the above result is a relaxed way of life (the peace of God).

the mystery: (musterion): an organized system of teaching for a Greek fraternity or close social society.

Believers are in the family of God and can understand the inner teachings.

Comment:

- The word **musterion** does not refer to something mysterious, but something that is revealed. In the N.T., the words which go with "mystery" refer to disclosure rather than keeping a secret.

Read Col. 1:26; 2:2; 4:3

- **IRONSIDE:** "The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, of lawlessness, of Babylon, the great mystery of Christ and the Church (Eph. 5), the mystery of the Rapture, the mystery of Israel's present rejection (as illustrated by the olive tree analogy in Romans 11) -- these things which were once hidden secrets which no man could understand are now opened up to the people of God. From the treasure that God has given to them,

the pastors and teachers draw things new and old, and open them up to God's people so that they may enter into the good of them."

- It is the responsibility of the Christian teacher to expound these mysteries to the saints.

Read 1 Cor. 4:1

- This knowledge is extremely important. When a person is born into the family of God through faith in Christ Jesus, he is positionally complete, "adopted" as an adult child. But his soul has a deficiency in experience and knowledge. For this reason every believer is commanded to grow, to progress toward maturity.

Read 2 Pet. 3:18; Eph. 4:14,15; Acts 16:4,5; Heb. 13:7-9; 1 Cor. 2:10-16

Topic: MYSTERY

of His will: God's plan for the believer's life.

Read 1 John 3:23

Comment:

- As we "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ", a certain orientation to God's plan for us takes place. We begin to understand God's plan and our proper place in it.
- We gain freedom from bondage to the Sin Nature: e.g., freedom from mental attitude sins and from slavery to details of life.
- We put material things in their right perspective.
- We obtain the ability to love God and our fellow man.
- We possess God's happiness in the inner man, a joy which doesn't depend on people, circumstances or things.
- The unbeliever cannot understand the will of God for his life; but the believer can!

Ephesians is the epistle about God's plan for the Christian life!

according to His good pleasure: see notes on Eph. 1:5. God's pleasure is the standard by which we are given this knowledge of the mystery of His will.

which He has purposed in Himself to "purpose" means to "put something beforehand; to predesign; to prepare beforehand".

Ephesians 1:10

That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, but which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him:"

dispensation: (*oikonomia*), "economy ; administration"

Note: (*oikonomos*) from Ephesians 1:7, "For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward (*oikonomos*), not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,"

The "steward" administers the "dispensation".

Topic: DISPENSATIONS

the fullness of times: (*pleiroma + kairos*) "full measure of times", a reference to a succession of events, ages, eras.

- When all of the times and seasons which the Father has fixed by His own authority have run their course, His age-long purpose which He planned in Christ will be fulfilled.

to gather together in one: (anakephaluow):

"to bring together several things under one head". The word was used of gathering things together and presenting them as a whole.

- The word (**anakephaluow**) was used in Greek rhetoric for summing up a speech at the end, showing the relation of each part to the complete argument.
- The Greek practice was to add up a column of figures and put the sum at the top (head) of the column.

all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him,

- Everything depends on Jesus Christ. He is the focal point of God's plan.
- Christ must be first in life, otherwise a person is outside of the plan of God, and misery is built on misery.
- A Christian can become stabilized through fellowship with Christ, living in the Word.

Ephesians 1:11

in whom also: reference to the Christian's union with the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle continues to enumerate the benefits of our position as members of the royal family of God.

At the time of his personal salvation, the Christian believer enters into a spiritual union with Jesus Christ and remains in that position forever.

There is a wide class of Bible teaching on the subject of the Christian's position in (union with) Jesus Christ.

Union with Christ makes available to the believer a great number of spiritual benefits. These benefits can be used and enjoyed continuously during the believer's remaining lifetime and will continue into eternity.

Topic: UNION WITH CHRIST

we have obtained an inheritance: (kleirow): "to be appointed by lot".

Thus, "in Jesus Christ our lot is cast"; our future is tied up in His; we share His destiny.

From (**kleiros**), "lot", used two ways since the time of Homer: (1) "a lot which is drawn, or cast", and (2) "a lot of land; an allotment".

The lot on which your house stands is your allotment. You might have bought it; you might have had it given to you; you might have inherited it.

Casting lots was often done by Greek and Roman soldiers in dividing the spoil. All the loot was brought to one place and dice were thrown.

Or, soldiers were allowed to choose: heroes first, senior soldiers next, then the rest.

The soldiers drew lots for the clothing of Christ while He was being crucified.

(kleiros) is closely related to **(kleironomia)** "inheritance" in the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament. The words are synonymous when used in Joshua 17:4.

Josh. 17:4 "And they came near before Eleazar the priest and before Joshua the son of Nun and before the leaders, saying, 'The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance (Heb: NACHALAH; LXX: kleironomia) among our brothers.' So according to the command of the Lord he gave them an inheritance (Heb: NACHALAH; LXX: kleiros) among their father's brothers."

The word NACHALAH is used extensively in the OT, so here is another case where Paul will give Jewish readers a direct connection between something they understand and a new doctrine.

Topic: HOPE

Topic: INHERITANCE

according to the purpose (prothesis), "a problem selected, approved, outlined: ahead of time"

God designed ahead of time everything we need for inner happiness and prosperity. The plan is revealed in His Word. To fill in the "outline of the thesis", we learn the Word; we do research. We can know God's purpose by learning the Word of God "line upon line, precept upon precept."

of Him genitive of source. God the Father is the source of the design.

who works (energē), "to put something into action".

God the Father has put the plan into action. And He put the details of His plan into His Word. All we need is a positive attitude toward the teaching.

All of the power of God is expressed in the phrase "the works of God." He is omnipotent: so He has all powerful capability to carry out His work. He is omniscient: so He knows exactly what work to accomplish and how to do it. He is omnipresent: so He is present everywhere to carry out his work.

Furthermore, God is love: so He has humanity's best interests in mind as He carries out His plan.

according to the counsel (boulei), "purpose; counsel; decision; resolution; plan"

of His will (theleima), "will", thus "the will of God".

Ephesians 1:12

That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ."

See notes on Ephesians 1:6.

Topic: GLORY

Ephesians 1:13

In whom ye also trusted, after 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."

in whom again, a reference to the Christian's position in Christ.

you also reference to all believers who were recipients of this letter, and by extension, all believers.

(trusted): not in original

At this point the King James translators introduced the word "trusted." Most KJV Bibles will have the word in italics. The reason was probably that it was inserted for clarity, because the concept of a person's having believed in Christ shows up later in the verse. Here is the New American Standard version of verse 13.

Eph. 1:13 (NAS) "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,"

you heard aor. act. part. of (**akouw**), “having heard”

The action of a Greek aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb “sealed”. This indicates, grammatically, that hearing and believing precede the indwelling and sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. The process then is: (1) you hear the Gospel; (2) you believe the Gospel: and (3) you receive salvation, the Holy Spirit begins to dwell in you, and this is the seal of your salvation.

the word of truth i.e., the expression of doctrine. The only way to get the gospel is by hearing it. The only way to learn Bible truth is to take it in.

the gospel of your salvation (euaggelion), “good news”.

There are many ways to express the Gospel. And it is very interesting and useful in personal evangelism to work out various ways to explain the plan of salvation to people. One approach is to think of Salvation as that which overcomes the impossible barriers that lie between man and God. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." And, "the wages of sin is death." But, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Topic: THE BARRIER (Reconciliation and Propitiation)

having believed aor. act. participle (**pisteuw**), “having believed”; with “having heard” also precedes the action of “sealed”.

you were sealed (sphragidzw), “stamped with a seal”

Comment:

- In the ancient world, the seal was a guarantee or a transaction, e.g., a signet impression on a ring. Sealing was used to authenticate contracts, laws, invoices, military orders. The seal was also used in the ratification of treaties.
- Seals were used to preserve tombs, libraries, treasuries. The seal was backed up by the force of the government in

charge, e.g., the seal on the tomb of Christ was guaranteed by the Roman troops.

- Seals indicate ownership; God owns the believer, having purchased him from the slave market of sin (Eph. 1:7; 1 Cor. 6:20)
- The believer is sealed as a guarantee of his eternal security.

with the Holy Spirit of promise “by means of the Holy Spirit which was promised”

Ephesians 1:14

Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

who: a reference to the Holy Spirit

Topic: THE HOLY SPIRIT

is the earnest: (arrabon), “installment; deposit; down payment”.

Thus, “a pledge on a contract”; the Holy Spirit is a pledge given by God that eternal life is promised to the believer.

of our inheritance: (kleironomia), “inheritance; legacy”

We inherit all things because of our union with Christ, Rom. 8:16,17; Gal. 4:7

until the redemption: (eis + apolutrosis), “because of the redemption”.

In this case, the resurrection of the body which is the physical redemption of the believer entering eternity. The word redemption implies that a ransom price has been paid, that we have been purchased. See Eph. 1:7.

Topic: REDEMPTION

of the purchased possession: (peripoeisis), “property; something paid for”.

The believer is God’s property. We are "bought with a price."

unto the praise (epainos), “praise”

of His glory: (doxa), “glory”, the perfect character of God.

Ephesians 1:15

Wherefore, I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,"

This verse begins the first of two prayers by Paul. He prays that Christians will employ the mechanics of the plan of God so that they will grow and enjoy the blessings of a dynamic life.

Wherefore, I also: “for this reason, I also”

after I heard: aor. act. part. (**akouw**), “having heard”

of your faith in the Lord Jesus: (**kata + pistis**), “about your faith in the Lord Jesus”.

and love toward all the saints: (**agapei**), “love”, the mental attitude love which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Comment:

- Love is the ability to appreciate someone, to have affection for someone, or to be occupied with someone. This includes being willing to sacrifice of yourself in order to draw the object of love to yourself for a closer relationship. Gen. 27:1 ff; Ps. 119:97; John 12:43; Eph. 5:25.
- Love is evidence of edification, growth in Christ.
- A relaxed mental attitude, characterized by the absence of mental attitude sins, is the basis for all love for others.
- The Ephesian church was unusual; believers living in the same town had love for each other, freedom from open sins, courtesy and respect for each other. It's easy to love those you are compatible with, but this verse says “all saints”. Christian love for others include those who are obnoxious, even those who are enemies.

- Paul enjoyed his fellowship in Ephesus for nearly three years. A doctrinal church is the closest to perfect environment you can find on earth. The environment is perfect regardless of weather, politics, or outward circumstances.
- But the only way to maintain this perfect environment is to maintain one's continuous advancement and growth through intake and application of Bible truth.

Ephesians 1:16

Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."

cease not (ou pauw): “never stop”.

Paul is always thinking about his friends, and he is always interceding for them.

to give thanks for you pres. act. part. (**eucharistew**), “giving thanks”

Thus, “I never stop being grateful for you...” Paul was thankful for his fellow believers in Ephesus.

making mention (of you): (**mneia + poiew**), “making a remembrance; producing a memory” (Eng.: mnemonic)

in my prayers: the noun (**proseuchei**) from the verb (**proseuchomai**), “to make prayer”, hence, “by my prayers”

Notice the content of Paul's prayers for others: that they'll keep on growing and making maximum use of divine blessings: studying, applying, growing.

John 17:20-26; Rom. 1:9-11; Eph. 3:14-19; Col. 4:12

Topic: PRAYER

Ephesians 1:17

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,"

that: introduces the following clause in which Paul states the purpose of his prayer.

the God of our Lord Jesus Christ: God the Father and God the Son

the Father of glory: (*doxa*), "glory".

Here, the word "glory" is a reference to the perfect character of God.

Topic: GLORY OF GOD

may give unto you: aor. act. optative of (*didomi*), "to give".

The optative mood expresses a desire. Paul's prayer expresses a very strong desire that his friends advance toward spiritual maturity.

the spirit of wisdom: "wisdom" is (*sophia*), which is a word used to refer to wisdom in the human spirit.

Wisdom is gained through the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. A Christian learns the Word of God academically; the facts enter the mind and can be understood there. The believer then makes a decision whether to believe the Word of God (to have faith in it), which may involve obedience to a commandment or accepting certain principles.

The Holy Spirit then uses the facts of Scripture to provide wisdom and prudence in the Christian's life. The Word of God becomes a tool or weapon with which to make correct decisions in life and to solve problems, all according to the divine wisdom of God which is within. This is the principle of "line upon line, precept upon precept" by which a Christian grows in the "knowledge of Jesus Christ."

The Lord provides abundant wisdom as part of His grace plan for believers. Eph. 1:7,8.

Bible doctrine is useful only when it produces edification, that is, applied knowledge. A Christian becomes wise when he learns and believes Bible truth while walking in fellowship. The Holy Spirit makes application, producing discernment and prudence.

**2 Chr. 1:8-10 "And Solomon said to God,
"Thou hast dealt with my father David**

with great lovingkindness, and hast made me king in his place.

"Now, O Lord God, Thy promise to my father David is fulfilled; for Thou hast made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth.

"Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can rule this great people of Thine?"

Prov. 2:1-7 "My son, if you will receive my sayings, And treasure my commandments within you,

"Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding;

"For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding;

"If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;

"Then you will discern the fear of the Lord, And discover the knowledge of God.

"For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

"He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,"

James 1:5 "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

and revelation: (*apokalupsis*), "revelation", a reference to the canon of Scripture, the inspired Word of God.

in the knowledge of Him: (*epignosis*), "full and applied knowledge from the source of God the Father"

Topic: EDIFICATION

Ephesians 1:18

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."

the eyes of your understanding: (ophthalmos) + **(kardia)**, "the eyes of your heart".

Along with the following words, the phrase means "the eyes of your heart", the thinking apparatus of the soul. In the Bible, the word for heart, (kardia), is not used for the physical organ, but for the inner rational thinking process of the human soul. The heart is the place of consciousness, self-awareness, conscience, and volition. The heart is the place where the Holy Spirit works with a quickened human spirit in His various ministries of conviction, teaching, and edification.

The Apostle Paul is very anxious that the Christian believers to whom he is writing make rapid and solid progress in spiritual growth; and the core process supporting that growth takes place in the heart, the conscious mind.

being enlightened: perf. pass. part. of **(photidzo)**, "having become enlightened"

NOTE: NAS is subjunctive in the English, expressing a desire. The Greek, however, is perfect tense and a participle, indicating that which already would have occurred prior to the receiving of knowledge and wisdom of the previous verse.

The KJV English gives the present participle, which is nearly right, but not as strong as the Greek.

Hence, from the Greek, "the eyes of your heart having become enlightened".

The passive voice indicates that the believer receives the action; God brings light into men's lives.

This is a reference to Bible truth that has been learned, understood, believed, and assimilated by application into the Christian's life.

Enlightenment precedes understanding. Knowledge precedes wisdom. You cannot apply in your life what you do not know!

People have been criticized for studying the Bible a lot. And it's true that a person can have knowledge of doctrine and not profit from it by application. But: no one applies all that they know! If you study the Bible at all, you will learn many facts, but application sometimes comes slowly. In fact, application often comes when a number of truths come together to form a correlated whole. Clarity is often found when truth is viewed from a number of viewpoints.

While such things as the control of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the will of God are vital concerns in Christian growth, it is impossible to grow in Christ without knowledge of Bible truth.

Some verses on the concept of "enlightenment

Ps. 119:130 "The unfolding of Thy words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple."

2 Cor. 4:3-6 "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

"In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

"For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

"For the God who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

1 John 1:5-10 "And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

"If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

that you may know: (oida), "for the purpose that you may have permanent knowledge."

what is the hope: (elpis), "confident expectation". There is no connotation of uncertainty regarding the Plan of God for individual Christians.

Topic: HOPE

of His calling: (kleisis), the plan of God, beginning with foreknowledge, predestination, election, and calling.

Note carefully Ephesians 4:1-3 regarding the Christian's calling and the importance of one's personal godliness.

and what the riches: (ploutos), "wealth, abundance".

Prov. 10:22 "It is the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, And He adds no sorrow to it."

Heb. 11:26 "[Moses] considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward."

of the glory: (doxa), "glory". Hence, "riches from the source of glory", namely, unlimited resources from the character of God.

Topic: GLORY OF GOD

of His inheritance: (kleironomia), "heritage, inheritance"

Topic: INHERITANCE

in the saints: (hagios), "saints". Hence, "among the saints".

Ephesians 1:19

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power."

There are four great words in this verse for the POWER of God. The next time you sing the chorus of that hymn "Power in the Blood", remember these four Greek words. It might be a little hard to sing them with the music, but it's fun to try (quietly, I suppose, lest the parishioners think you're daft).

The Greek words are **(dunamis)**, **(energeia)**, **(kratos)**, and **(ischus)**.

and what the exceeding greatness: pres. act. part. of **(huperballw)**, used as an adjective, "surpassing; unmeasureable" PLUS the noun **(megethos)**, "magnitude". Thus, "what is the unmeasureable magnitude" of His power.

of His power: (dunamis), "power, strength"

Reference to God's inherent power and strength; omnipotence.

Topic: ESSENCE OF GOD

toward us (who) believe: pres. act. participle **(pisteuw)**, used as an adjective in apposition to "us". An expression of Grace. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed."

Therefore, "And what is the surpassing magnitude of his inherent power toward us, the believing ones".

Comment:

- The plan of God depends on the power of God
- The potential of our lives is unlimited because God supplies infinite power to us; the best of lives is available. And of course, when this life is over, we enter the presence of God.

according to the working: (*energeia*),
“operational power, energy, ability to work.”

of his mighty power: (*kratos*) and (*ischus*)

(*kratos*): power of control, dominion, might

(*ischus*): endowed power, the faculty of power

Summary of the four words for power:

- 1. (*dunamis*): inherent power, the omnipotence of God
- 2. (*energeia*): the operational power of God (excludes all human power)
- 3. (*kratos*): power of control, dominion, might
- 4. (*ischus*): endowed power, the faculty of power

Comment:

This is a verse of great assurance. All believers are in the plan of God and are maintained by His great power. God has the ability to execute His plan and to make every provision for now and eternity.

Rom. 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

See also Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:7, 20; 1 Chr. 29:12; Psalm 110:1-3; Phil. 2:13; Col. 1:29; 2 Thess. 1:11,12

Ephesians 1:20

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places."

which a relative pronoun in the accusative feminine singular: indicates that its antecedent is (*energeia*), which is of the same form. Hence, “which operational power.”

He wrought in Christ: perf. act. ind. of (*energew*), “had been operational in Christ”

(when) He raised him: aor. act. part. of (*egeirw*), “having raised him”

Note: The action of the two aorist participles precedes the action of the main verb *energew*. Therefore, Christ was raised from the dead and seated in order to take his position of operational power.

I believe you can see from studies like this that there are times when reference to the original Greek is necessary to get the true grammatical construction and meaning from a passage.

In cases like, the (to some) very dull process of diagramming a sentence, and laying out the verb, noun, and adjective sequences systematically, allows a student to mine real gold from a vein of ore that had seemingly already yielded everything of value.

from the dead: (*ek nekros*), “out from the dead”

Topic: RESURRECTION

and set him: aor. act. part. of (*kathidzw*), “having seated him.”

Topic: ASCENSION

at His own right hand: the place of highest rank and power, Christ is at the right hand of the throne of God.

in the heavenly places: “in the heavenlies”

Now: very important: read Ephesians 2:1-10.

Note that we are saved by the Grace of God; and observe the position God has raised us up to occupy. He has "raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;"

Our position in Christ is at the very seat of power in heaven, the place of the absolute victory of Jesus Christ in the spiritual warfare, above all "principality, power, might, dominion, and every name that is named ..."

This is one of the most exalting and encouraging doctrines that a Christian can understand. These are life-changing concepts. The absolute power of God brought about our salvation, is made

available to us during our life on earth; and now we see that our position in Christ is the most exalted it can possibly be.

Furthermore, note the purpose for which God saved us by Grace. "That in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His Grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." He saved us, not only because He loved us and had mercy upon us, but that we could be used to demonstrate the very Grace of God in salvation.

These are the things we can meditate upon when things are dark, when the details of life are providing us with very little satisfaction, when we are discouraged and depressed.

And these are the truths for which a hungry world is waiting. There are multitudes of people who would be eternally grateful to hear the good news of just these two chapters of Ephesians. Even if this were the only message you could bring to someone, you would have a wonderful ministry.

Ephesians 1:21

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:"

far above all: (**huperanw + pas**), "above all; superior to all: with respect to rank.

This is not a geographical position, in the sense, for example, of Christ's being in heaven above while all the rest of creation is "below".

This is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ's position at the right hand of the Father, the place of His eternal victory and authority over all ranks of spiritual and earthly power, whether friend or foe.

Hence, Jesus Christ is "over above all", over everything in all respects.

Eph. 4:10 "He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things."

John 3:31 "He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from

the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all."

Specifically, here, Christ is superior to all "principality", "power", "might", references to supreme powers, including the powers of the Satan's kingdom, the demon world.

A wonderful feature of this statement of Christ's ultimate victory is that, because of our union with Christ, we Christians can have full assurance of ultimate victory. The Lord has "raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 2:6) So we are even now seated in the place of victory with Christ.

And not only this, but during our lifetime here on earth, the Lord provides us with mighty offensive and defensive weapons of spiritual combat, as outline in Ephesians 6:10-18.

principality: (archei), "high authority; ruler".

An Archon was the chief ruler of a Greek city-state. In terms of the hierarchy of Satan's forces, this is a reference to his chief fallen angels, or demons.

cf. Luke 20:L20; 12:11; Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Jude 6

and power: (exousia), "delegated power; the ability and authority to perform an action" Here, a lower ranking demonic authority.

and might: (dunamis), "inherent power, strength, ability"

Fallen angels have great power and ability. But the Lord Jesus has a far superior power.

and dominion: (kurioteis), "lordship; constituted authority"

cf. 2 Pet. 2:10; Jude 8; Col. 1:16

Refers to demons which are distinguished by great authority, those who influence world rulers.

(above) every name that is named: (onomadzw) "to name, to make known, to give a reputation"

Reference to all other rank and file creatures among Satan's forces.

not only in this world, but also in that which is to come :

This expresses the idea of a settled future; that which will come about. The coming age is that which begins with the Second Advent of Christ.

Note that here in Ephesians 1 we have many promises to Christians about the future. We have all blessings in heavenly places. We are permanent members of God's family. We have a wonderful inheritance. And now we see that we are member's of a victorious army, with a leader whose victory is already declared. Knowledge of these basic facts about the Christian life and the power and glory of the Lord Jesus is one of the most effective weapons against worry, depression, and general fear about the future.

Topic: SATAN

Topic: DEMONS

Ephesians 1:22

And has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,"

and has put all things under his feet: aor. act. ind. of (**hupotassw**), "to subordinate; to bring under authority"

(**hupotassw**) was used in Greek to refer to subordination in a system of military rank, and also as a word for subordination in any chain of command. We are all under authority, and Jesus Christ is the chief authority. In this context, the subordinates are the members of the church, the body of Christ.

All things will be placed under Christ's feet, referring to His total superiority over all beings.

READ all of Hebrews 1.

Is. 9:6,7 "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be no end to the increase of {His} government or of peace, On the

throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this."

1 Pet. 3:21,22 "And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him."

See also Matt. 28:18; John 10:18; Jer. 23:5; Dan. 7:14; John 18:37; 1 Cor. 15:25.

For parallel uses of (**hupotassw**), subordination to authority, see 1 Pet 2:13,18; 3:1,5; 5:5; James 4:7; Luke 2:43-52 (Jesus as a boy); Luke 10:17-20; Rom. 8:7; 10:1-3; 13:1; Titus 2:9; 3:1.

and gave him to be: (didomi), "presented, appointed"

Jesus Christ was appointed (by God the Father) to be the chief authority over the church.

head over all (things): (kephalei), "chief authority, appointed superior"

Here the Greek word for "head" is used in much the same way as we speak of the "head" of a company or some other organization.

to the church: (ekkleisia), "the assembly, the congregation"

The Jews were called "the congregation of Israel" (Acts. 7:38). The title was transferred to the Body of Christ, 1 Cor. 12:28; Col. 1:18.

The word also refers to local church bodies, Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 14:4.

Topic: AUTHORITY

Ephesians 1:23

Which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all."

which: demonstrative pronoun referring to the word "church" in the previous verse.

is His body: a reference to the church as the Body of Christ.

Rom. 12:3-5 "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

"For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,

"so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

READ 1 Cor. 12:12-31

the fullness of Him: (pleiroma), "completeness; that which fills up; full measure; entire contents; full development"

John 1:14-18 "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

"John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'

"For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

"For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

"No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

We Christians are the completeness of Jesus Christ, in the sense of a fully developed Body. Of course, it by the grace of God, and provision of God, that we have received salvation and union with Christ. The passage in John above is a very good outline study of the concept of Christ's fullness, the Church's fullness, and how

we are involved and participate in the whole process.

that fills all in all: (pleirow), verb "to bring to completion, to accomplish, to bring about"

Col. 2:8-10 "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

"For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

"and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;"

I want to mention to you right here one of the most important concepts in Bible study and Bible teaching. Scripture explains Scripture!! You can learn a great deal about a doctrinal topic by tracing the parallel passages of a concept through the Bible.

You can see from the preceding paragraphs and Bible citations the wonderful facts about our involvement with the person of Jesus Christ, along with the wonderful benefits available to us, beginning during our lives on earth and extending into eternity.

Ephesians, Chapter 2

Ephesians 2:1

And you (hath he quickened) who were dead in trespasses and sins."

and you reference to Paul's addressees, believers in Asia Minor, and ultimately, all believers in Christ.

(hath he quickened) this phrase does not appear in the Greek. It has been added by the KJV translators because the verb appears a few verses down and is put in here by reference, for clarity.

were dead (eimi + nekros), "were dead".

TOPIC: DEATH (esp. spiritual death)

Rom. 6:23; Prov. 21:16; Rom. 8:11

in trespasses and sins (paraptwma + hamartia): “a stumbling aside; fault; offense; transgression” plus “sin, offense”

The locative case implies location, hence, “in the sphere of...” Every human being is spiritually dead because of sin.

Rom. 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 1:7

Ephesians 2:2

Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience:

wherein in time past “formerly, in the sphere of”.

This verse is a reference to the Christian’s manner of life before his salvation.

you walked (peripatew), “walk; lifestyle”.

Eph. 4:22; Col. 1:21; 3:7; 1 John 5:19

References to a sinful manner of life: Jer. 7:23-26; Phil. 3:16-19

Contrast this “walk” with “walking worthy of the vocation with which you are called” of Ephesians 4:1.

The Greek word (**anastrephw**) is used in Eph. 2:3 for “a pattern of social life”, and is translated “conversation” or “walk” in other passages.

The word (**stoikew**) means “to follow a definite course of action”; used for the procedure followed in a military drill. Rom. 4:12; Phil. 3:16; Gal. 6:16

TOPIC: WALKING

according to the course of this world: (kata + aiwn + kosmos). Thus, “according to the age of this world system”

This is a reference to the universe under the control of Satan and his forces. The concept includes the idea of Satan’s thoughts, his viewpoint, his doctrines, his plans and strategies, his religions, his solutions, etc.

Living as part of the world system is described in these passages: Matt. 13:22; 16:26; Rom.

12:1,2; Col. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:4; Titus 2:12; James 4:4; 1 John 2:5-17; 1 Sam. 8:19; 2 Kings 17:15.

according to the prince (kata + archon), “according to the highest ruler”.

The archon was the chief ruler of the Greek city-state. Historians do not refer to these individuals and “kings”, because this type of ruler did not obtain his position through inheritance. He took over by coup d’etat or by conquering.

This highest ruler of the world system is Satan. He is in the picture in the previous chapter and in chapter 6.

of the power (exousia), “delegated power; the ability and authority to perform an action”.

Satan is the chief ruler of all the subordinate demonic powers.

of the air (aeros), the lower or dense part of the atmosphere. In classical Greek, this word was used to refer to the dwelling place of evil spirits.

the spirit (pneuma), “breath, spirit, being”; also refers to “state of mind”.

We use the word spirit for state of mind: “He was mean-spirited. She had a kind spirit.”

In this context, spirit speaks of the state of mind that originates with Satan and is characteristic of those who are disobedient to the will of God.

This state of mind has been fostered by the “prince of the power of the air”, Satan, whose kosmos (worldly) doctrines lead people into disobedience.

that now works, pres. act. part. of (**energew**), “now operational; now working; now effective”

Satan is presently working in the world to promote his own state of mind, his own teachings and doctrines.

in the sons of disobedience (huios + apeitheia). “the sons of obstinacy.

Heb. 4:1-6. In Heb. 4:6, unbelief is **apeitheia**.

Both believers and unbelievers can be obstinate, unbelieving. In Eph. 4:17-19, Paul warns Christians that their manner of life must not

parallel that of the unbelievers in that they fail to grow in Christ and be renewed in their minds.

This obstinacy leads to ‘vanity’ or ‘futility’, an emptiness in the soul into which Satanic doctrines can penetrate. A believer influenced in this way can have a daily walk that is indistinguishable from his former manner of life before he became a Christian.

Titus 1:15,16

SEE: Notes on Titus 1:15,16.

Ephesians 2:3

Among whom also we all had our conversation in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

among who also we - reference to the environment of a person as an unbeliever. The relative pronoun “whom” refers to the “sons of disobedience”. We were all there when God’s Grace found us. We were all under the control of Satan and the Sin Nature.

Titus 3:3-7

had our conversation: (anastrephw) “formerly lived”, “manner of life in social living; the practicing of certain principles.” Hence, the pattern of behavior or conduct of the unbeliever.

Rom. 6:1-14; Col. 3:1-10; 2 Peter 1:1-9; Jer. 7:21-28; Romans 3:1-23

in the lusts of our flesh (epithumias teis sarkos), lust patterns in the sin nature.

Prov. 16:25,26

Rom. 6:12, “Let not sin reign...!” How?

Rom. 7:5ff; Rom. 8:1-7; Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 10:1-12; Gal. 5:16-26

Topic: SIN (see esp. the discussion of the Sin Nature)

fulfilling (poiew), “doing”.

The only emphasis of this verb is simple “doing.” Both KJV “fulfilling” and NAS “indulging” are attempts to add meaning to the

word. The person who is controlled by his sin nature “does” what the desires of his mind dictate.

the desires (theleima), “desires”.

People do what they want to do; but they don’t always want to absorb the consequences of their actions. The lifestyle of the sin nature is a frantic search for happiness through the details of life.

But this search leads to misery long before happiness is realized.

of the flesh (sarkos), “flesh”.

The production of the sin nature, whether moral or immoral! The sin nature produces both sin and human good. This is an important distinction. Not everyone is a wanton, dissolute unbeliever. There are many upright unbelievers who have personal integrity, good character, and high ethical standards.

But a good person is still doing what he wants to do, apart from divine guidance. It’s just that his areas of weakness are not as noticeable as some other people’s.

After salvation, a believer tends to continue in the same pattern of living, until he begins to “walk worthy of the vocation” with which he is called (Eph. 5:1).

Christian growth (edification) leads a Christian into producing “good works”, divine good.

of the mind (dianoia), a compound which means to “think through” something, to plan.

The unbeliever plans his deeds in advance, good or evil, and carries them out.

and were by nature (fisis), “natural condition; inherited endowment”.

The sin nature is inherited from Adam.

1 Cor. 11:14; Gal. 2:15; 4:8; James 3:7; 2 Pet. 1:4

the children of wrath (teknon + orgei), “those who will experience the wrath of God.”

John 3:36; Rom. 1:18; Rom. 2:5-8

even as others

Rom. 8:7,8; 1 Pet. 1:13-16; 1 Pet. 2:11,12

Ephesians 2:4

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.

But God - the contrast is between what we were like when God found us and what God is like.

who is rich “who, being rich...” “Rich” is (**plousios**), “wealthy” [English cognate: “plutocrat”]

We share through all eternity everything that God has in abundance: love, mercy, justice, holiness, will always be available to us.

Considering these things, the details of life can be enjoyed to their fullest if they are made secondary to occupation with Christ, that is if our permanent happiness is derived from the inner life. But God is able to share His happiness, His wealth, with us even when we have lost details of life. Circumstances change, but the wealth of God is unchangeable.

in mercy (eleos), “kindness, mercy”, a benefit which results from compassion.

2 Cor. 8:9; 1 Tim. 6:17; Ex. 33:19; Rom. 2:4.

for His great love “because of His great love” **wherewith He loved us (agapao)**.

God’s love for us does not depend on us.

We were not worth loving when God loved us. We were completely under Satan’s influence. We were totally obnoxious to God. Even our good works were, to say the least, unacceptable.

Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:10-18

The theological term for this condition is “Total Depravity”.

However, God loves us unequivocally. His love depends on His character, not on ours. He is an initiator of love, not a responder.

We, on the other hand, sell our love. If we don’t get immediate dividends or long term benefits from our loving, we stop giving it out. As soon as our love is unrequited, we begin to lose interest. In fact, we often turn to hatred of the

same person. We are love dispensers; put in a coin and out comes love.

From Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, “...I want to be paid at once. I want to be praised, to be paid for love with love. Otherwise, I’m quite incapable of loving.”

Because we are this way, we think that God’s love has to be purchased. We think that He will respond to us. So we try to bribe God with our love by offering Him good works.

But God loved us with maximum love even when we were His enemies; and He loves us now as His children, even while He is chastening us.

Topic: ESSENCE OF GOD

Ephesians 2:5

Even when we were dead in sins, has made us alive together with Christ (by grace ye are saved),

even when “at the time”. That is, at the time that God loved us...

we were dead (nekros), “dead”. We were totally alienated from God, totally unattractive to God, spiritually death.

READ Eph. 2:11 to the end of the chapter.

in sins (parapiptw), “sin, transgression, fault, a defection”

READ Rom. 5:6-10

has made us alive together with Christ (sudswpoiew). This is sun + zw + poiew, or, “with + life + to make”

Note: in this notation for the Greek, the “w” is used for the Greek letter omega.

Hence, “to make alive along with Christ”

1 John 5:11-13 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

for by grace - instrumental singular of (**charis**). The instrumental case indicates that the noun is the means by which an action occurs. Therefore, "by means of grace you are saved".

Topic: GRACE

you are saved - perfect passive participle of (**swdzw**), "you are brought to a place of safety; you are delivered from danger"

Note: the verb is in the passive voice, which means that the subject of the verb "you" receives the action of the verb, i.e., we do not save ourselves!

Topic: SALVATION DOCTRINES

Ephesians 2:6

And has raised up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;

and has raised up together (**sunegeirw**), "to raise up with someone".

Verse 6 is a continuation of a sentence begun in verse 4. This phrase speaks of the reality of our union with Christ.

Col. 2:9-14, "For in Him all the fullness of God dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

"and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

"having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

"And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

"having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us which was hostile to us; and He has taken

it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

READ Rom. 6:1-23

Application:

Col. 3:1-4, "If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

"Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

"For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

"When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

and made us sit together (**sunkathidzw**), "to sit together with someone".

in heavenly places

The "heavenly places" is the location of divine blessing, including all the blessings of Christian maturity

Eph. 1:3; 1:19-23

This is the locale of the Lord's success in spiritual warfare against Satan, Psalm 103:19.

Heaven is the location of the believer's position in Christ. Thus, the believer shares the victory of Christ. The result is daily victory in the believer's life. Eph. 2:6.

The "heavenly places" is the sphere of angelic activity, Eph. 3:10.

The "heavenly places" is the battlefield for spiritual warfare during the present age, Eph. 6:12 ff.

in Christ

TOPIC: Union With Christ (Positional Truth)

Ephesians 2:7

That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

There is a reason for our having been raised up to the throne of God.

that - a Greek preposition here introduces a purpose clause.

in the ages to come (en + aion + eperchomai). "In the approaching ages". This is a reference to the future, beginning now and extending into eternity.

he might show (endeiknumai), "to demonstrate, to manifest".

Believers will be part of a demonstration of God's grace throughout all eternity. This has particular consequences in the resolution of the angelic warfare, as God's fairness and grace are demonstrated to Satan and his "principalities and powers."

the exceeding (huperballw), "to throw beyond; to surpass"

This word is used as a participle modifying the word "riches". God's riches are superabundant.

riches - again, (**ploutos**), "riches". See verse 4.

of His grace - genitive of (**charis**)

in His kindness: (chreistoteis), "goodness, kindness, gentleness"

God's goodness is a combination of His grace thinking and merciful actions. Because God loves us, He shows us His goodness; but always through Jesus Christ.

toward us through Christ Jesus.

Because we are believers in Christ, we are in Christ, and we are members of His body. God judged His Son, Jesus Christ, for us. He was our substitute on the Cross. Therefore, God can be good to us without compromising His perfect justice or righteousness.

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,

for by grace

Topic: GRACE

are you saved

Victory begins here. Union with Christ guarantees that Christians are winners, permanently. We can stay in the winner's bracket because grace provided everything for us.

Topic: SALVATION DOCTRINES

through faith

The means of entering God's plan is a non-meritorious system of thinking.

Topic: FAITH

and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.

Topic: LEGALISM

Ephesians 2:9

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

not of works: not of human good.

Human works are dead to God because they come from the Sin Nature. Isa. 64:6.

It is essential for a Christian to begin "thinking Grace" as quickly as possible.

Heb. 6:1, "Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,"

lest anyone should boast, (kakaomai), "to boast". Human good promotes boasting and pride. Grace is the opposite of boasting and pride. Grace promotes humility, growth, and divine good.

Topic: PRIDE

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

for we are - (**eimi**), verb of absolute condition.

His workmanship: (poeima), "a product that is the result of labor; workmanship".

Therefore, "We are continually the result of His work."

created in Christ Jesus for good works: (ktidzw), with several meanings.

- 1. "To reduce from a state of disorder, to produce order out of chaos."
- 2. "To call into being", i.e., the new birth means we are called into God's family.
- 3. "To invest with a spiritual frame", 2 Cor. 5:17, new creatures, created in Christ Jesus.

Topic: UNION WITH CHRIST

which God has before ordained that we should walk in them

Topic: THE CHRISTIAN WALK

See also notes on Eph. 2:2,3.

There are three spheres to the believer's walk:

Walking in Faith Rest: we walk by faith, not by sight

2 Cor. 5:7

Walking in the Spirit

Gal. 5:16-18, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."

Walking by Learning Doctrine

3 John 1:3,4, "For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, {that is,} how you are walking in truth.

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."

Ephesians 2:11

Wherefore remember that you, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands -

The Gentiles are being asked to recall a situation which previously existed, that they were totally alienated from God and were held in total disdain by the Jews who were God's chosen people.

The Christian life was a great change of situation for Gentiles, and it required them to remember their former alienation from the things of God.

There was a Legal Barrier; the Jews held up the Law of Moses to Gentiles as a basis for spirituality.

There was a Moral Barrier; the Jews were highly moral (on paper), while the Gentiles had no moral code (by Jewish standards) and were regarded as lascivious.

And there was a Ceremonial Barrier: circumcision, a false barrier which had nothing to do with the inner life. There was a great haughtiness toward those who did not have "the mark." Read Romans 2 regarding the differences between legalistic circumcision and the "circumcision of the heart".

The Gentiles in local churches were being victimized by the false standards of the Jews, especially regarding ritual circumcision. The Jews were often superficial and unspiritual, speaking disparagingly of Gentiles as pagans, heathen, instead of thinking of them as people to share Christ with.

But the Greeks and Romans, themselves, were just as guilty of racism. The Greeks despised those who live outside their city-states, even other Greeks. They called them pagans (**ethnoi**).

Clashes were inevitable. There was tremendous antagonism.

But everyone comes into life with a mass of prejudices. The problem is only cured by having one's viewpoint changed by the Word of God.

Unity is one of the objects of Grace. By Grace, people can have a high regard for each other and work together productively, regardless of race or background.

READ Eph. 4:11-16

The apostle Paul did not condemn circumcision. It was, after all, a God-given sign of the covenant. But the outward sign was not matched by inward faith and obedience. Thus it was worthless, a “work of the flesh.”

There are great lessons here for Christians today. We are highly prejudiced against other people, especially those who don't think the way we do or act the way we do. "Stronger" brethren despise "weaker" brethren. But the teaching of Romans 14 is vital here. We are all "weaker" brethren in our personal areas of weakness. And we all have "strengths". But it is self-righteous and unloving to despise others' weaknesses as if we ourselves have no areas of weakness.

1 Cor. 7:17-24, "Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And thus I direct in all the churches.

Was any man called already circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

Let each man remain in that condition in which he was called.

Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.

For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

Brethren, let each man remain with God in that condition in which he was called."

Gal. 5:6, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

Gal. 6:12-18, Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh.

But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy {be} upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

Ephesians 2:12

That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

that you were at that time: (ekeino choris).

(**ekeino**) is a demonstrative pronoun used to refer to a thing previously mentioned. This is speaking of the time when the Gentiles were unsaved, outside of the Plan of God.

(**choris**) means “parted from” or “apart from”. From (**choridzw**), “to separate; to disunite”.

excluded from: nom. pl. masc. perf. pass. part. of (**apallotriow**), “to be alienated from; to be a stranger to; alien”

the commonwealth: (**politeia**): “citizenship; a community; the state of being a citizen”

The English word “commonwealth” is made up of “common” and “weal” (“good”), referring to citizens united in a community for the common good. The American states of Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia are officially known as Commonwealths.

of Israel: Gentiles were not citizens of Israel. They were, in fact ...

strangers: (**zenoi**): “foreigners; barbarians”

to the covenants: God’s promises to Abraham, Moses, David.

Almost all Gentiles were unaware of the promises of God to Israel. So they had no way of knowing the teachings or the prophecies of the Old Testament, except in cases where Jews were faithful in communicating truth to Gentiles.

having no hope: (**elpis**). Having no basis for confidence.

Topic: HOPE

and without God in the world.

This passage is one of the most dire and gloomy in Scripture in describing the plight of a person without Christ. The hopelessness and despair that unbelievers feel, when they think of the afterlife or the future, can be crushing. Thank God for the great hope and confidence which is available in Christ, as expressed in the remainder of this chapter.

Ephesians 2:13

But now, you who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

But now you who formerly were far off

This is a reference to Gentiles who are now saved by Grace. It is speaking of a time in the past when Gentiles had been on the wrong side of the Barrier between God and man, but now

because of the Father's provision of a Savior, the barrier has been removed.

Topic: BARRIER: Reconciliation, Propitiation

have been brought near: aorist passive indicative of (**ginomai**), “to be brought near.”

This means to be somewhere you have not been before. The passive voice of the verb indicates that God is the one who brings a person near to Himself.

“Far off” and “near” are in contrast. The new believer has seen the Barrier removed, so he is now able to approach God without fear.

by the blood of Christ - a representative analogy set up in the Old Testament.

Topic: BLOOD OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ removed the barrier between man and God; and he broke down the wall separating Jews and Gentiles. It was the blood of Christ that was the ransom price for redemption, Eph. 1:7.

The Jews were monotheistic, moral, and had a worship centered in legalism. The Gentiles were polytheistic, immoral, and had a worship centered in immorality. Both were brought into union with Christ at salvation. There is now no distinction.

Ephesians 2:14

For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

for he himself is our peace: this is peace in the sense of reconciliation; the removal of the barrier reconciles man to God. “He keeps on being our peace.”

It is the individual to whom God gives peace, not a group. God has no plans to bring about happiness or peace by changing people’s social status or organizational affiliation through salvation. The Lord’s plan is to give every believer happiness, joy, peace, all the fruits of the Spirit and blessing of Christian living, in the present situation.

The Peace of God is a relaxed mental attitude which does not depend on people or circumstances to maintain it.

Topic: PEACE

who made both groups into one and has broken down the barrier of the dividing wall.

The temple of the Jews had an outer court for Gentiles and an inner court for Jews. A Gentile could be killed for going any further inside than he was supposed to.

But now there is no basis for discrimination; every believer is "in Christ." While no human beings are born equal in any sense of the word, all Christians are "born again" and equal in the sense of spiritual birth.

The Christian Jew has no right to say "keep out" to the Christian Gentile.

Ephesians 2:15

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of two one new man, so making peace:

having abolished in his flesh: from (**katargeo**): "to render useless"

The thing being abolished was "the enmity". And it was Jesus Christ's own work, in His own body, on the Cross, that accomplished this. He abolished the barrier between God and man, and between man and man (Jew and Gentile). The Cross cancels the barrier. Therefore, the Cross is the only way to have peace with God.

Topic: THE BARRIER

the enmity: (**ton ekhthran**). This is the opposite of love (**philia**). To have enmity means to live in hostility to someone, to think of someone as an enemy.

Gal. 5:20; Prov. 6:19, compared with Prov. 1:23.

Between Jew and Gentile there was a "middle wall of partition", a separation set up by Jewish law but now broken down by the work of Christ.

Topic: LAW OF MOSES

Moral people are often legalistic, arrogant, and self-righteous. The first part of Romans 2 deals with this type of judgmental self-righteousness on the part of the one who points the finger of blame at an immoral person, yet "does the same things".

Self-righteousness is a product of pride and produces enmity. This is seen in the disdain and indignation that is often characteristic of this type of sinful mental attitude. The self-righteous man judges another as if he, himself, was free of sin.

However, there was a an even more formidable barrier broken down at the Cross, the enmity between God and man caused by man's sin. Christ died for us when we were His enemies.

READ James 4:4; Romans 8:7

Topic: ENEMIES, Witnessing to

The antidote to arrogance, legalism, self-righteousness, and enmity is the Word of God. When a Christian learns the Word of God, and is controlled by the Holy Spirit, there is a rapid growth in the qualities of consideration and love which are the opposite of enmity. The "fruit of the Spirit ... love, joy, peace ..." is the result of growing in Christ.

so making peace: (**eireinei**).

Peace is one of the most wonderful results of the work of Christ and Christian growth. To "make peace" is to "bring about or establish the condition of peace." There is both a figurative or spiritual peace and basic human harmony as results of God's work of peace-making.

Topic: PEACE

even the law of commandments contained in ordinances

This is a reference to the law of Moses. Jews were grievously offended by Gentiles who "had no law". There has never been a social division as sharp as that between Jews and Gentiles. Yet God found a way, through Jesus Christ, to make "both one" in Christ, to form unity out of diversity.

to make in himself of two one new man

We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10). We have become the "new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of his creator" (Col. 3:10). This is also a reference to "the new man, created in the likeness of God in righteousness." (Eph. 4:24).

A paraphrase of Ephesians 2:8-15

“No one can pride himself upon earning the love of God. The fact is that what we are we owe to the hand of God upon us. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do those good deed which God has planned for us to do.

“Do not lose sight of the fact that you were born "gentiles", known as "the uncircumcised" by those who were circumcised. You were without Christ; you were utter strangers to God's chosen community, Israel; and you had no knowledge of, or right to, the promised agreements. You had nothing to look forward to and no God to whom you could turn.

“But now, through the blood of Christ, you who were once outside the Pale are with us inside the circle of God's love in Christ Jesus. For Christ is our living peace. He has made a unity of the conflicting elements of Jew and Gentile by breaking down the barrier which lay between us. By his sacrifice he removed the hostility of the Law, with all its commandments and rules, and made in Himself out of the two, Jew and Gentile, one new man, thus producing peace.”

Ephesians 2:16

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

And that he might reconcile: (apokatallasw).
"to reconcile; to change mutually"

Dictionary: "to restore to friendship; to restore to a previous condition."

Compare Ephesians 1:10 with Colossians 1:20.

The whole universe is to form a unity which has its goal and foundation in Jesus Christ.

Reconciliation restores those who are at extreme odds. "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." (Romans 5:10)

READ 2 Cor. 5:17-21 for the process by which reconciliation takes place.

Topic: RECONCILIATION

both: in this context, one of the most important word in New Testament theology.

BOTH Jew and Gentile need reconciliation to God!

There is no room here for arrogance, class pride or envy, or any other distinction. READ Romans 3. "What then, are we better than they? God forbid, for we have before proved that they are ALL under sin."

unto God: that is, "with God".

Jew and Gentile are changed to a standard which God has set up, namely, his own perfect righteousness.

Here is the process of Reconciliation:

2 Cor. 5:18-21: And all things are of God, who has reconciled the world unto himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

That is, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

in one body

READ 1 Cor. 12:1-14.

by the Cross

The work of Christ for redemption made these things possible.

having slain the enmity thereby.

(See discussion of verse 15)

Ephesians 2:17

And came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them that were near.

The coming of Christ meant that peace could be preached to them which were far off, the Gentiles, those who had previously had "no hope" and were "without God." And peace could be preached to those "that were near", the Jews, who had the "covenants of promise" and were the people of God.

For both, this was peace with God, which both groups needed alike. And the result is that there was the opportunity for concord between the two groups as well. Through the Cross of Christ peace was made, and Christ, through His church, brings out the message of reconciliation and peace to the world.

READ Acts 20:32; 2 Cor. 5:18-20

Ephesians 2:18

For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father.

For through Him: through Jesus Christ.

By means of Christ, unity is achieved between Jew and Gentile.

we both have access: (*prosagwgei*), "the way in; the approach; the landing place".

John 10:9, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in (*prosagwgei*)..."

Rom. 5:1,2, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through out Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access (*prosagwgei*) by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

READ Heb. 10:19-22.

by one Spirit unto the Father.

Entrance into union with Christ is by means of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:13. When we are saved, we are placed into Christ permanently by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the seal, the pledge, or our inheritance, Eph. 1:13,14.

Ephesians 2:19

Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Now, therefore: Greek is "so then", or "consequently".

Those who are in Christ have experienced a profound transition from a state of enmity and strangeness to the condition of being members of the same family.

Here Paul speaks further of the change in the believer's status and position.

you are no longer: (*este ouketi*), literally, speaking of time, "no longer; never again".

The emphasis here is that there is no way to revert to a former state of being or condition.

strangers: (*zenoi*), "alien".

Jesus Christ does away with xenophobia, the fear of strangers. Strangers become family members, fellow citizens. Those who are outside are admitted to fellowship.

foreigners: (*paroikoi*), "outsiders".

In a Greek inscription, this word was used to refer to a licensed practitioner who, although he was a foreigner, was permitted to stay in the community to practice his trade.

Here, the word is used figuratively for Christians (Jews and Gentiles) who are now citizens of heaven.

but fellowcitizens with the saints: (*sumpolitai*), "members together of the same city", along with all believers in Christ.

Describing believers as citizens was an effective way to describe the position in God's kingdom that Jews and Gentiles now share equally.

and of the household of God: (oikeioi), from (oikos) = "house"

This phrase "of the household" was used literally in Greek literature to refer to family members, blood relatives. Here it speaks figuratively of members of the household of faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5:10 uses the same word (oikeioi) speaking of the "household of faith".

Topic: CITIZENSHIP OF THE BELIEVER

Topic: FELLOWSHIP, CHRISTIAN

Ephesians 2:20

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,

What follows is another view of the great doctrine of Edification. Those whose faith is in Christ are like an edifice that is being built, the cornerstone and foundation having already been laid in place.

and are built: (epakodomeithentes), "built on something"

The verb is aorist passive participle, indicating that the subject, "you" of verse 19, receives the action of the built. That is, we do not build ourselves; rather, we are built by God.

The building process is described in Ephesians 4:11-16.

READ Ephesians 4:11-16.

Note the process:

- 1. The Lord Jesus Christ provided spiritual gifts of communication to the church, 4:11
- 2. The purpose of communication is (a) to bring "perfect" the saints so that the "work of the ministry" can be accomplished; (b) to edify the body of Christ; (c) to bring all believers into "unity of the faith"; and (d) to bring believers into maturity, a maturity which is measured by "the stature of the fullness of Christ."

- 3. The result of the edification of verse 12 is that Christians, who are becoming wise with godly wisdom, are no longer easily deceived by false doctrine, but
- 4. Mature Christians know and speak the truth from a spiritual framework of love, and continue to grow in Christ, who is the Head of the body.
- 5. The end result is a mature church, a body that functions together in concert and harmony, because every part is mature and working, and makes "increase of the body, edifying itself in the sphere of love."

There will never be a mature church without edified believers. And a believer cannot be edified apart from learning the word of God under the teaching and control of the Holy Spirit.

There are many Christian dabblers, religious buffs who like to hang around the edges of the Christian scene, or perhaps even "participate" to the full, but who are not daily involved in this edification process.

An understanding of the doctrines of the Word of God, and how they apply to every problem that comes up, or any decision that has to be made, is a prerequisite to real progress in the Christian life.

Topic: EDIFICATION

on the foundation: (themekiw), "a foundation"

A foundation is indispensable for any building.

apostles and prophets: the communicators who did the teaching.

Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: (akrogwniaiou), "the high stone"

Jesus Christ is simply the "cornerstone". There is only one cornerstone, or capstone, in a building.

Ephesians 2:21

In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto a holy temple in the Lord;

In whom all the building

Another reference to Union with Christ, positional truth. All activity in the Christian life is "in Christ".

All the building" refers to the edifice, the result of God's construction.

1 Cor. 3:9, "For we are laborers together with God; you are God's vineyard, you are God's building."

fitly framed together: (sunarmologoumeni): "joined together"

This word is also used in Eph. 4:16.

It is absolutely vital that you understand how the Lord brings Christians along in the Christian life and causes them to grow in "the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ". You can't grow in Christ by osmosis, or by putting your Bible under your pillow and learning in your sleep. There is a building process by which God uses His word to change us from naive babes in Christ into mature, productive witnesses and warriors for the faith.

grows into a holy temple in the Lord: "increases".

Notice in Eph. 4:11-16 how the Body of Christ grows.

John the Baptist said "He must increase; I must decrease." (John 3:30). First, Christ increases, then He causes us to increase.

What is being built here is a Church, a "holy temple", the temple of temples, the body of Christ. Of Christ and "in Christ".

Ephesians 2:22

In whom also you are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

In whom also you are build together

We are being edified, built, for a great purpose: to be a habitation of God through Spirit. This phrase refers to various parts of a structure being brought together in a building. We are "built together" and we continue to be "built together".

What is our purpose in life?

Eph. 5:25-27, "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

It is God's plan for every Christian to be part of this process.

for an habitation of God: a dwelling place.

What do you make of the idea that you are God's dwelling place? Does that change your attitude toward your daily activities? Does this concept change your life goals?

If you think of yourself as God's dwelling place, does that help you make decision when you are tempted to sin, to dishonor God?

Remember from Titus 2, we are to live so as (1) not to cause the Word of God to be slandered; (2) not to give the enemies of the gospel any evil thing to say about us; and (3) to "adorn", decorate, the gospel of our Lord and Savior.

Ephesians, Chapter 3**Ephesians 3:1**

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

Notice that this thought is interrupted by verses 2 to 13. That is, verse 14 is a continuation of verse 1, with verses 2 to 13 in parentheses.

Paul is saying that because of the previous statements, he has cause to bow his knees in prayer for the Gentiles. We will deal with those verses when we come to them, but it is good to notice again the actual substance of Paul's prayer for his Christian friends.

So he begins this section with the intention of praying, but he pauses to write about two other subjects: the "mystery", and the "ministry".

Paul always prays that Christians will grow in Christ. He seldom prays for the details of life. He understands, and certainly the Holy Spirit understands, that the most important feature of the Christian life is to be occupied with Christ and to absorb the doctrines of the Word of God, under the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

In this verse, Paul refers to his status as a prisoner - he wrote this epistle when he was incarcerated in Rome.

Ephesians 3:2

If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me toward you:

"**If you have heard**" - this is one of the most important phrases in the Christian life. A believer must hear the Word of God in order to perform any function in the Christian life, including worship and service to Christ.

Worship is the ability to hear and think about God's Word while under the control of the Holy Spirit.

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

When you stop concentrating on the Word, you stop worshipping. Worship demands concentration, learning, understanding. Your ability to worship depends on what you understand about God, about Christ, and about the Holy Spirit. It depends on how well you understand God's plan for your life and how you are to function as a believer.

Worship includes singing, giving, praising, teaching, and other activities. Worship can be accomplished privately, alone with oneself, or with a group of other Christians. But it all depends on the content!

"of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me toward you."

God gave to Paul the knowledge of His grace so that Paul could communicate it to people. Paul is

saying, "If you have heard and understood the basic features of the grace of God that I have communicated to you before, you will be able to understand which I am about to describe."

Topic: GRACE

Ephesians 3:3

How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery: (as I wrote before in a few words,

"**by revelation he made known unto me**" - the Lord communicated His thinking directly to Paul. The first instance was during his desert experience shortly after his conversion. The second was during his writing of the inspired epistles, during which the Holy Spirit was involved in communicating the "mind of Christ" so that Paul could communicate divine viewpoint accurately.

"the mystery"

The word "mystery" in the New Testament refers to the doctrine which is specific for the Church Age. It is called "the mystery" because these things were never revealed in Old Testament scriptures.

Paul states in Rom 16:25-26, Col 1:25-26 and in this passage that this mystery is now revealed. Especially in this passage, he points out that there is no excuse for ignorance.

If the Ephesians appreciated the way that special knowledge of the plan of God had been given to him, and the particular work of communication that God had entrusted to him (see Eph. 3:7-12), they would agree that "by revelation" God had made known to Paul "the mystery".

"As I wrote afore in few words."

Or, "I have already written a brief account of this."

He refers to what he had already written earlier in the letter, namely that the Gentiles and the Jews were to be included in one Body and in the household of God.

Some expositors suggest that this phrase refers to another non-inspired epistle which Paul wrote

to the Ephesians, a document which has been lost. I am inclined to the conclusion in the previous paragraph, however.

Ephesians 3:4

By which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.

"By which, when you read, you may understand"

Christians must have the ability to understand. And understanding comes from "reading", that is through edification, the building up of the Christian life "line upon line; precept upon precept". This is the only way a believer can become occupied with Christ, be spiritually self-sustaining, and can have the productivity associated with Christian maturity.

The Holy Spirit indwells a Christian for the purpose of teaching, among other things. "And I will send another Comforter, and He shall teach you all things", Christ said.

A newborn Christian, a "babe" in Christ, has minimum ability to understand principles of Bible doctrine. If the novice Christian does not receive a lot of Bible truth from some source, preferably face-to-face with a strong pastor-teacher, he will not grow in his understanding. He will be spiritual malnourished; and he will exhibit all of the symptoms of lack of feeding, though he have been a Christian for many years.

Nothing is more sad than to see a grownup with the mind of a child. Yet we understand that many people are challenged this way through no fault of their own. How much more distressing to see in an older Christian, one who has been saved many years, who does not have the "mind of Christ", but the mind of a babe.

A Christian can have a life of purpose, inner peace, a relaxed mental attitude, great inner happiness (joy), and can be very stable, but it only comes through the Word of God - "understanding".

Hebrews 5:12-14

"For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food.

"For everyone that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

"But solid food belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Topic: EDIFICATION

A brief synopsis of 2 Timothy 2:1,2:

"You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Paul speaks to Timothy as his spiritual "son". Timothy was in Paul's traveling seminary for several years, and he was now a pastor himself, but a man who still needs instruction.

The phrase "be strong" is in the passive voice in Greek, indicating that Timothy is to "receive strength". No Christian has inner strength to perform in the Christian life. Spiritual strength come only from God. We are weak in all the areas of doctrine and teaching, especially when it comes to Grace.

Note in 2:2 that Timothy is being given specific instructions as to how to disciple people in the congregation.

He is not advised to set up action groups, to create social situations, to promote sharing and fellowship.

He is told to TEACH. He is to teach the same doctrines that he has learned from Paul, from his mother and grandmother, from others. Whatever other activities might occur in his church, TEACHING has the top priority and cannot be interrupted.

Timothy is commanded to COMMIT Bible teaching to other men, to "deposit" the Word in the entire congregation. Some of the people in his congregation will take the bit in the teeth and move out into their own teaching ministries. Some of these faithful people will have wonderfully productive lives of their own, based on the good teaching that Timothy has provided.

And note that Timothy's teaching must be such that his students, in turn, will be able to teach themselves. This implies a much more intensive level of teaching that simply giving out the facts and hoping that people catch on. He must TRAIN people to be teachers.

"my knowledge in the mystery of Christ"

(See the discussion in Verse 3 regarding "mystery")

Ephesians 3:5

Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

"in other ages"

This is another reference to the fact that many features of the Christian life, known as "mystery" doctrines, were not made known to people prior to the beginning of the New Testament church.

But now, God is making additional revelation available through the communicators of the inspired Scriptures.

Topic: INSPIRATION

Ephesians 3:6

That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

Topic: INHERITANCE, THE CHRISTIAN'S

Topic: THE GOSPEL

Ephesians 3:7

Of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

"Of which I was made" - aorist passive indicative of (ginomai)

Paul became something that he was not before, namely, a "minister".

"a minister" - (diakonos), "minister; server; deacon"

The word (diakonos) is transliterated in the English into "deacon". However, the apostle Paul did not become a church deacon. He became one who "ministers", and the type and extent of his ministry is explained in the succeeding verses, in words such as "to make all men see". Paul lived and worked in the "service" of Christ.

The word "minister" is used several ways in Scripture.

- • Those in authority in a national entity are ministers, such as judges. Romans 13:4.
- • Every believer is a minister: 2 Cor. 3:6; 4:1; 6:4
- • The pastor of a local church is a minister: Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:23; 4:7

The context of the word determines which of the above is intended.

How a Person Becomes a Pastor

A pastor receives a spiritual gift of pastor-teacher by which he is divinely enabled to perform the pastoral function (Eph. 4:11,12). No human merit is involved; Christians receive their spiritual gifts at salvation, in most cases long before they have even heard of spiritual gifts, let alone determined which they have.

This eliminates many other reasons people give for going into the ministry, such as: "I'm a preacher because my mother prayed"; "...because I was a missionary"; "...because I felt led..." Spiritual gifts of all kinds are strictly

Grace provisions. No one earns or deserves the calling.

A pastor must himself be spiritually self-sustaining. This means that several years of Bible study are necessary, leading to the knowledge of the plan of God, the exercise of that plan, and personal spiritual productivity. At that point there will be a recognition of a gift, followed by a spiritual decision.

This period of preparation is common to all Christians. All Christians are in full time Christian service and are expected to use their spiritual gifts intelligently.

Once a man has decided to become a pastor, he must enter into a period of intense specialized preparation. This may take anywhere from four to ten years. He will study biblical languages, theology, exegesis and hermeneutics, history, biblical psychology, and many other subjects.

The individual then enters into his life's work of service to others, which is terminated only at death or at the 2nd Coming of Christ.

General passages which deal with the ministry are:

Col. 1:23-29; 1 Tim. 1:12-14; 2:24-26; 3:1-9; 2 Tim 2 (all); Titus 1:6-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-4

In general, it is the responsibility of a minister to teach Bible truth so that Christians can become edified, stable, and self-sustaining, and spiritually productive.

In all of the above passages of the New Testament, and in many others, the teaching ministry is seen to be by far the most important activity in a local church, and the most important responsibility of those who teach. That is, whatever other activities the minister is involved in, his teaching must have utmost priority in his time and effort.

How much teaching is enough teaching in a local church? Well, there is almost no limit to what hungry sheep can consume! I am acquainted with pastors who spend 60 hours or more per week preparing and teaching, holding four to six, or more, classes per week for their congregations. In churches like this, the pastors

are not a public relations men, politicians, back slappers, or promoters. They are "feeders" of the flock. They are "ministers" in the true sense of the word in this verse.

A pastor is a shepherd. A good shepherd puts the needs of the sheep first, and has an abiding sense of obligation toward them. One who does not know how to care for sheep, or who neglects sheep, is not a good shepherd.

A good shepherd leads sheep to good pasture and water. A person who does not provide food and water for sheep is not a good shepherd.

A good shepherd protects the sheep and sets up defenses against those who would harm the sheep. An individual who deliberately harms or frightens sheep is not a good shepherd.

I urge you to study carefully the following topic.

Topic: SHEPHERDS OF THE FLOCK OF GOD

"according to the gift of grace"

There is no merit involved in Paul's becoming a minister. He has done nothing to earn or deserve any special treatment from the Lord. In fact, he knows that he is "chief of sinners".

If a minister is successful, it is because of who and what God is, not who and what he is.

"given unto me by the effectual working of His power."

The operating power for the ministry comes from the very omnipotence of God Himself!

This verse takes the ministry out of the scope of the pastor's personality. He may be scintillating and charismatic; or he may be an awful dullard. He may or may not be smooth, suave, a social butterfly, smiling, likeable. He is a shepherd-teacher in the hand of God.

Ephesians 3:8

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Verses 8 to 10 deal with the function of Paul's ministry.

Verse 8 involves teaching to the Gentiles, new believers who are not versed in either in Old Testament scriptures or the New Testament "mysteries".

Verse 9 teaches about the new era that is now opening up in Jesus Christ.

Verse 10 refers to the teaching of truth to angels.

"Unto me, who am the least of all saints, is this grace given"

Paul refers to his gift of teaching. He emphasizes that he is the product of God's grace, and he fully understands that, of all people, he is one of the least worthy to receive anything good from the Father.

1 Cor. 15:10, "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

A believer's happiness, stability, function, and productivity all depend on grace. The Christian ministry does not require efficiency experts, public relations, super organizers, or some kind of super church machinery to operate effectively.

The word "given" shows that the ability to minister is not earned, it is not won - it is received!

"that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ"

Paul regards this as the highest possible calling.

Only one life,

'Twill soon be past.

Only what's done

for Christ will last.

1 Tim. 1:11-16

"According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

"And I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has enabled me, in that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.

"Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

"And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

"Nevertheless, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

Ephesians 3:9

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

There are some difficulties with the text in this verse. The word "fellowship" in some Greek manuscripts comes from the word (koinonia), "fellowship". However, the weight of textual evidence seems to show that (oikonomia), "dispensation", is used here. And because the context of this verse is certainly referring to historical ideas, we have here the meaning of God's "plan" or "purpose". Therefore, Paul is expressing the fact that his work is to show God's purpose in Christ, including particularly an explanation of the "mystery", the doctrines which have been "hidden" until this time.

The Word of God counterbalances all interpretations of history. The Bible not only contains historical facts, but it also gives, by means of doctrine, the correct interpretation of history. That is, the divine plan moves through history unhindered, in spite of human activity,

even in spite of Satan's efforts to upset the plan of God.

A person who does not understand the Bible categorically is a dupe for any political, philosophical, or historical stupidity that comes along. The novice Christian is a child, "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14).

The responsibility of the pastor (teacher) is to teach all points of doctrine and to use the Bible to interpret history, to show how mankind operates, and to provide insight into the realm of Satanic influence.

Ephesians 3:10

To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.

Compare this passage with Ephesians 4:11-16. Note that here the church (we believers) is expected to somehow make the wisdom of God known to heavenly "principalities and powers", which is a reference to demons and leadership among the fallen angels.

"principalities" is the Greek word (archon), referring to one of the highest rulers.

This word first shows up in the Attic Greek (Athens) in the days of the Athenian democracy. The Archon was the president or preeminent decision maker in Athens. The number two man was called (bassilius archon), or "king-ruler". The third man was called (polymark), a military ruler. The following six leaders in Athens were the (thesmoteitai) or "legislators". Even though there was democracy, there was no anarchy in Athens because these leaders kept things under control.

The Satanic organization has a number of supreme rulers; how many is not known.

"powers" ... from (eksousias), "commissioned officers"; therefore, a secondary group of demon rulers.

Satan has a special force of high ranking demons to make attacks against prominent officials and heads of nations.

In Daniel 10:13f, the term "prince of Persia" refers to a fallen angel, a demon, who was busy attacking the ruler of Persia. Gabriel was delayed in bringing a message to Daniel because he was in conflict with this kosmokrator demon. The archangel Michael came to help and released Gabriel to come to Daniel.

In Dan. 10:20, the "prince of Grecia" is mentioned, referring to the demon in charge of mounting attacks against the ruler of Greece who was Alexander the Great at that time.

The principle is that Satan will vigorously attack any nation which protects the divine institutions, allows personal freedom to its citizens, and protects the nation against immorality. In nations like that there is evangelism and missionary activity, so demon activity will be stepped up with respect to those countries.

In addition, all Christian believers are placed under direct attack in the world system, with particularly heavy attacks against those who are advancing in the Christian way of life.

And it is in this battle arena of spiritual conflict that a Christian is supposed to function and succeed! No wonder Paul is so careful to teach continually about the power of God and the grace of God being the key to a believer's function.

The Church, the Body of Christ, teaches God's wisdom, His plan, His perfection, by being His exhibit to heavenly beings of the work of Jesus Christ in lowly humans.

And the "minister", the pastor, the teacher, the shepherd, has the all-important function of communicating the information to Christians.

Topic: BIBLE TEACHING, IMPORTANCE OF

Ephesians 3:11

According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In these verses is one of the Bible's great statements of the Plan of God for every person. We are part of an eternal, comprehensive program which God is accomplishing by means of Jesus Christ.

The Lord wants every individual to accept Christ as Savior.

The Lord's desire is that every Christian believer grows in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, by means of the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

God the Father intends to use growing Christians to demonstrate His Grace to the whole cosmos, including even angelic forces of darkness.

The body of Christ (the church) is a university. Christians are the professors (pun intended). Angels are the students. The curriculum is the "wisdom of God."

"According to the eternal purpose" - (prothesin ton aionon), "the purpose of all the ages."

This verse continues the statement of verses 9 and 10. It brings missionary activity into the perspective of the overall plan of God. This phrase is used to emphasize the long-term historical overview, the far-reaching plan of God that involves both men and angels. And is very encouraging for Christians to realize that the Plan of God is so comprehensive. And God's program is centered in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 2:13,14

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

READ Luke 15:3-10, Joy in heaven over one sinner that repents!

The elect angels rejoice with every convert. It is far more important to win the one lost sinner than to win a theological argument with 99 self-righteous people who are negative to the Word of God.

Elect angels are in constant battle with demon forces; so they rejoice with every battle won, on earth or in heaven.

READ Daniel 10:10-14. Compare "prince of Persia" with "Michael, one of the chief princes...".

This is God's historical perspective. We see in years, or at best, centuries. God the Father has an eternal outlook, an eternal plan. Passages like this give a sense of direction, a focus.

When Christians first begins learning Bible truth, they often have a very self-centered approach. "How does this doctrine affect ME?" The doctrines of union with Christ, inheritance (Oh, goody!), redemption, edification, are absorbed with the attention focused inwardly. This is not wrong; a person must be informed and stabilized before any ministry can begin.

However, edification causes the vision to widen considerably as a Christian grows. The purpose of Christian growth is to enlarge the vision so that it includes others, so that the larger picture is seen, so that the overall plan of God is recognized, as well as one's place in that plan.

Homework: read the book of Ephesians as though you were the missionary, as though you were the one responsible not only for evangelism and edification but also for being part of the church's witness to angels.

This passage gives us insight into affairs beyond our own noses. It is a passage of production, of outreach, of evangelism, of an eternal viewpoint.

"which he purposed" - (poiew), "which He made, constructed, created, prepared, executed"

In this context, (poiew) carries more meaning that the word "purposed". To "purpose" is to have a will to do something. This word refers to actually accomplishing something. God the Father has actually carried out, and He is now accomplishing, His plan.

"in Christ Jesus our Lord"

Jesus Christ is the seat and power of the whole Plan. He is the Victor in the spiritual warfare. And recall, we are seated with Him in heavenly

places; that is, we have a position in Christ which is the position of ultimate victory. Eph. 2:5,6.

READ Rev. 5:9,10; 12:7-12

Ephesians 3:12

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

"In whom" - in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everything that happens in the Plan of God and in the Christian life occurs "in Christ". It is vital to understand the principles of Union with Christ thoroughly.

Topic: Union with Christ (File - Eph02d)

"we have" - present indicative of (echw), "we continually have", "we possess", "we have power over (something)".

This word was used in Greek as "to grip", as in a wrestler's hold.

"boldness" - (parreisia). In Greek this is (para) + (reisis). (reisis) is "speech". Hence, "freedom of speech".

Acts 4:13, "Now when they saw the boldness (parreisia) of Peter and John ..."

The boldness of Peter and John was in their speech.

READ John 7:10-13,26 referring to making open speech.

Acts 2:29, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak (parreisia) unto you of the patriarch David."

The knowledge of God's plan, plus the power of Christ, gives people the courage to speak out, "boldness".

It is one thing to have knowledge of doctrine, of theology. But it is major progress in a Christian's life when that edification produces the willingness and courage to witness for Christ.

"and access" - (prosagwgei), "admission into someone's presence"

This expression refers to someone who is an "insider", someone who knows the mysteries,

someone who is a "member" or "initiate". We Christians are permanently in the Plan of God, therefore we have "access".

"with confidence" - (pepoitheisis).

This word comes from the perfect past participle of (peithw), "to persuade, to convince." It refers to the past process of being completely persuaded with the result that one has confidence, conviction, trust.

2 Cor 1:12-15

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly toward you.

"For we write none other things unto you, that what you read or acknowledge; and I trust you shall acknowledge even to the end;

"As also you have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as you also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

"And in this confidence (pepoitheisis) I was minded to come unto you before, that you might have a second benefit;"

Note that here Paul views the Corinthians as in the permanent Plan of God, "ours in the day of the Lord Jesus," and has confidence based on knowledge of God's eternal plan and a vision of the invisible day of the Lord.

"by the faith of Him" - literally, "through faith in Him"

Faith is the means of access into Grace. Union with Christ depends upon a person's faith in Jesus Christ and His substitutionary atonement on the Cross.

It is this confidence which allows Paul to encourage the Ephesians (in verse 13) not to "faint" at the trials he is going through, because he is enduring them with supreme confidence.

Ephesians 3:13

Wherefore I desire that you faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

There was no need for the Ephesians to be upset at what Paul was going through (his imprisonment). He had a powerful source of strength.

"wherefore" - "for this reason", "on this account"

Paul keeps us thinking about the source of courage and boldness and our nearness to God ("access"). He explains how he is strengthened, and he passes this confidence along to his readers.

Confidence breeds confidence. A leader can draw attention to the big picture and, especially when times are tough, give his subordinates confidence in the outcome.

"I desire" - present middle indicative of (aitew), "I request", "I ask", even "I demand"

Paul does not flail people with his authority, but he does expect volitional action!

"that ye faint not" - from (egkakew), "to lose spirit; to be faint-hearted or fearful; to be despondent".

There is always every reason to be encouraged in the Christian life.

- We have eternal life.
- We are in union with the Lord Jesus Christ
- We share in Christ's victory over Satan and his forces.
- We have "all blessings in heavenly places in Christ"

So this passage says, "Get your mind up out of your soul's center; stop being introspective; look up! See what God is doing! See how you fit in to His plan!"

READ Rev. 2:1-3

READ especially 2 Cor. 4:1-18

READ Gal. 6:7-10; Isa. 40:29-31; 41:10-13

Topic: DEPRESSION

"at my tribulations for you"

The Ephesians Christians may have had an extra burden because Paul had been arrested the second time in Ephesus, and he was transported from there to his second imprisonment.

"which is your glory"

Paul himself rejoiced in his trials, so he wanted to give the Ephesians a perspective on suffering. The better they understood this, the less they would give way to weakness and discouragement ... hence, the greater would be their reputation (testimony) as unto the Lord.

Topic: SUFFERING**Ephesians 3:11,12**

According to the purpose of all ages which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In whom we possess the boldness to speak out and perfect confidence through faith in Him.

Ephesians 3:14

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This verse takes up where verse 1 left off in mid-paragraph. Verses 2 through 13 have been parenthetical. Notice that the phrase "for this cause" occurs both in verse 1 and here. Both phrases refer back to the conclusions of chapter 2.

- The Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens and members of the household of God.
- The whole building (all believers) is built on the foundation of the apostles, with Jesus Christ being the key stone.
- The whole body grows into a holy temple, with the individual Christians who make up the body being built together for a habitation of God, through the Holy Spirit.

Paul's prayer of verses 14 to 19, therefore, is based on these facts and proceeds from these facts. In chapter 2 he lays out the position and condition of Christians, who by the grace of God, have been brought into a position as members of the Father's royal family. In chapter 3, Paul's prayer is that the logical and spiritual next step will be taken, namely that members of the royal family will take advantage of their new position and grow mightily in Christ.

"I bow my knees" - this is another of Paul's great, fervent prayers that believers learn, apply and prosper from the Word of God. Read again his prayer in Eph. 1:17-21. The Apostle wants the best for his beloved friends in Asia. He knows the value of concentrating on the strengthening of the "inner man."

The great need of any Christian is stability, and the wisdom that comes from knowing God's viewpoint on every issue.

When a Christian is "rooted and grounded", he will be stable, supported, and nourished as a believer.

When a Christian is able "to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height" and knows "the love of Christ, which passes knowledge", he has the ability to make sound decisions and to solve the problems of everyday life, using the very wisdom of the Creator.

Why does the Apostle Paul pray?

Read all of Paul's prayers in his epistles. Note that he almost never prays for the details of life for his friends. In particular, in his prayers in Ephesians, he does not pray for the health of his friends, that they will get jobs, that their finances will be improved, that their relationships will be straightened out, that they will be safe from harm,

These things are details of life - those things which, by definition, are associated with our physical life on this earth - things like money, relationships, family, health, sex, jobs, social life and position, promotion.

Paul prays that Christians will be so grounded in the Word of God, regardless of the ups and downs of life, whether poor or rich, whether in good health or bad, whether in safety or in jeopardy, whether alone or surrounded by adoring friends, that they will know the will of God, that will be models of stable and courageous thinking, that they will be filled with the fullness of God, knowing the lord of God which passes knowledge.

Application

When we pray, we should give top priority to the known will of God. We are told in the Bible if we pray according to His will, He hears us.

But we usually don't know the will of God concerning details of life. When we pray for someone's health, we don't know if the Lord wants the person to be well, or whether He is providing a spiritual test to the individual. Likewise for any other type of personal suffering, such as job loss or family problem.

Personal suffering is a very real and necessary part of the Christian life and is always meant "to work together for good for those who love God." If we pray that the suffering be relieved, we are often praying at cross purposes with God's plan for the individual. We want our friends to be happy and free of pain, but, in fact, it is not the relief of suffering that brings joy and confidence to the Christian.

Topic: PRAYER

Topic: CHRISTIAN SUFFERING

When we are suffering, God's purpose for us is that we walk in the Spirit, stay occupied with Christ, live in His Word, grow in Christ, and live productive Christian lives with "eternity's values in view." So when we pray for others who are suffering or who have need, we should keep God's eternal program in mind. The most important issues are the spiritual ones; and we should give priority in our thinking, and in our actual prayer, to the issues the Scripture shows to be the most important.

If you are in charge of a prayer meeting, try conducting it from this perspective. Remind

those who pray of Paul's focus in prayer, and of the overriding spiritual issues in people's lives that are so much more important than the details of life. Your prayer request time will change from mournful litany of people's hard times to an encouraging and joyous discussion of the eternal possibilities which accompany mastery of the details of life.

Ephesians 3:15

Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

We are members of a family, the family of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ is "King of kings, Lord of lords, the Bright Morning Star," His family is a royal family. In fact, we are "seated together with Him in the heavenly places" right now (Eph. 2:6), so that our union with Christ gives us a wonderful position as intimate members of Christ's family, the church, the Body of Christ.

Rev 19:16, "He has a royal title written on His robe, 'King of kings and Lord of lords.'"

It is because a Christian has permanent position of solid authority as a member of the royal family of Jesus Christ that Paul can speak so confidently in these verses of the value and absolute necessity that believers be thoroughly rooted in the principles of the Christian life.

At His birth, our Lord was born Jewish royalty, in His humanity. The virgin birth introduced the humanity of Christ into the world, at which point Jesus Christ became Jewish royalty. He is descended from lines of two of the sons of David by Bathsheba.

While Joseph was not the physical father of Jesus, he is the legal father in a human family; and the line of royal descent from Solomon ends with Joseph, as shown in Matthew. The line of royal descent from Nathan, given in Luke, comes down to Mary, our Lord's real mother.

Jesus' royal title is "Son of David," and His royal family is the dynasty of David. As Jewish royalty, our Lord will fulfill the Davidic covenant at the time of His second coming.

The royal family of God, therefore, is made up of every believer, regardless of background, race, classification, etc. All distinctions are erased at the point of salvation and reconciliation.

This is a permanent family relationship that will last forever. Our position is eternal and secure since it is related to our regeneration. This means also all believers are in full time service for Christ as royal priests and royal ambassadors.

Our objectives as members of Christ's family are to glorify God. We do this by:

Advancing in spiritual maturity, according to the plan of God.

Receiving the blessings which have been laid up in escrow for us (Eph. 1:3)

To pass tests of faith as evidence of our growth and progress in the Christian life.

To receive the blessings which are waiting for us in heaven, in eternity.

All these are summed up in the phrase "to glorify God." All the other priorities in life are really not important.

These facts, too, influence where Paul places his emphasis in his prayers.

1 Pet 2:9, "But you are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

As an exercise, read Ephesians, Hebrews, Romans, and Colossians with the aim of extracting any comment which deals with your position as a member of the Lord's family.

Ephesians emphasizes the position of the royal family. Hebrews emphasizes the priesthood of the royal family. Romans emphasizes the objectives of the royal family. Colossians emphasizes the lifestyle of the royal family.

The Plan of God for Members of His Royal Family

The first objective for a Christian is to learn the Word of God on a consistent basis until he begins to have a personal love for God. This develops spiritual self-worth and focus.

Next, the believer must continue to grow spiritually by learning and applying Bible truth, until he is spiritually self-sustaining, and has developed impersonal love for other people.

Then, a Christian must pass through testing: people testing, thought testing, system testing, and disaster testing.

Finally a Christian must reach spiritual maturity, where through testing of the evidence of his faith he becomes a witness against Satan.

At maturity, we receive our blessings which were deposited in escrow in Christ in eternity past (Eph 1:3-14). These blessings glorify God to the maximum. Then God may test us concerning these blessings as evidence against Satan. This is the objective of the royal family while on earth.

Topic: CITIZENSHIP OF THE BELIEVER

Ephesians 3:16

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

"**That He would grant you**" - aorist subjunctive active of (didomi), "to give; to grant; to permit; to present."

"**Grant**" is a New Testament Grace word. That for which Paul is praying is available on a grace basis. However, the subjunctive mood of the verb indicates that there is potential here. Whether a Christian receives the benefit of the "grant" depends on personal volition. Paul prays that Christians will take advantage of that which God has provided. Verses 17 to 19 list the provisions of this grace gift: inner strength, Christ dwelling within, grounding in love, comprehension of the whole realm of Bible truth, knowledge of the love of Christ, and being filled with the fullness of God.

The Lord never provides anything that is not equally available to all people. Salvation, inner

strength and growth, great happiness and productivity are available to anyone, regardless of education or situation in life.

"according to the riches of His glory"

The unbeliever can only personally experience grace in salvation. He has little knowledge of God and no appreciation for the character and person of God or the Lord Jesus.

Paul the Apostle knows the source of true riches; and he directs us to that source. The believer learns to know God in His complete character (breadth, length, depth, height), His "glory".

Topic: GLORY

"**to be strengthened**" - from the Greek, the passive infinitive of (krataiow), "to have an inner ruling power."

The passive voices of the verb indicates that a Christian "receives strength". Since this is by grace, it is on a non-meritorious basis. The infinitive indicates that this is God's purpose for every believer.

"**with might**" - (dunamis), "inner power".

"**by the Spirit**" - "by means of the Holy Spirit"

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to teach us spiritual truth, to make spiritual things understandable. The filling and control of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for this to take place. The Spirit is the agent of perception and understanding.

"**in the inner man**" - in the human spirit, in the mentality, in the thinking apparatus of the soul.

READ 2 Peter 3:18:

We are commanded to "grow" in grace, and to keep on growing. There are roots to that which grows; then that which is above ground produces fruit. Christian edification is that which is above ground. We must make positive decisions to be filled with the Spirit (by confessing sin); to expose ourselves daily to Bible teaching; and to believe the doctrine, by faith applying the teaching in our minds.

But the command to grow is accompanied by God's giving us the ability to perform the

command. We grow in grace and in knowledge. Our part is receiving the academic instruction of Bible truth. God's part, through the Holy Spirit as our Teacher, is to establish the roots and bring about growth.

Topic: EDIFICATION

Ephesians 3:17

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Verses 17 to 19 continue to state Paul's purpose for his fervent prayer for his beloved friends in Ephesus. He agonizes over his great desire that believers steadfastly pursue that which builds them up in faith, the Word of God, taught by the Holy Spirit, and lodged in the hearts of believers.

Christ "dwelling in your hearts", or "Christ at home in your hearts" is a reference to edification, to the "roots" which are the foundation of a growing Christian's life. "Heart" is from the Greek word KARDIA which is always used in the Bible to refer to the inner life, the life of the soul.

Christ is the Word of God (John 1), so "Christ in the heart" is equivalent to "the Word in the life."

Your mentality is part of your soul. You do your thinking in your soul. You also do your deciding (volition) and your appreciating (emotion) in your soul. The Sin Nature is also part of your inner life, so there is always negative motivation present - you will be tempted to make the wrong decisions and to commit sin.

The most important weapon in combating sin, in having victory over personal sin, is the Word of God locked (rooted) in the soul. By faith we understand the Word; by faith we believe it; by faith we accept it. Christian growth is the process of learning and applying the Word of God so that a system of divine standards is built up in the soul. God's "wisdom and prudence", with their continuous influence in our decision making and our problem solving, are the tools with which we function in the Christian life.

Topic: EDIFICATION

Topic: MENTAL ATTITUDE

"by faith"

Belief in Christ is required. Belief in the Word of God is required. The process is as follows:

God the Father provided the written revelation of His thinking. "We have the mind of Christ."

Communicators (pastors, teachers) teach the Word for the purpose of bringing us to maturity (Ephesians 4:11 to 16). The local church is the principal environment for learning doctrine and growing in grace. In some manner, truth must be communicated from the Bible to the mind.

The Holy Spirit dwells in us. When we are filled with the Spirit (spiritual), the Spirit teaches us and brings us to understanding of those things which are "spiritually discerned." This understanding is GNOSIS, knowledge in the mind of the soul. However, further decisions are required for application.

Once a principle of Scripture is understood, a believer has a choice, whether to adopt the teaching, believe the teaching, obey the teaching - in short, "faith" is required. Faith, in effect, causes the transfer of truth from the mind to the "heart". Head knowledge becomes heart knowledge through the exercise of faith.

Once an unbeliever understands the gospel, he must make a choice. Faith in the gospel brings about regeneration and all that is associated with it.

When a Christian understands a Bible principle, a choice must be made. Faith in a promise brings about claiming the promise. Faith in a command brings about obedience to the command.

It is absolutely vital that you always stay positive to Bible truth. But here is where the spiritual tragedies occur. Believers who have heard Bible teaching, and understand it through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, fail to utilize the doctrine by appropriating it by faith.

The "roots" of doctrine in the "heart" become part of the foundation and building that is growing in the believer's soul (EPIGNOSIS).

The "edifice" is in the process of construction. And a Biblical frame of reference is formed in which Bible truth becomes the basis for understanding deeper truth. Bible principles are stored in the heart to make a Christian ready for any contingency which requires godly decision making or problem solving.

"that ye being rooted and grounded"

"Rooted" is the perfect passive participle of RIZOW, "to take root."

"Grounded" is the perfect passive participle of THEMELIOW, "to lay a foundation."

The perfect tense points to that teaching which resides permanently in the soul.

The passive voice shows that the believer receives the action of the verb, that it is God that plants and roots the doctrine. This activity is a Grace gift; the believer receives these benefits from the Lord.

The participle indicates that this is a law of God.

"in love" - EN plus the instrumental of AGAPAW. "By means of love."

Read Romans 5:5, Galatians 5:22.

Ephesians 3:18

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

"**May be able**" - aorist active subjunctive of EKSISCHUW, "to be quite able", "to have an endowed strength."

This is the focus of Paul's prayer. The subjunctive mood of the verb indicates that the ability to comprehend is potential - the results depends on the believer's choices.

Here is the spiritually devastating part of non-volitional theology. The training of a believer's volition is neglected; but, since deliberate choices are required at every stage of growth, the believer's growth is short-circuited.

Topic: HAZARDS OF NEGATIVE VOLITION

The choices in the Christian must be made from valid objects, from doctrine in the inner man. Religion is insidious in that it holds out a selection of INVALID choices, none of which lead to edification.

"**to comprehend**" - aorist middle infinitive of KATALAMBANW, "to seize; to lay ahold of."

The middle voice is reflexive, showing that the benefit to be gained from "seizing" truth accrues to the subject ("you"). Thus it means "to seize for yourself!" This is a VOLITIONAL WORD. It carries far more meaning than mere "comprehension." There is a "seizing", a grasping and possessing of something.

Compare Mark 9:18, where the "speechless" spirit "seizes" the son with an unrelenting grip and "throws him," "convulses him," "tears at him."

This understanding of the force of KARALAMBANW leads to a new reading of any verse which contains it.

John 1:5, "...darkness did not seize for itself the truth"

John 8:3, "...seized in adultery"

John 12:25, If you do not "seize" the light, darkness will "seize" you.

Examples from the koine Greek in the papyrii (Moulton and Milligan):

"I have impounded (KATALAMBANW) the property..."

Colonists "appropriated" (KATALAMBANW) the farm land.

To "detect (KATALAMBANW) in a crime"

READ I Tim. 5:4.

I Cor. 9:24, "one receives (LAMBANW) the prize. So run that you may obtain (KATALAMBANW)"

Phil. 3:12,13, the word "apprehend" is KATALAMBANW.

Application

A believer has every grace opportunity to benefit fully from divine provision and strength.

There is benefit from acquiring EPIGNOSIS, "full and applied knowledge" of Bible truth.

The believer must wholeheartedly and forcefully "seize" doctrine.

This is Paul's constant prayer.

"with all saints".

All believers have the same apparatus for understanding Scripture, the Holy Spirit - "He shall teach you all things."

All have "riches of glory", "strengthening of the inner man", "Christ dwelling within."

"what is the breadth (PLATOS), length (MEIKOS), depth (BATHOS), and height (HUPSOS)."

Shows that all Bible truth is available to all Christians. All of the revelation is intended for each of us.

Ephesians 3:19

And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

"And to know the love of Christ"

The experience of knowing Christ and the love that comes from Him is the result of edification, and it is what Paul desires for the Ephesians. As you learn Bible truth and apply faith to it, you grow in grace and in your knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"which passes knowledge"

The verb "passes" is HUPERBALLW, "to surpass; to throw beyond". "Knowledge" is GNOSIS, "mental understanding in the human mind."

Knowledge of the love of Christ (EPIGNOSIS) is produced by edification and surpasses any purely human mental knowledge.

Application

When there is something that surpasses, be aware that there is still something you need; there is still a distance to go.

The word for knowledge (GNOSIS) refers to knowledge in the mind of the soul.

To know something which surpasses GNOSIS means to have wisdom in the "heart" (EPIGNOSIS).

This surpassing knowledge is the spiritual IQ of the believer, and it's based on the quantity and quality of the applied knowledge in the heart.

The greater the spiritual IQ, the greater the knowledge of the love of Christ.

There is a surpassing experience available to every person - to have a real, object, experiential wisdom that passes knowledge.

"that ye might be filled"

"Filled" is the aorist active subjunctive of PLEIROW, which has several related meanings in the Greek New Testament.

"To fill up a deficiency" - The deficiency is in the believer's soul, namely a lack of spiritual IQ. The "fullness of God" is not there, so it must be provided.

"To fully possess" - Bible truth in the spirit is knowledge that is fully possessed by the human spirit. This is a reference to "Christ at home in your hearts by faith."

"To fully influence" - Edification fully influences the life of a believer.

"To fill with a certain quality" - The believer's spiritual quality, his spiritual IQ and level of edification, are available to be used to provide a quality life. A quality life is characterized by: Faith-Rest, Joy, Peace, a relaxed mental attitude, occupation with Christ, divine production of gold, silver, precious stones.

The verb "filled" is in the subjunctive mood. This means that edification is not a given, it is potential. The tragedy here is that there are those who fade out rapidly.

Example: the parable of the sower, in which:

The unbeliever by the wayside rejects the gospel.

The person on rock soil has knowledge pushed out by suffering.

Thorns refer to slavery to the details of life, resulting in no edification.

But knowledge (GNOSIS) plus good soil (FAITH) produce wisdom (EPIGNOSIS), and the production of divine good.

"with all the fullness of God" - the complete package - length, breadth, depth, height.

Ephesians 3:20,21

Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

"Now unto him that is able"

God the Father is the author of the plan for the Christian's growth. God knew all about human IQ, and He knew what IQ every person would have. He decided not to use any of it and designed a grace plan for spiritual perception that would depend on the Holy Spirits teaching ministry rather than a person's ability to understand.

"to do exceedingly abundantly above" - a double adverb meaning "beyond all measure; infinitely more than". This is the highest form of comparison in New Testament Greek.

God is able to do what we cannot do, beyond anything that we can imagine.

"all that we ask or think" - prayer will not produce edification, and it's far beyond what the greatest genius could devise. You can ask God to edify you, but His answer will be "Everything has been provided for your edification, so get with the program."

"according to the power that works in us" - the power on the inside, the indwelling Holy Spirit working in the human spirit to produce the Christian life from the spiritual food of the Word of God.

Verse 21 - "unto this God be eternal worship and praise on the part of all believers through the

person of the Lord Jesus Christ from now until eternal ages, even beyond the end of time itself."

Ephesians, Chapter 4

Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation to which you are called.

The books of Ephesians is said to divide here between the "theological" or "doctrinal" portion, chapters 1 to 3, and the "practical" or "application" section of chapters 4 to 6. But you have probably noticed that, when the Bible is taught expositionally verse by verse, most theoretical theology proves to be immensely practical, and the application sections are seen to contain much profound doctrine.

But it is true that there is a literary break here and a definite intention to develop practical advice which is derived from the earlier teaching.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of Ephesians are among the most valuable portions of scripture for teaching us about the will of God for us as individuals. You will go a long way toward mastering the principles of the Christian life by mastering the ideas contained in these chapters, indeed in all of Ephesians.

Chapter 4 deals a great deal with mental attitude, and it begins with Paul's great mental attitude under maximum pressure. In this chapter we study:

- The principle of mental attitude
- The unity of the members of the Body of Christ - the team concept
- Principles involved with spiritual warfare (v. 8)
- The exercise of our spiritual gifts
- The development of unity and coordinated function in the church.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord"

Paul accepts his imprisonment as part of the plan of God for his life. He is not blaming anyone for his problems, least of all God. He considers this merely an event in his life. He knows that "all things work together for good for those who love God and are called..." During this imprisonment he wrote the mighty works of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, indicating strongly that he was anything but defeated in very tough circumstances.

The word "therefore" refers to the previous chapters' teaching. In those chapters, the reader's attention is drawn to the importance of taking in the Word and becoming "rooted and grounded" in truth.

The impossible is accomplished through Grace. Through knowing God and His mind, the believer begins to see God and realize that God is able to do "exceedingly abundantly" above all that he can ask or think.

We are not really aware of the tremendous assets we have in Christ until we begin to see some of the principles of the Word applied to our lives. Then we develop the strong positive mental attitude that gives control and production the life.

"beseech you", PARAKALEW, "to call to; to cheer on; to exhort; to excite"

This Greek word carries the idea of someone being alongside to cheer you on. Paul is not begging; he is not on his knees to us pleading. He is heartily encouraging us. He wants us to be successful in the Christian life, in the operation of the life of the spirit, in the intake and application of truth, in the function of the filling of the Holy Spirit and production of gold, silver, and precious stones.

Paul know that we must have the desire and volition to establish our manner of life on Bible principles, on grace principles. Therefore, he begins his discussion of the Christian life with some principles of mental attitude.

"that you walk worthy of the calling"

The word "walk" is PERIPATEW in Greek, referring to "conduct of life".

The word "worthy" is AKSIOS, meaning "worthy" or "deserving", in classical Greek conveying the meaning of "high price".

The word "calling" is KLEISIS, "a calling; a legal summons; an invitation"

A calling is not some sort of mystical sense of one's career or destiny. It is an actual summons from someone of importance. God calls the Christian!

But how do you know when you've been called? What's the difference between being "called" to the ministry and just following your own desires? And where is the objective evidence that one has been called to preach, teach, be a missionary, etc.?

The word "call" today is so abused as to be totally useless. Young people are led to expect anything from skywriting to visions at the foot of their beds. A lot of people just "fake it", describing their call, knowing that there is almost no way to contradict it.

Many people answer "calls" which are just the rumblings of their emotions, or their responses to desires for approbation, for power, for recognition. And because keen young people are encouraged to "step out for the Lord", they step much too soon and much too far.

In the Bible, a "calling" is objective published information from a specific person. God does not provide information to people outside of His written Word. In the Bible God gives complete information to every Christian about His plan, His will for the Christian life, His program of personal ministry. There is no need to mistake God's will or miss it. It is all written down, and there's nothing about it that is mystical.

"wherewith you are called", the aorist passive indicative of KALEW, "to call"

The passive voice of the verb indicates that the believer is called by the Lord directly.

The Lord does His talking through the Word. Therefore, a believer will receive his calling

through the Word of God. Any other source of information is bogus!

The whole time that a believer is on earth, he will be "walking". He does his own walking. The word "worthy" indicates that God wants the believer's walking to be accompanied by a proper mental attitude.

The walking is done in a manner that is compatible with one's position in Christ, with God's overall plan, and with divine principles of production.

A "vocation", a "calling", means that there is an alternative to unproductiveness, an alternative to living a life of misery and unhappiness, an alternative to having a mental attitude that is in terrible condition.

The Christian life is designed for happiness (joy) and production. Philippians is about happiness; whatever you are doing, whatever is happening to you, you can have happiness all the time. Ephesians and Colossians answer the question, "What is the believer-priest doing on the earth, anyway?"

You don't enter into the production phase of your calling until your mental attitude is correct. How can you tell when your mental attitude is squared away? The answer is in these chapters.

Ephesians 4:2

With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.

"with" - META, "associated with". Associated with the worthy walk are "lowliness and meekness"

"lowliness" - TAPEINOPHROSUNEI, "sound objective thinking according to an absolute standard"

Because the word "lowliness" was used to translate this verb in the KJV, there have been many strange ideas floated by Christians over the generations. Often, acts of humility or submitting oneself to hardships or degradation, certain things which place the believer in a lowly position, are thought to be the means of spiritual attainment. Many believers are

impressed by the things they, or others, have given up or suffered.

But TAPEINOPHROSUNEI is NOT self-effacement. It is one of the key words in the Bible for Grace thinking. It one of the key ingredients to the true Grace life in which SELF is out of the picture, and in which God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the WHOLE picture.

This in a compound noun in the Greek. The emphasis is on PHROSUNEI, from the verb PHRONEW, meaning "to do good, objective thinking; to understand; to be in one's sound senses".

TAPEINO refers to orientation to an absolute standard, All good objective thinking must have a standard. Subjective thinking has no standards, calls on emotions and outside opinions, has no absolutes.

But this noun demands that a believer has standards, namely, the Word of God locked in the soul. And there must be a massive, continuous intake of truth to get these absolute standards. TAPEINOPHROSUNEI is the first in this list because the rest of the list of characteristics would be worthless without it.

READ Acts 20:17-21. Paul, in his speech to the elders of Ephesus uses this word. He shows that he has had this mental attitude and that it has enabled him to have the ministry among the Gentiles that he has had.

READ Phil. 2:1-8. Compare also Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 5:5 (being "clothed with humility")

"meekness" - PRAUTEIS, "gentleness in the sense of true sensitivity".

This word refers to a mental attitude based on the principle of correct orientation to life, a correct mental focus directed toward God and toward other people. The idea of "thoughtfulness" is certainly present. This is NOT meekness in the sense of being wimpy. It IS one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, Gal. 5:22.

You must know Bible truth before you can apply it. A proper mental attitude is the result of learning the Word of God, applying it by faith,

and producing the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The results will be perfect peace, instinctive love for all people, kindness, true friendship. As a result there will be the ABSENCE of insubordination, malice, hatred, envy, bitterness, jealousy, etc.

You are, right now, whatever is in your mind. "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." You are not what you appear to be; you are what you think.

For the growing Christian, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."

"long-suffering" - MAKROTHUMIA, "patience toward others".

The mental attitude of long-suffering recognizes the spiritual progress, or lack of progress, of other people. Every person in a congregation is either growing in Christ or is in a state of backsliding, reversion.

Long-suffering is patience towards other people. Every community has people who are hateful, implacable, antagonistic, bitter, vengeful. These people malign, gossip, judge, criticize, complain, ostracize. But "long-suffering" means that the believer's attitude toward such people is patience.

A long-suffering Christian does not hate, does not seek revenge, does not malign or gossip, is not jealous or envious, does not counterattack. Long-suffering does not mean that you pat your foot and wait for your chance.

Topic: MENTAL ATTITUDE

"forbearing one another in love"

"Forbearing" is ANECHOMAI, "to put up with; to endure; to take up the slack; to restrain oneself"

A believer can stand his ground because of a good defensive position. You do not have to give way to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune". You can be stable and take a stand because of Bible truth in your soul. You can refrain from an improper response because you know the correct response.

"in love" refers to a lack of mental attitude sins. It is the result of a totally relaxed mental attitude

toward others. This is the characteristic which allows a gracious interest in others without pride or prejudice getting in the way.

The evidence that one has true "love for the brethren" is in the observation of these mental attitude.

The opposites of "gracious interest" are:

Bigotry as seen in ethnic humor, snide remarks, hateful actions.

Self-promotion, one-upmanship in conversation, continually talking about oneself, one's experiences, showing off.

Indignation accompanied by sarcasm or bitter talk.

Insisting on one's own way, ideas, plans, programs.

All this shows lack of interest in others, hence, lack of love, hence, need for growth in these areas of mental attitude.

Ephesians 4:3

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

"Endeavoring" - present active participle of SPUDADZW, "to hasten; to be zealous; to be diligent".

Here is a case of the Greek participle being used as the imperative, a usage that is peculiar to the koine Greek and to the papyri. So the translation is "Be diligent!", "Be zealous!" The infinitive "to keep" shows the area of diligence.

"to keep" - TEREW, "to keep; to guard"

The **"unity of the Spirit"** is a condition which exists continually as long as a grace status is maintained.

The concept of unity is brought up again in 4:13 and the following verses. Unity among people comes about when there is unity of thinking. It is edification and Christian growth that causes believers to be unified in their thinking, because the content of every person's thinking is the same, the Word of God. Without the unity of thinking that comes about through learning

Bible truth, everyone is free to think independently. This results in a lack of unity.

The word "unity" here refers to a common essence, to the characteristics we share as members of the family of God, the Body of Christ, the things listed in verses 4 to 6.

An illustration of unity of thinking and purpose is found in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, where the Jews under Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple and the wall with tools and weapons in hand.

1 Peter 3:8, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." In this verse there are four chief characteristics of Christian unity.

"having compassion" - SUMPATHEIS, "suffering with". The English word "sympathy" is a transliteration of this Greek word. This is the ability to share with another person because of understanding in the spiritual frame of reference. Bible truth can be communicated because of knowledge of what the other is going through and how to help. One believer can think when another is not able to think; this is a great help when someone is going through a time of great stress.

"love as brethren" - PHILADELPHOS. This is rapport love, and it grows as the Christian grows, through edification. It is rapport and compatibility between two or more believers based on applied truth in the soul.

"pitiful" - EUSPLAGTHNOS. Literally, "happy innards", therefore "good emotions". The word "pitiful" in the KJV times (early 17th century) carried this meaning of sympathy and "having pity", but the English word carries an unhappy, unpleasant connotation today. The ability to have good feelings is the result of "mind over emotions", Bible doctrine leading the thinking so as to produce good feelings, in this case, towards others.

"courteous" - a mental attitude of graciousness. Grace thinking leads to grace action.

In all four of these cases from 1 Peter 3:8, the believer who has "one mind" thinks doctrine, and this is the stabilizing factor.

"in the bond of peace" - in the bond of security.

Ephesians 4:4

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling.

Chapters 4 to 6 are the chapters of the mature Christian life, of the *normal* Christian life. These verses are the description of the "conformed" life which is mentioned in Romans 8:29. These verses describe how to be conformed to the image of Christ, and everything for this life and for the life to come is described as a gift of God's grace.

Salvation Grace: non-meritorious, by means of Grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian Life Grace: God provides living grace. Ephesians 1:3 points out that there is an escrow account of blessings in heaven, in Christ. Some people take advantage of Grace; others do not.

Maturity Grace: James 4:6 "...he gives more grace...God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble." The grace life of the growing Christian includes (1) occupation with Christ, (2) stability, "this grace wherein we stand", (3) capacity for life, (4) unlimited blessings, (5) victory with Christ in the spiritual warfare, victory over circumstances, victory over evil.

You know you are growing and have reached some level of maturity when you are walking in the plan of God, know your position and responsibilities, and exercise your privileges as a child of God.

"There is one body"

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Each member of the Trinity is related to the Body of Christ.

God the Father place Christ as the Head of the Body.

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 fills all in all."

Col. 1:18,19; Eph. 5:23,24

The Holy Spirit forms the Body of Christ and sustains the Body.

1 Cor. 12:12-14, "For as the body in one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many."

1 Cor. 6:15; 6:19,20.

Christ is the Savior of the Body.

Eph. 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the savior of the body."

Eph. 5:25,30.

Christ is the Sanctifier of the Body.

Heb. 2:11, "For both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Heb. 13:12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate."

The Body of Christ participates with the Lord Jesus Christ in tactical and strategic victory over Satan and his forces of evil.

Eph. 1:22,23, "And has 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 fills all in all."

Every Christian is a member of the Body of Christ. The Body includes Gentile believers and Jewish believers.

Ephesians 3:16, "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

The Body of Christ is the recipient of many spiritual gifts.

Rom. 12:4,5, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

1 Cor. 12:7,8, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit. For to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom, to another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit..."

The communication of Bible truth is the responsibility of the Body of Christ and of those who are given communication gifts.

Eph. 4:11 and the following verses describe the process of church building through communication of doctrine. This is discussed in the Ephesians course for chapter 4.

The objective of the Body in this life is to live the Grace life.

Eph. 4:15,16, "But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according tot he effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

"and one Spirit"

The Holy Spirit does many things for the believer at the time of salvation, and forever afterwards during this life and on throughout eternity. It is very important at this point that you review the wide range of scriptures that describe the Person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Topic: HOLY SPIRIT

"even as you are called" - the verb KALEW is an aorist passive indicative.

Greek scholars regard the usage in this verse as the nomic aorist, indicating that this is a doctrine that is to be regarded as axiomatic. Therefore, every believer is part of the plan of God; you are in the plan of God, whether you know it or not, whether you like it or not.

The passive voice of the verb indicates that every believer receives this calling from God the Holy Spirit; and the indicative means that this is a dogmatic assertion. Every believer is in one body, elected.

"in one hope" - ELPIS, "expectation; confidence; prospect"

"your calling" - the descriptive genitive of the noun "calling". Being a member of God's family, the Body of Christ, in your station in life!

Ephesians 4:5

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

"One Lord"

The Royal Family has only one Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lord of all believers.

Some Christians say, "If Christ is not Lord of all, he is not Lord at all." This is an untrue statement! A person who says this simply does not understand anything about the relationship between Christ and His Body. And it is horribly misleading to say this because it directs the focus of a person's thinking on himself instead of on the Lord.

Christ is always Lord. If you are a Christian and you do not acknowledge Christ as Lord - if you live apart from the plan of God and shun His will for your life - as a child of God you will receive chastisement! "Whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges..." Oh yes, Christ is Lord, and you'll learn that one way or the other!

"one faith" - PISTIS.

Everyone is saved the same way. This is true ecumenicism; those who have placed their faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ are members of the Church, members of His Body, members of God's family.

"one baptism"

This is a good place to study the doctrines relating to baptism. There are actually seven types of baptism mentioned in the Bible, including the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It's important to be able to distinguish among the types of baptism and to know which type is being discussed in a particular context.

Four of the types of baptism are real baptisms and three are ritual baptisms.

Real Baptisms

- The Baptism of Moses
- The Baptism of the Cross (or Cup)
- The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- The Baptism of Fire

Ritual Baptisms

- The Baptism of John
- The Baptism of Jesus
- The Baptism of the Christian Believer

Topic: BAPTISM

Ephesians 4:6

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

"One God and Father of all"

This is God the Father. Both the Son and the Holy Spirit have been mentioned in this listing. And these seven items which unify all believers can be thought of as the family seal, or the escutcheon on the shield of the believer.

The phrase "of all" refers to all members of the royal family, the Body of Christ.

"who is above all" - literally, "the one over all"

This stresses positional location and authority. God the Father is sovereign in authority. He is the author of the divine plan.

"and through all"

This describes the omnipresence of God the Father. All the plan and production of God are manifestations of His character, His essence, His

qualities. God is everywhere, personally present. The whole of God is in every place.

This is not pantheism, because pantheism denies the person of God.

God, in the totality of His essence, without diffusion, expansion, multiplication, or division, penetrates and fills the universe.

Psalm 139:7,8,18; Jer. 23:23,24; Acts 17:27.

God is also free to be local, such as on the mountain with Moses, in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle; on the Mount of Transfiguration with three of the apostles.

"and in you all"

God actually indwells every member of His royal family.

All members of the royal family have the same Father, just as all members of the royal family have the same Savior, and just as all enter the palace (are placed in the Body) the same way, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

While all members of the royal family are unified by these attributes of nobility, all do not have the same functions, nor do all achieve the same stage of growth at the same time.

Topic: ESSENCE OF GOD

Ephesians 4:7

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

While we live out our lives on earth, God's plan for us includes giving us a measure of His grace. We are left on this earth so that we can grow towards maximum spiritual maturity, so that we can enjoy prosperity, and so that we can see the grace of God in our adversities.

When we reach heaven, there will be no more tears, no more sorrows, and best of all, there will be no more sin and no more desire to sin!

But in this life God is able to demonstrate to us His wonderful grace in times of maximum stress, in times of great need, when we are physically worn out and broken down, and even

when we have sinned and need to be forgiven, restored to fellowship, and set on the road to maturity again..

Ephesians 4:4-6 have shown us what is provided for all of us at salvation, the great assets which we have as members of God's family and as part of the Body of Christ. In the verses from 4:7-16, we are shown what God provides to us after salvation, His post-salvation provision.

"but unto every one"

But word "but" is used to show that there is a difference between that which is common to all members of the royal family (one Lord, one faith) and that which differentiates among believers. Each individual Christian is given a unique capacity, by grace, to function and grow as a Christian and to produce as a member of the Body of Christ.

The words "unto every one", or "unto each one" takes into consideration the differences among a wide variety of believers.

"is given grace" - aorist passive indicative of DIDOMI, thus "has been given".

There is a unique grace package designed for each Christian. The aorist tense of the verb "given" shows that there was a time in the past when this grace package was given. The passive voice shows that we were given this by God.

The plan of God for every believer includes:

Salvation and the assurance of a glorious eternal future

The opportunity to walk in the Spirit and be occupied with Christ.

The opportunity to live in the Word of God, acquire divine wisdom and prudence, and be able to make decisions and solve problems according to God's divine viewpoint.

Peace that passes understanding.

A great happiness (joy) that does not depend on circumstances, people, or things.

A well laid out "career" of serving God, exercising spiritual gifts, evangelizing and

teaching, producing "gold, silver, and precious stones."

There is something that prevents Christians from having the happiness and prosperity in this life that comes from being a member of God's family. What's missing in many lives is Bible doctrine in the soul!

Indifference to the Word of God, rejection, apathy, or antagonism toward Bible truth keeps many believers dirt poor and malnourished spiritually, in spite of their being members of God's royal family. People try to reach happiness by substituting something else for the Word of God, such as some religious experience, emotionalism, ecstasies; but any attempt to live for the Lord apart from God's plan of grace will cause a person to miss the boat.

But ...

"according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

This is a gift without any strings attached. The Lord Jesus Christ was the greatest gift that could be given, and He was given without measure to any person who believes on Him, who calls on Him.

In the same degree, without measure, grace is provided in the plan of God to supply the needs and provide all the assets required for a successful life on earth for every Christian.

The letter to the Ephesians is one of the principal "how to" books of the Bible. In these chapters we learn what the plan of God is, how we can become a part of it, how we can have access to "all blessings in heavenly places in Christ", how we can become powerful Christian operatives in the grace of God.

Ephesians 4:8

Wherefore, he says, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

"wherefore" - "for this reason".

The word "wherefore" follows a conclusion in order to allow inferences about the conclusion.

"he says" - LEGW, "he says" or "the scripture says".

What follows is a documentation of the conclusion and is a quotation from Psalm 68:18.

"when he ascended up on high" - ANABAINW.

These verses refer to the ascension of Christ as part of His victory over the forces of Satan in the ongoing spiritual conflict.

According to Greek scholars, this verb is in a tense called a "culminative aorist". It views the ascension of Christ in its entirety but regards it from the viewpoint of its results, namely, the glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father as the unique person of the universe.

Topic: ASCENSION OF CHRIST

It is a blessing to remember Eph. 2:5,6, which tells us that "even when we were dead in sins, (God) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace are you saved), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

We are saved by grace! We are given living grace! Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father! We are seated with Him! Therefore, we are already placed in a position of victory with the One who will have ultimate victory!

We are there to observe when His enemies shall be made His footstool!

"he led captivity captive" - aorist active indicative of AICHMALWTEUW.

This verb means either "to take captives in battle" or "to lead a triumphal procession of one's own soldiers along with their captives."

The consensus of the commentators which I studied is that this phrase is a reference to Christ leading the Christians who had previously died, that is, they died prior to his ascension. This would include all Old Testament believers and those saved during Christ's lifetime. They have been residing in Paradise (also called "Abraham's bosom") until the Ascension of

Christ. They are called captives because they do not have a resurrection body yet. They will not have a resurrection body until the second coming of Christ, 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

There are references to Paradise in Luke 23:43; Luke 16:23; Gen. 37:5; 1 Cor. 15:55; and Hab. 2:5.

I think this view is the most likely from several that have been presented in many commentaries; but the documentation for this opinion is sketchy. I base my opinion on the fact that, to me, the tenor of scripture seems to be least disturbed by this version of the account.

"and gave gifts unto men" - "distributed gifts unto men".

Here is a reference to the distribution of spiritual gifts among believers of this age. There have been many books and written about spiritual gifts over many generations of Bible teachers. I have read many of these publications over the years along with my Bible studies; but I still don't feel that I can be dogmatic about much that has been claimed.

Without question, the Lord Jesus Christ has made available some sort of divine enabling power to every Christian, i.e., "a gift or gifts." These are spiritual gifts, and a number of scriptures show that the Holy Spirit is intimately involved both in the supplying of spiritual gifts and in the exercise of these gifts. See chapters 12 to 14 of 1 Corinthians.

Where I have trouble is in the area of discerning one's spiritual gift or being sure that one has some particular gift or other.

I have heard many men claim, for example, to have the spiritual gift of pastor or "pastor-teacher," and I have heard a few claim even to be apostles or prophets. But I have never heard a good explanation of how those men discovered that they had this gift, other than to cite certain circumstantial evidence that led them to think they had the gift. (Claims of miracles I discount entirely.)

Several times I have asked men "How do you tell the difference between discerning that you

have a communication gift and simply deciding that being a pastor is what you want to do?" I have not heard a good answer.

Nevertheless, we see that in Eph. 4:11-16, some have been given communication gifts, those of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher - divine enablings to be used to "feed the flock of God", to bring us to unity, to be conformed to the image of Christ, to be productive Christians.

Until I have better information, then, I think I'll regard any Christian who is doing the work of "feeding the flock" by thoroughly teaching the Word of God to Christians as having a communication gift and a divine enabling for the work.

I'll leave the titles and other accoutrements of religion for someone else to work out. Those who occupy pulpits, or who rule as elders, and do not teach the Word of God, are not "pastors" ("shepherds" or "feeders"), anyway. They are either impostors, or they have communication gifts and are not using them. In either case they are best avoided.

Ephesians 4:9,10

(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Verses 9 and 10 are a parenthetical expression for the purpose of amplifying the statement in verses 7 and 8.

The following comments have been transcribed from taped messages of R. B. Thieme, Jr., Pastoral Messages on Ephesians, 1963.

"Christ's body was in the grave, His spirit was in the presence of the Father, and His soul descended to a region called Hades (Greek) or Sheol (Hebrew).

"All believers from Adam and Eve up to the Resurrection of Christ, who had died, stayed in one compartment of SHEOL, known as Paradise, or Abraham's Bosom. Those who died without Christ prior to the Resurrection were sent to Torments.

"Prior to the Resurrection of Christ, no human beings were in heaven; all believers checked in to Paradise in the heart of the earth. Reference: Luke 16:19 and following.

"There is also a place called Tartarus which is a residence for certain of the fallen angels (demons) who were involved in the events chronicled in Genesis 6. They are locked up there until the Judgment of the Great White Throne.

"Jesus Christ was not in Hell, He was in Hades. Hades has two divisions, Paradise for the believer, and Torments for the unbeliever. Hell, and the lake of fire and brimstone, is reserved for the future."

Ephesians 4:11

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

This part of Ephesians chapter 4, verses 11 to 16, is one of the most important passages for understanding what God's plan is for individuals and churches. Here the Lord provides communicators with spiritual gifts which enable them to teach us God's word with insight and accuracy. Here is the outline of a believer's growth from spiritual childhood to maturity, from being a victim of today's crisis to being a victory with Jesus Christ on the battlefield of spiritual warfare. Here the church, a body of learning, growing, functioning saints, enables its own edification by the coordinated functioning of mature individuals.

Chester McCalley, the pastor of Beth Haven Church in North Kansas City, Missouri, says that personal growth in Christ, and the growth of a local church, is very much dependent on two activities, FEEDING and BEING FED. His lessons entitled "The Fed and the Feeder" describe how a pastor prepares substantial and nourishing "meals" of spiritual food, providing his congregation with the quantity and quality of teaching that are needed for growing in Christ. But, he says, to be fed one has to show up for meals and partake; and a Christian who will not receive teaching or who fails by faith to adapt

doctrine to his life, will show ever-increasing signs of spiritual malnutrition.

"The Christian who does not understand what God has done in the past, and does not have faith in what God will do in the future, will be overwhelmed by today's crisis." Chester McCalley

1 Peter 5:12, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: FEED THE FLOCK of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

Deuteronomy 8:3, "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."

We live by God's Word, that which proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus". And it is our pastors - our shepherds - who have the duty to provide us with this nourishment, lest we waste away in spiritual malnutrition!

The spiritual gifts, which were given by the Lord Jesus Christ, include those mentioned here, that of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. Here is an outline study of spiritual gifts provided by my pastor, Bob Bolender, of Austin Bible Church, in Austin, Texas.

Spiritual Gifts

I. Introduction and Definition.

A. God has a purpose in life for each and every believer.

Life-long purpose (Jer. 1:5; Ps. 139:16; Matt. 6:27).

Short-term purposes (Acts 16:6 Paul is forbidden to go to Asia, cp.

Acts 18:19-21; 19:1-41 where Paul bears some of his greatest fruit in

Asia).

B. To facilitate the believer's fulfillment of that purpose, God has

provided spiritual gifts.

1. During this present dispensation, the distribution of spiritual gifts is universal. Every Church Age believer has (at least) one (Rom. 12:3,6; Eph. 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10).

2. During previous dispensations, each and every believer had a purpose in life, or a work-assignment, but the giving of spiritual gifts was not universal. The Spirit of God would come upon a person for a specific time or reason, and then depart just as suddenly (Judges. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 14:6,19; 15:14; Num. 11:17-30). Moses expresses his earnest desire (Num. 11:29) was for the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit such as we enjoy in this present age!

3. Spiritual gifts (charisma) are given entirely by grace (charis), and the assignment of one gift versus another gift are not reflections of individual human merit or demerit.

4. Passages which speak of spiritual gifts, and "list" examples of such include Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; 13:8-12; 1 Cor. 14 is the application of 1 Cor. 12-13 to the particular circumstances in Corinth, but we gain great principles there as well; Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

a. Peter (1 Pet. 4:10-11) gives the simplest breakdown of gifts when he divides them between communication gifts and service gifts.

b. Paul gives more detailed distinctions of gifts. Eph. 4:11-13 should be taken in context with what Paul has already written in Romans and 1st Corinthians. In Eph. 4, Paul is describing what are often referred to as the leadership gifts: Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, and Pastor-Teacher. I prefer to think of them as the equipping gifts, because they are designed for the equipping of the saints for the work of service (Eph. 4:12).

5. The purpose for spiritual gifts.

a. For the common good (of the entire body of Christ) (1 Cor. 1:7).

b. For the equipping of the saints for the work of service, and for the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).

c. For serving one another (1 Pet. 4:10).

6. Who gives these spiritual gifts? The Holy Spirit is referred to as the giver of these gifts (1 Cor. 12:11). The Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as the giver of the "leadership gifts" (Eph. 4:11). These are delegated responsibilities, of course, because ultimately everything is given by the Father (James 1:17). This is the Trinitarian perspective that is important to maintain.

II. Development: The Calling to the Ministry.

A. The example of Paul.

1. Paul was saved on the Damascus road (Acts 9:4-6). This is salvation calling.

2. Paul was called to the ministry on the street called Straight, in the house of Judas (Acts 9:11,15,16). This is lifelong-purpose calling.

3. Paul was called to the specific task of the first missionary journey while ministering in Antioch (Acts 13:3). This is short-term purpose calling.

B. The example of Timothy.

1. Timothy was saved in his youth (2 Tim. 3:15). This is salvation calling.

2. Timothy was called to the ministry under the Apostle Paul's ministry (Acts 16:1-3). This is lifelong-purpose calling. Paul was the Apostle under whose ministry Timothy was trained for his gift of Pastor-Teacher.

3. Timothy was called to the specific ministry of Ephesus upon Paul's departure from that place (1 Tim. 1:3). This is short-term purpose calling.

4. Timothy had a problem with "neglect" of his spiritual gift (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). Others needed similar reminders, such as Archippus (Col. 4:17). Paul, the older man, was sensitive to Timothy's (and Archippus') gift and its use.

C. The example of Samuel.

1. Samuel was saved as a small boy (1 Sam. 1:28).

2. Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli the priest (1 Sam. 2:11,18,21,26). This is short-term purpose calling. Samuel trained under Eli. Samuel served to be an encouragement to Eli, when his own sons were certainly a disappointment to him.

3. Samuel was called as a Prophet to the Lord (1 Sam. 3:1-21). This is lifelong-purpose calling. Eli, the older man, was the one who first recognized the calling of the Lord.

III. Development: Training for spiritual gift operation.

A. The spiritual gift is an entrusted treasure, which God intends to be used for its design and purpose (1 Cor. 9:17; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14).

B. The spiritual gift is not to be neglected, nor allowed to grow cold (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). The best training is use! Paul was constantly sending Timothy here and there for the use of his gift. Christ sent His disciples out on training ministries (Matt. 10:5-42).

C. Believers need to be trained and equipped in the use of their spiritual gift.

1. The ministry of the Evangelist and the Pastor-Teacher, in the local church setting, is designed to train and equip all believers for the work of service (Eph. 4:12).

2. The curriculum for training in every spiritual gift is the Word of God in its full counsel (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

3. The training for every spiritual gift is in the realm of God the Father, and is therefore Paterological in scope (Heb. 13:20,21).

4. The Biblical model for a training institution is not the Pharisaical schools of learning (Acts 22:3), or any form of secular educational process (1 Cor. 1:20,21). It is illustrated both by Christ and His walking ministry with the twelve disciples (Acts 10:38-43), and by Paul and His working ministry with his associates/trainees (2 Tim. 3:10,11).

Ephesians 4:12

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

What is your greatest desire or goal for yourself and for your Christian community? I answer the question for myself by referring to two Bible passages: Acts 2:41-47 and Acts 16:4,5.

Acts 2:41, "So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

"And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

"And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

"And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;

"and they {began} selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

"And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

"praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."

Acts 16:4,5, "Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees, which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.

"So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily."

These scriptures show that:

Apostles and teachers were teaching the Bible continually and people were soaking it up (positive to Bible teaching).

Christians were growing in grace and being strengthened.

The edification was producing great unity among believers so that they enjoyed wonderful fellowship together.

The Christians enjoyed a wonderful reputation and testimony for Christ in the community.

The local churches were enjoying a time of great productivity, both in the production of divine good and in reproduction of spiritual progeny.

This occurred in many locations, not just in Jerusalem, and not just as a spinoff of the miraculous events on the Day of Pentecost.

Now - how were these wonderful conditions brought about? Answer: by the process described in Ephesians 4:11-16 !!

What keeps a church from growing and prospering, from edifying itself as a local body?

Answer: when individual Christians fail to be edified and equipped, either through their own neglect or the neglect of the "feeders", a group will fail to achieve unity and will not operate through the filling of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of love. This will result in a lack of "body" growth and effective functioning.

When a church is not growing and functioning it may be because there is no effective teaching.

Where there is good teaching, individuals may fail to grow, and many things can cause this, such as:

Failure to stay in fellowship and to be consistently filled with the Holy Spirit

Failure to believe and obey the doctrine being taught

Failure to exercise Faith-Rest and other victory principles

Failure to be occupied with Christ, to be Grace oriented, to live in the Word of God.

Eph. 4:11-16 provide the keys to satisfying the commands of verses 1 to 3 and 17 to 32, **SHOULD YOU SO DESIRE!**

How does a Christian "walk worthy of the vocation to which he is called?" Verses 11 to 16 make this concept very clear and give concrete steps to follow. **YOU ARE CALLED!** There is

no point in approaching the Christian Life half-heartedly or on a part-time basis. **YOU** must identify with the "YOU" of this chapter!

Read the following scriptures carefully, giving thought to these ideas.

Matt. 4:21; 1 Cor. 1:14; 2 Cor. 13:11; Gal. 6:1

This is the doctrine of Hebrews 6:1, the idea of perfection or "completeness of knowledge", "fulfillment", "realization".

For the "work of the ministry", read:

Topic: CHRISTIAN WORKER QUALIFICATIONS

Ephesians 4:13

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 fullness of Christ;

"Till we all come", the 1st person plural aorist subjunctive of KATANTAW, "to come; to attain to"

This Greek word was used very similarly to the way that the English word "come" is used. That is, there are both literal and figurative uses for the word.

Literally, KATANTAW means "to arrive somewhere". It is used this way in the Bible in several places.

Acts 16:1, "Then came he [Paul] to Derbe and Lystra..." which speaks of Paul's arrival in a geographic location.

Acts 20:15, "And we sailed from there, and came the next day over against Chios..." referring to the apostle's arrival at Chios.

But the use of KATANTAW in Ephesians 4:13 is figurative, referring to someone's attaining to something.

Acts 26:6,7, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers. Unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God day and night, hope to come

[KATANTAW]. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews."

In Acts 26 Paul is speaking of the confidence that the Jews have they will reach, or attain to, the promises made by God to the Jewish people.

Phil. 3:10,11, "That I man 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 [KATANTAW] the resurrection of the dead."

In Phil. 3 Paul shows his earnestness in desiring to "arrive at" or "attain to" a deeper knowledge and experience of his relationship with Christ by means of a greater understanding of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.

In our verse, Eph. 4:13, the idea is that there is the possibility that Christians can "attain to" a state of unity of the faith, by means of the Word of God which is taught by the communicators of doctrine.

Note that unity and knowledge are tied up in the same package. It is oneness of thinking that is the basis for Christian unity. And it is the Word of God which can bring any believer to thinking according to divine viewpoint. Therefore, all people who think in Bible terms will be unified.

Here is a place where the grammatical mood of a verb is important. The Greek verb KATANTAW is in the subjunctive mood. This is the mood of potential, not certainty. The subjunctive mood says "maybe we will come (to unity) and maybe we won't." The difference, of course, lies with a Christian's personal volition, the choices made when doctrine is presented.

There will be no unity if the Word of God is not taught in a local church.

If the Bible is taught carefully and well, there may still be no unity if believers in the church do not accept and apply the truth they receive. Believers who do not learn Bible truth, or who reject what they learn, will not be unified with other believers who accept truth by faith and who have application of the Word in their lives.

"in the unity of the faith"

"Unity" is the Greek noun HENOTEIS. The Greek and English words are cognates, which means that the English word "unity" comes directly from HENOTEIS.

This chapter has the only two places in the New Testament where HENOTEIS appears. Indeed, in the King James Version, the word "unity" only appears in the New Testament in English in this chapter.

In Eph. 4:3, one of the characteristics of "walking worthy of the vocation" to which we are called is that we "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Yet a person may well wonder how Christians can be expected to maintain any sort of unity when there is so much diversity of culture, language, and opinion.

The context of verse 13 has the answer! Unity CAN be attained to, and there is a straightforward process by which believers arrive at unity. Unity must be based on unity of thinking according to divine viewpoint. And unity of thinking leads to unity of purpose and service which results in the growth of the church outlined in verse 16.

Topic: UNITY (DAVAQ)

"and of the knowledge of the Son of God"

"knowledge" is EPIGNOSIS, which may be defined as "full and applied knowledge", or knowledge which is characterized by both wisdom and prudence.

In Ephesians 1:7-10, we see that in Christ we have redemption and that in Christ God makes available wisdom and prudence, "having made known unto us the mystery of His will..."

A believer can have all of the riches of God's grace that he wants. Ignorance of God's Word and carnality prevent a Christian from having these riches.

Compare Eph. 5:15, asophos (unwise) with 2 Cor. 11:1, 17, 21 (aphrosunei), "foolish"

The wisdom of God is not merely intellectual or academic. It is not a higher philosophy which the Gnostics in the early church claimed to

possess. It is the source of understanding of the details of daily living.

Phil. 1:9-11, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

Note that "knowledge and judgment" are the foundations of the outworking of Christian love and fruitfulness.

Jesus Christ give men the ability to see the great ultimate truths of eternity and to solve the problems of daily living.

Col. 1:9, "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

"unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

There is a goal - spiritual maturity. There is a pattern - the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The Bible is the only source of knowledge of how to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as "love at first sight" in spiritual things. The believer must get to know Christ very well, and this requires the daily intake of knowledge about Christ through the Word of God, which is "the mind of Christ."

I Cor. 2:16 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

Phil. 3:10 "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death."

John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our

abode with him. He that loves me not keeps not my sayings; and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

To be like Christ, we must know Christ!

Knowledge of the Bible leads to occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ, a daily walk with the Savior. The "looking unto Jesus" requires being in the Word.

Heb. 12:2,3 "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds."

The Bible is the only source of God's viewpoint, the only basis for Christian unity.

Isaiah 55:7-9 "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Bible truth is the basis for orientation to God's plan during the believer's lifetime.

Isaiah 26:3,4 "The one who is steadfast of mind thou wilt keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in thee. Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord, we have an everlasting rock."

Bible knowledge produces sanity and stability of mind. It is very important to get the Word of God into the mind before the times of pressure come. It is not too likely that an unstable person will respond to the Word of God. God's deals with the pressures of life using "preventive maintenance".

James 1:8 “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

Bible truth is the basis for divine guidance. With all believers in a local church being guided by the same truth, there will be unity.

Romans 12:1,2 “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

But without the Word of God, the believer's mind will be corrupted by Satan and will become a repository of world-viewpoint and false teaching.

2 Cor. 11:3 “But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.”

This is avoided by the process outlined in verse 14.

Ephesians 4:14

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive:

Satan is the crafty one, lying in wait to deceive. He has a whole program of false doctrine that he uses to fool the immature person, the novice, the gullible one.

Chester McCalley has said: "If a Christian does not know what God has done in the past and does not have faith in what God will do in the future, he will be overwhelmed by today's crisis."

Satan doesn't give up when a person accepts Christ as Savior. In fact, he intensifies his

activity. He has a strategy regarding believers which is very subtle and far-reaching.

Satan accuses believers before God. The sins of the Christian are observed by the fallen angels and reported. In effect, a dossier is being kept on each believer. Satan does this to try to hinder the work of God on earth. However, 1 John 2:1ff points out that Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father; and the Lord reminds the Father of what happened at the Cross and makes note of the believer's faith and position in Christ.

Rev. 12:9,10; Zech. 3:1,2; Job 1:6-11; 2 Cor. 2:11

Satan tries to keep the believer from the Word of God. He discourages unity among believers and he encourages Christians to ignore the Word and accept false teaching so that they will revert to their former manner of life.

1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Cor. 10:19-21; 2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15; 2 Chron. 21:1

Satan distracts by trying to keep believers from public assembly worship, Heb. 10:25. He tempts the believer with an improper emphasis on details of life such as money, success, social life, pleasure, loved ones, health, sex, materialistic things, or status symbols. The mature believer knows that his happiness is not derived from these things, so he is not a slave to them. The novice Christian, however, may try to gain happiness from such things, and this will distract him from the Word of God.

False teaching is also a part of Satan's strategy. The following are some of the characteristics of false teachers:

- They have a false facade. Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:18.
- They court believers. Gal. 4:17,18; 2 Tim. 3:5,7.
- They appeal to human pride. 2 Cor. 10:12
- They promote idolatry because it is a quick way to demon influence. Hab. 2:18,1
- They promote legalism. 1 Tim. 1:7,8

The false teachers will continue to operate throughout Satan's rule on earth. 1 John 4:1

Satan seeks to frustrate the will of God for the believer. There are three categories of the will of God which Satan tries to interdict.

1. The operational will of God (what God wants us to do); James 4:7,8; Gal. 5:7.
2. The mental, or intellectual, will of God (what God wants us to think): 1 Tim. 4:1.
3. The geographical will of God (where God wants us to be);, 1 Thess. 2:18.

Satan encourages believers to worry. Worry neutralizes the soul of the believer. He tries to frighten Christians with regard to physical death

1 Peter 5:7-9; Heb. 2:14,15

Satan attempts to change the focus of the believer. Instead of Occupation with Christ, Satan wants the Christian to be occupied with

Self, (Col. 3:1; 1 Cor. 1:10,11; Gen. 3:4,5; Mt. 26:31-35)

Things, (Heb. 13:5,6; 1 Cor. 1:10,11),

People, (Jer. 17:5; 1 Kings 19:10; Jer. 17:4).

One of the functions of the Faith-Rest principle is to protect the Christian in the area of having a proper focus on life.

Satan also promotes heavily in the area of mental attitude sins such as fear, worry, bitterness, desires for revenge, pride, guilt feelings, lack of love, failure to forgive, hatred, mental adultery, and so forth. A believer is neutralized by sin; and mental attitude sins are behind all sin. And they are the worst category because they are so devastating. As long as mental attitude sin is taking place, the Word of God is being ignored.

There are several religious counterfeits mentioned in the Bible.

- A counterfeit gospel. 2 Cor. 11:3,4
- Counterfeit ministers (unsaved, humanists, misled, etc.) 2 Cor. 11:13-15
- Counterfeit doctrine 2 Tim. 4:1

- Counterfeit communion table 1 Cor. 10:19-21
- Counterfeit righteousness Matt. 19:16-18
- Counterfeit manner of life ("living the beautiful life") Matt. 23
- Counterfeit power 2 Thess. 2:8-10
- Counterfeit gods 2 Thess. 2:3,4

The Bible talks about the Armor of God as enabling the believer to "stand against the wiles of the devil". This armor is protection for us while we live in kosmos diabolikos, and the weapons of our warfare are stronger than Satan as we take our stand in the Lord Jesus Christ. See Ephesians 6:10-18.

Ephesians 4:15

But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ;

“Speaking the truth”

Another reference to Bible truth; however, now we see the mature Christian functioning as a knowledgeable witness to the grace of God. A believer who knows the truth can speak the truth.

Note the process to this point:

The truth was revealed by God the Father and the Holy Spirit to the inspired writers of the Bible.

The truth was recorded in writing and made available to mankind.

The truth has been taught by people who have been given spiritual gifts of communication.

Christian people have learned and applied the truth through the teaching and edification ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Growing believers are now able to "speak the truth".

"may grow up into him in all things"

"Growing up" in Christ is edification! This result in a Christian's life is the core of the Apostle

Paul's desire and prayer for the Ephesian believers.

Eph. 1:16-18, "...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 you may know what is the hope of his calling..."

Eph. 3:14-19, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God."

When I read the above prayers for the first time, I thought these would be wonderful results in my own life, but I had no idea how to proceed to reach these lofty goals. How would God reveal things to me? How would I be strengthened in the inner man? How would I ever be able to have spiritual comprehension of the love of Christ which passes knowledge?

Thank the Lord for the answer to all these questions in Ephesians 4. We are now studying the HOW-TO of the Christian life, God's grace plan for the edification, strengthening, and unifying of believers to stabilize us and make us ready for a life of ministry.

"who is the head, even Christ."

Topic: DEITY OF CHRIST

Ephesians 4:16

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effective working in the measure of every

part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Here is the result we've been looking for! Here is the picture of a community of Christian believers, growing in Christ, functioning in unity, stabilized by the Word of God, and witnessing to the world. The results is that a church builds itself in the sphere of love.

"from whom" - from the Lord Jesus Christ

"the whole body" - the body is the church.

Eph. 1:22,23, "And has put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all."

The Body is also mentioned in the following:

Eph. 2:16 - Jews and non-Jews are included.

Eph. 4:4 - these things are common to all believers; the family coat of arms.

Eph. 4:11,12 - how the body grows

Eph. 4:16 - how the body works together

Eph. 5:23 - the Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior of the body.

"fitly joined together" - present passive participle of SUNARMOLOGEW.

This is a compound Greek word made up of SUN + HARMOS + LOGOS (or LOGEW, the verb form).

SUN = "with; together with"

HARMOS = "a joining; a union". Hence the English word "harmony", a "union between persons; an agreement; concord", and includes the concept of musical harmony.

LOGOS = "word; vocabulary". Refers to mentality, the things that we think about, the vocabulary we use to discern and decide things. Our vocabulary provides the basic building blocks for our standards.

Therefore, "fitly joined together" [SUNARMOLOGEW] means "a harmony of thinking; a unity of words or ideas; concord in

thinking", with emphasis on accuracy because the thinking is based on God's word.

Unity is more important than any other feature of local church life. All legitimate church activity is based on accuracy (God's Word) and a unified belief in that accurate Word.

"and compacted" - another present PASSIVE participle, "to cause to come together; to unite; to knit together; to bring to terms; to reconcile"

"by that which is supplied" - EPIXOREINIA, "supply; aid; additional help"

"every joint" - HAPHEIS, "a fastening; a ligature; a joint"

You and I are "joints". For some reason I like this word, and I notice that the New American Standard version uses it, too. What we have to this point, then, is ...

"From whom the whole body brought into harmonious thinking by the additional help of every joint..."

...so that we Christians are part of the fundamental process of church growth!

"according to the effectual working of every part" - KATA, "by means of", plus the accusative singular of ENERGIA, "active energy; operation; efficiency".

All "parts" of the body work together effectively to produce the Lord's desired result.

"makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

This is the body-to-body relationship in which the church increases (grows) as edification takes place. Individual believers grow in Christ as the Word is taught and absorbed. The resulting unity brings about church growth.

SUMMARY of Eph. 4:11-16

When the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, He gave spiritual gifts to Christians. The Holy Spirit became the Comforter and Teacher of all believers. "And when the Spirit is come, He shall teach you all things."

Some of the gifts are teaching gifts: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

One objective of the teaching ministry is to bring Christian saints to maturity so that they can do useful work in the ministry of edifying the Body of Christ.

Another objective of teaching is to bring believers together in unity, so that every Christian has a working knowledge of the Word of God, can become mature, and become more like the Lord Jesus Christ every day.

The purpose is to produce Christians who are no longer as gullible and naive as children who can be pushed around by anyone with a smooth line of talk.

But the Christian is to learn the truth accompanied by the inner working of the Holy Spirit so that he can grow up into Jesus Christ in all things.

When this happens, the whole Body, the Church, is accurately framed together by the additional help supplied by every believer (joint) in the Body.

And every part of the body contributes active energy and operating efficiency to the work of causing growth in the Body. That is, the body edifies itself under the care and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:17

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.

This passage of Ephesians, verses 17 to 24, is probably the strongest and most graphic warning to Christians in the New Testament!

Paul issues this warning now because he knows that the great results of the previous verses depend on the personal choices that people make in the Christian life.

In this passage we are shown that it is possible for a Christian to have a darkened spirit (soul), an understanding that is like that of an unbeliever (other Gentiles), and the empty soul that has no spiritual understanding in it.

And we are also shown that it is completely unnecessary for any of us to have these problems. But as long as we live we are dependent on doctrine from the Word of God and on our day-to-day resolve to learn Bible truth at the feet of those the Lord has provided as communicators.

The developed Christian life in Grace is supposed to lead to maturity, edification, and effective function, as described in 4:11-16. But when a Christian's understanding is darkened, he becomes sensitive to the opinions of other people, his self-consciousness leads him to flail around in a hundred directions. Self-consciousness leads to self-pity, then bitterness and implacability.

But God has ordained a system for getting Bible truth into the believer, via the public proclamation of the Word of God and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is incumbent upon every believer to keep himself on track by staying in God's plan for spiritual growth.

"This I say, therefore"

"This" is a reference to the statements which follow, comments on the subject of insensitivity, obtuseness, and indifference in the soul. Indifference to the Word of God is a Christian's greatest occupational hazard. The apostle warns about the hardness of soul which is the direct result of failure to obtain Bible teaching and spiritual understanding.

The first hints about the problems of immaturity are brought out in Eph. 4:14. Immature Christians are "children", gullible, pushed about by every phony idea that comes along ("winds of doctrine"), and easily fooled by crafty imitators.

Everyone begins the Christian life as a novice; we all started our Christian walk as "babes in Christ." A new believer is expected to be naive, to behave as a "child", and not to know how to function as an "adult." Young children have to grow up.

But the spiritual "babe" needs to take in spiritual food every day in order to grow. Otherwise, the

effects of spiritual malnutrition will be obvious for everyone to see. Verses 11 to 16 tell us how to grow up spiritually and function like adults. Verses 17 to 19 verses show what happens to Christians who do not follow the Lord's plan for growth.

"and testify in the Lord" - a use of the verb MARTUREW, "to make a solemn appeal".

Paul is very concerned for his Ephesian friends and colleagues. In his wide travels he has seen every kind of dysfunctional Christian. He knows what Christians need for Christian growth and spiritual health, and he knows how easy it is for indifference to develop. He begs his friends not to "walk as other Gentiles walk".

"that you walk not as other Gentiles walk"

"walk" refers to the pattern of life a person follows. Chapter 4 began with his exhortation to "walk worthy of the vocation to which you are called." And he continues in chapter 5 with "Therefore, be followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love..."

"Gentiles" is ETHNEI, the plural of ETHNOS, "a nation; a people". Here the reference is to the rest of the "general population" who have not accepted Christ as Savior. Paul is pointing out that if a Christian has deadness of soul, his manner of life will exactly resemble that of the unbeliever.

1 Cor. 3:3, "For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men?"

Christians are supposed to be distinguished by their walk. But there are believers, just as there are unbelievers, who are moral or immoral, religious or irreligious, self-righteous and legalistic, living in overt sin or not, in short having nothing to distinguish them from other people.

Now begins the statement of the main problem in Christianity and in individual Christians' lives.

"in the vanity of their mind"

"Vanity" is the Greek word MATAIOTEIS, "emptiness; vain; fruitless; without profit".

A believer who is occupied with Christ and living in the Word is constantly "renewing his mind" by a process in which he continually takes in (inhales) the Word of God and exercises the Word (exhales). Let's read ahead...

Eph. 4:22-24, That you put off concerning the former manner of life the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND, and that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The apostle Paul makes a very similar plea to the Christians in Rome in Romans 12.

Romans 12:1,2, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The opposite of a RENEWED mind is an EMPTY mind.

A negative Christian "exhales", that is, he thinks, speaks, and acts based on the contents of his mind. "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." However, because he does not "inhale" the Word of God, he can only "exhale" his own ideas, his own doctrines, or the ideas and doctrines that he has picked up from whatever sources in the world.

When a soul is empty, there is a resulting "vacuum" that pulls in false doctrines, doctrines of demons, darkness. Satan has a complete system of false theology to be used to ensnare the novice, the unprotected, the gullible. Today these doctrines may be any system of religion, existentialism, communism, or any other non-biblical proposition. Into the "vacuum" will go misery, mental attitude sins, religion, legalism,

emphasis on details of life, human viewpoint, and so forth.

Topic: SATAN

1 Tim. 4:1-3, Now the Spirit speaks expressly that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving by them who believe and KNOW THE TRUTH.

"of their mind" - NOUS. This word is a reference to the mind as a container of the thoughts of the soul. The phrase is not "...vanity of thoughts" but "...emptiness of the mind, the container of thoughts."

The verb equivalent to NOUS is NOEW, "to think". The noun, therefore, means "place of thinking". Both these words are used extensively in the Greek New Testament; and both words are used with various prefixes to indicate different kinds of thinking.

For example, DIANOIA is DIA + NOUS. DIA is the preposition "through", so DIANOIA are thoughts moving "through the mind", or simply "active thoughts." This is used in Eph. 4:18.

In another example, the Greeks had an expression for changing one's thoughts, METANOIA, the "changing of the mind." This word was translated "repentance" in the King James Version, and the word "repent" 17th Century England meant "to rethink" or to change one's mind about something. The change in idiom in modern times has resulted in a lot of confusion about repentance; but repentance is simply changing one's mind, reversing previous thinking.

Verse 17 reads, then, "This is say, therefore, and make a solemn warning in the Lord that your manner of life is not to be as the Gentiles manner of life, in the emptiness of the mentality of the soul."

Ephesians 4:18

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;"

"Understanding" is DIANOIA, the activity of thinking in the soul.

READ Isa. 55:7-9, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, says the Lord ..."

There are two types of active thinking [DIANOIA] that are available to a Christian.

The first type is called DARKNESS and refers both to satanic thoughts and human viewpoint.

Col. 1:21, And you that were once alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled."

2 Cor. 10:5, Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

And from 1 Tim. 4:1, "...doctrines of demons"

The opposite type of active thinking is DOCTRINE, which is the Word of God active in the mind of the believer.

Again - the way a believer sets himself up for trouble and darkness in the soul is to NEGLECT BIBLE TEACHING. It happens when one is too busy, apathetic, antagonistic toward doctrine, or antagonistic toward the teacher of doctrine.

"darkness" is SKOTIDZW, "to shroud in darkness; to be benighted; to bring about moral obscurity."

The process of darkness: the Christian who is negative toward Bible truth opens up his soul and empties it; satanic doctrines occupy the soul by moving into the vacuum. There are scores of repercussions; here are eight of them.

1. Darkness causes a Christian to fail to orient to the plan of God. He does not know God's plan or how it works, and he does not know how he fits into God's plan.

2. Darkness brings about a failure to orient to the grace of God. The result is arrogance and legalism, lack of forgiveness, lack of graciousness.
3. Darkness causes inner misery, unhappiness, lack of peace. These things cannot be compensated for by anything in life, but the negative Christian spends his life in a frantic but futile pursuit of happiness through the details of life.
4. Darkness can bring about neuroses and psychoses.
Phil. 4:6,7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard [STABILIZE] your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
5. Darkness results in a frantic search for happiness through details of life, or through some form of sublimation.
6. Darkness leads to slavery to the details of life. Sins may grow out of legitimate things in life (money, success, pleasure, sex, social life, family, loved ones, career, hobbies, health, status symbols).
7. Darkness leads to apostasy, erroneous thinking, false doctrine in the soul.
8. Darkness is accompanied by a lack of capacity to love, leading to pseudo-love towards God, family, the community.

"being alienated from the life of God" - the perfect passive participle of APALLOTRIOW, "to alienate".

Disorientation to the plan of God is a result of darkness. A Christian can live his whole life on this earth and always be out of phase with God's plan for his life. This can go on indefinitely as long as the believer refuses to hear and believe the Word of God.

All of this is caused by...

"through the ignorance that is in them" - DIA plus AGNOIA. "By means of" or "because of" the "ignorance" that is in them.

This word is, literally, "no thinking". The Greek word describes someone who is ignorant of the content of something that he is supposed to know. To "ignore" means "not to think about".

Therefore, the Christian in darkness either has not learned Bible doctrine, or he does not think of the Bible doctrine to which he has been exposed. So he lives in darkness. Without knowledge of the Word of God it is impossible to orient to God's plan of Grace. When a believer lacks knowledge and edification he is out of step with the plan of God.

"in them" refers to believers who have darkness in their souls.

"because of the blindness of their hearts"

"Blindness" is POROSIS, which is a direct cognate of the English word "porosis". POROSIS means "callous" or "something which has hardened or petrified". It is used for the buildup of scars from multiple wounds in the same place, hence "scar tissue."

So verse 18 reads, "Having become darkened in thinking, having been alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the callous on their heart."

So, in verses 17 and 18, all the ingredients for soul blackness have been presented:

Negative volition towards Bible truth

The resulting callous (scar tissue) on the soul

The opening up of the vacuum (emptiness) of the soul

Darkness in the soul

Subjectivity

Alienation from the life of God.

Ephesians 4:19

"Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

Remember - Paul is warning Christians not to fall into this lifestyle. It is easy to associate a sinful manner of living with non-Christians. But Christians who live apart from the plan of God can easily be involved in "Gentile" lasciviousness or uncleanness.

"Who" is a relative pronoun referring to people who have callous on their souls, who are negative toward Bible teaching.

"being past feeling" is APALGEO, "to cease to feel anything; to become callused". Callous develops from failure to learn and appropriate the Word of God. For the negative Christian, callous remains on the soul and accumulates, resulting in a lack of feeling. In other words, his situation continually gets worse.

Darkness of the soul is characterized by mental attitude sins, such as arrogance, bitterness, jealousy, worry, vindictiveness, implacability.

The antidote is first, Confession of Sin; then, Occupation with Christ and Living in the Word.

"have given themselves over unto lasciviousness". Literally, "have betrayed themselves into immoral sexual activity (ASELGEIA)"

Topic: SEXUAL HEALTH IN THE BIBLE

"to work all uncleanness" - or, "to make a profession of impurity".

"with greediness" - this is the frantic search for happiness through the details of life. Because details of life cannot satisfy, the search becomes more and more intense, resulting in greediness.

Greediness is the willingness to do something immoral, illegal, or harmful to other people in order to obtain something one desires. The Christian life removes greediness because a believer trusts God to supply all needs and has the patience to wait for God's timing in everything.

Topic: CONFESSION OF SIN

Topic: OCCUPATION WITH CHRIST

Ephesians 4:20,21

But you have not so learned Christ; If so be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

Francis Foulkes in "Ephesians", "'But you' the apostle says to his readers, emphasizing the personal pronoun, 'can no longer walk in that way. You have not so learned Christ. The truth of God and of His purpose has come to dominate your minds, and this truth has ethical implications. Your lives are no longer dark, your minds no longer vain. You are no longer alienated but walking step by step in the full light of the Lord, and in fellowship with Him. So you must finish with all immorality, and the passion for what is impure, and for what outrages the souls and bodies of others.'"

The ability to stand alone for that which is right is one of the truest signs of maturity in the Christian life. It is the sign that one has openly identified himself with a superior way of life - with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE VERY CAREFULLY THE SEQUENCE FOLLOWED IN THIS PROCESS OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY!!

You learn Bible truth; you grow in Christ; you become more like Him; you are edified.

Result: whereas you were once in darkness, you are now "light in the Lord" and you "walk as a child of light".

The Christian life is NOT a process by which you turn over multiple new leaves and form yourself into a product that is somehow acceptable to God.

The Christian life IS a process by which you submit to His plan of grace, learn and apply the doctrines of the Word of God, and enjoy His work of reconciliation, restoration, and edification in your life, whereby you grow into a place of spiritual productivity.

Topic: SEPARATION

To put it another way: while separation is definitely a part of God's plan, you do not

become more spiritual or more advanced in the Christian life by separating yourself from various evils. Rather, your advancement in the Christian life depends on the Word of God in your soul and your being filled with the Holy Spirit. As the Lord builds our lives, line upon line, precept upon precept, the fruit of the Spirit grows in our lives and our behavior changes, as shown in the verses that follow in chapter 4.

Ephesians 4:22

That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Notice in verses 22 to 24 that the Christian life is one of moving from a former state to a future state, from the "old man" to the "new man". And the mechanism is described in verse 23 as being renewal that takes place in the mind. It is like a breathing process in which bad air goes out and good air comes in.

"**that you put off**" is APOTHESTHAI, "to lay aside" as in laying aside a garment.

The word "former" refers to us when we were unbelievers. An unbeliever may be religious or irreligious, moral or immoral, self-righteous or sincere - there are all types of unbelievers. And the qualities of an unbeliever are generated by the sin nature in his soul. It is very important to study the doctrine of the Sin Nature at this point, because the Bible describes us to a "T" and helps us to see just what it is that we are laying aside.

Topic: SIN NATURE

"**which is corrupt**" is from the Greek PHTHERO, "to be constantly depraved". This is the strongest Greek word for depravity and means "to be marked by corruption or evil."

"**according to deceitful lusts**" Lusts are the activators of the Sin Nature and the motivators of a person who not controlled by the Holy Spirit. There are all sorts of lust patterns, and any person will have one or more of them: power lust; the desire for approbation; sexual lust; lust for worldly possessions; etc. The result of lust, among other things, is slavery to the details of life - seeking happiness and

satisfaction in what the world offers, rather than through God's plan.

Ephesians 4:23

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

This is one of the greatest concepts in the Christian life! This verse describes how the Christian life works - the very process!

If someone asks you, "How do I live the Christian life? How do I grow in Christ? How can I become a productive believer?", here is your answer.

The word "renewed" is ANANEOUSTHAI, which means "to be continually undergoing a restoration process". This is comparable or analogous to involuntary respiration, the automatic breathing process by which our lungs continually bring in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide and other gases which could be harmful to the body.

The Bible process is called edification. Bible doctrine comes in, first academically through the communication of the Word. Then, the Holy Spirit undertakes His teaching activity and gives us spiritual perception of the things we have learned. As the Word of God comes in to our souls and gives us life, false doctrines are expelled; our human viewpoint is replaced by divine viewpoint. That which is harmful is replaced by that which is life-giving.

The only way to "put Christ first" in the life is to have maximum intake of God's Word accompanied by the continual filling of the Holy Spirit.

Here is the same process discussed in Romans.

Romans 12:1,2, I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, {which is} your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Ephesians 4:24

And that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The "new man" refers to edification, the structure (OIKODOME) which the Father builds in a believer's life. Edification is the process of spiritual growth in a Christian who is living according to the plan of God and who is fulfilling the command to "grow in grace and in the knowledge" of Jesus Christ.

To grow in Christ, a Christian must be consistent on a daily basis in staying in fellowship with the Lord through confession of sin, and learning and applying Bible teaching.

Edification is the means of advancement and productivity in the Christian way of life.

Doctrine that is learned must feed both the human spirit and the human soul for capacity for both human and eternal life. Edification of the soul is the result.

Synonyms for Edification

Light. Eph. 5, "...walk as children of light.

"Christ formed in you" Gal 4:19, connotes edification.

"The new man," Eph 4; Col 3, refers to edification

"The perfect man," James 1:4.

"Imitators of God," Eph 5

1 Cor 14:26, "When you assemble, let all things be done for edification."

Acts 9:31, "All the church were having prosperity, having been edified, and advancing in occupation with Christ.

Ephesians 4:25

Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

This section of Ephesians, from 4:25 to 5:2, directs us to the very practical results of our putting on the "new man" of verse 24. The word

"wherefore" indicates that the following characteristics of the Christian life are a direct result of the development of a new Christian character.

This is where the rubber meets the road. The Christian life demands a new character, a new outlook, and a willingness both to "abide in Christ" and to "grow in Christ." Here are the positive qualities or actions that must be found in the Christian life.

We are to "put away lying" and "speak truth".

Zech. 8:16 'These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates.'

Falsehood is put away with the old man. Truth, and truthfulness, comes in with edification.

"we are members one of another"

When Christians try to deceive one another, they break the bonds of royal family, love, and fellowship. We belong together as members of one body, so we must be completely honest and open with one another.

Chrysostom: "If the eye sees a serpent, does it deceive the foot? If the tongue tastes what is bitter, does it deceive the stomach?"

Foulkes: "Lying is a great hindrance to the proper functioning of the body. When members are open and truthful, the body will work in harmony and therefore efficiently. Without openness and truth, there can only be disunity, disorder, and trouble."

In general, growth in Christ is the antidote for verbal sins.

Topic: SINS OF THE TONGUE

Ephesians 4:26

Be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

OR, "Although you may have become angry, stop sinning."

This verse is a quotation of Psalm 4:4.

There is righteous anger, such as we see in the Lord Himself (Mark 3:5; John 2:13-17); but His anger never led to sin because His emotions were always perfectly controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Foulkes: "A Christian must be sure that any anger is that of righteous indignation and not just an expression of personal provocation or wounded pride. It must have no sinful motives nor be allowed to lead to sin in any way."

Christians can have victory over the sin of anger! The Bible talks about anger and answers questions like the following:

What's the difference between sinful anger and righteous indignation?

Does God get angry?

What causes me to get angry, and what can I do about it?

How can I have victory over the sin of anger?

If you haven't recently studied what the Bible says about ANGER, it's important that you do so now. The topic accompanies this lesson.

Topic: ANGER

"let not the sun go down upon your wrath"

"Wrath" is PARORGISMOS, "provocation", which refers to the personal resentment that anger, even righteous anger, can become when it is harbored and brooded over in men's hearts, especially when the heart is overwhelmed with temptations to malice and bitterness. Passionate feelings against people are not to be kept long lest they break down the love between brethren.

The teaching of verses 31 and 32 is also very important here. Those verses show that the means for putting away bitterness and malice is "forgiveness". The grace believer is a forgiving person. Realizing that the Lord has forgiven us, even when we were His enemies, we are motivated to put away our self-righteousness, or even our genuine rights, in order to forgive others and "put away wrath".

Even unbelievers are not strangers to this concept of achieving immediate reconciliation

with others in times of strife. Plutarch says of the Pythagoreans: ".. if betrayed into angry reviling (they) made it their rule to shake hands before sunset."

Psalm 4:4, "Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah."

Ephesians 4:27

Neither give place to the devil.

"Place" = "opportunity". Bishop Moule says that anger "gives Satan a half open door", an opportunity for fostering the spirit of pride or hatred.

Foulkes: "Sudden instinctive indignation against injustice or wrong, good in itself, if retained and nursed as a grievance, will let the devil lead his victim on to unkind thoughts, words and actions, and so work havoc with personal relationships."

Satan is to be resisted. James 4:7. He is to be given no place in the believer's life.

Ephesians 4:28

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that has need.

There must be no more common pilfering, but honest work instead.

Dishonesty was a way of life for many in ancient times, just as it is for many people today. Whenever discipline or personal integrity is even slightly relaxed, honesty and productivity slip a lot. Most employees are in a position to steal something: pencils, computer time, petty cash, working time.

The honest Christian laborer stands out in a society like this. Honesty and good character are two of the most important aspects of the Christian's testimony. In any witnessing situation, these traits are necessary before any verbal testimony can be successful. Lev 19:35,36; Deut 25:13-16

Prov 11:1 "A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight."

See also Prov. 16:11; 20:10; Micah 6:9-14.

Rom 12:17 "Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

READ 2 Cor 8:20-24

1 Thess 4:11,12 "That ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

Note carefully Titus 2:9,10

Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, NOT PILFERING, but showing all good faith that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

The objective of this Christian life is to ADORN, to DECORATE the doctrine of the Savior! What a precious privilege and responsibility!

To ADORN means "to arrange; to set in order; to decorate; to embellish; to prepare; to trim; to put in readiness; to honor; to dignify"

Matt. 23:29 "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish (kosmew) the sepulchres of the righteous..."

Luke 21:5 "And as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned (kosmew) with goodly stones and gifts,"

1 Tim 2:9 "...women adorn (kosmew) themselves in modest apparel..." The adorning of the heart is to be given priority.

Rev. 21:2,19 "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And the

foundations of the wall of the city were garnished (kosmew) with all manner of precious stones."

One of the main goals of God's plan is that every Christian "adorn" or "decorate" the doctrine of the Lord. Honesty in everyday life is a very important part of this.

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.

Note just ahead in Ephesians 5:3,4, "But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and {there must be no} filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks."

The word "corrupt" is SOPROS, "rotten", therefore "worthless". Like bad fruit, such speech spreads rottenness and leads others to think on the worthless. This is to be replaced with "that which is good".

Proverbs 15:23, A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word!

Foulkes: "The test of a man's use of money is: 'What am I giving to those in need?' The test of his conversation is not just 'Am I keeping my words true and pure?' but 'Are my words being used to minister grace unto the hearers?'"

The speech of the Christian is to be characterized by grace.

Col. 3:16,17, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Col. 4:5,6, "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech

always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person."

Ephesians 4:30

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

All sin is a cause of personal sorrow to God. We are called to "walk worthy of the vocation with which you are called", to walk in fellowship with the Lord. And the Holy Spirit occupies the Christian and is the source, the bond, of the spiritual fellowship with have with God. He is our teacher and our comforter. Sin grieves the Holy Spirit and is the cause for the loss of fellowship, the loss of filling, the loss of the controlling ministry of the Spirit.

The Spirit's presence is also a seal of assurance of the life and inheritance that we possess now and will possess fully in the end. The very thought of this should encourage us to keep ourselves pure.

1 John 3:2-6, "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.

"And everyone who has this hope {fixed} on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

"Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

"And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

"No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him."

But we do sin! And we do grieve the Spirit! So remember that Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father. And remember that there is open to us a method of being cleansed from the corruption and defilement of the sin we commit

- by means of the cleansing which follows confession.

1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Prov. 1:23, "Turn at my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you."

So there is a restoration to fellowship with the Spirit, a means of continuing to be occupied with Christ, through acknowledging God's sovereignty and our sin.

Ephesians 4:31

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Here is even more reference to sins of the tongue and of mental attitude, so that they can be set over against the way that we have learned in Christ. Six things are named here that are decisively to be put away.

"Bitterness" is PIKRIA (cf. the English "picric acid"). Aristotle spoke of this as "the resentful spirit which refuses reconciliation." The Apostle Paul says that all of this must go, every trace of such sharpness of spirit, of such temper.

The "wrath" and "anger" here are those which spring up from passion and temper because of personal resentment or provocation. The only Christian rule about these is total abstinence!

Then follows "clamor", KRAUGEI, which is "the loud self-assertion of the angry man, who will make everyone else hear his grievance."

"Evil speaking" is BLASPHEMIA, "slander; blasphemy". This word is commonly used for speaking against God, but it is also often used for slanderous or abusive speaking against one's fellow men.

Finally, Paul adds "all malice", or "bad feeling of every kind", thus demanding the complete exclusion from the Christian's life of every thought that leads a person to speak or do evil against some else (Foulkes).

Ephesians 4:32

And be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

The parallel passage in Col. 3:12 says, "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering."

If, after all, God has forgiven us of the most heinous sins, having reconciled us even while we were His enemies (Romans 5), how much more ought we to have gracious regards for other people, and act as conduits of God's grace to them.

A forgiving spirit is one of the most obvious and telling character traits in a growing Christian. The lack of a forgiving spirit is the mark of the novice Christian.

The word "forgive" is a Grace word, in the English as well as in the Greek. An early meaning in English was "to give or to grant". Then, "forgive" came to mean "to remit a debt; to give up resentment or claim for requital; to pardon an offense."

All of us are debtors to others, to society as a whole. And we often feel that people owe us many things in our human relationships. We feel we are owed courtesy and consideration. Sometimes we think that we are owed reward or status or promotion in some enterprise, or on the job. We are certainly owed fair treatment, justice, restitution and many other things.

But, many people in America are spiritually, ethically, and morally bankrupt. They simply cannot pay society what they owe! They are thoughtless, selfish, ungracious. What should a Christian do about all of the debts owed to him. Answer: forgive them, as Christ forgave you.

A Christian who practices Grace thinking (divine viewpoint) will become a forgiving person. To forgive means "to give up a claim; to cease bearing resentment".

The rich man in Luke 7 was able to forgive the two debtors because he was prosperous. He gave

to them out of his prosperity. A person can only give to others out of what God has already provided in the way of prosperity. In terms of money, the principle is "Let him that stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor, doing with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

As a growing Christian, you have many other kinds of prosperity, by the Grace of God. You have intellectual prosperity (divine viewpoint). You have spiritual prosperity (peace with God). You have emotional prosperity (relaxed mental attitude). You have financial prosperity (mastery of details of life). You have social prosperity (stable marriage, stable family life, etc.).

Wherever in your life you find that someone else owes you something, you have the wherewithal to forgive him! God has forgiven all of us who are absolutely without resources of our own. And He is not expecting or demanding some kind of payment in return for His Grace gifts. And we are to be channels of Grace to the world. "Out of your innermost being shall flow rivers of living water."

Ephesians, Chapter 5

Ephesians 5:1

Therefore, be followers of God, as dear children;

The word "therefore" indicates that this verse and the last verse of chapter 4 are closely related. The gracious forgiveness that God has provided to us is shown in 4:32, and now we are commanded to imitate it in practice.

"followers" is MIMETAI in the Greek, "to imitate". We have been made children of God, by grace; so we are by constant perseverance and attention to become more like the heavenly Father. Christ is our example; to become more like Christ is to imitate the Father..

1 Peter 2:21,22, "For even hereunto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

To "follow" God we must be guided by His thinking, divine viewpoint. We use the Word of God, which is lodged in our souls, to make the decisions which set the course of our lives.

The whole context of Ephesians 4 and 5 deals with how a Christian moves into the proper function of the Christian life, the "imitation of God", to perform the work which the Father has set for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."

The Christian life is the moving away from our former manner of life, the worldly culture and lifestyle, towards a godly culture and life of production characterized by the fruit of the spirit and Christ-like behavior.

These chapters show us what the new life looks like. In the new life the Christian:

- Has an enlightened understanding; no longer alienated from God through ignorance
- Is being renewed constantly in the spirit of the mind, to create a new man
- Puts away lying and speaks truth to every man
- No longer steals but does honest work so that he can be generous to others
- Is characterized by gracious speech in the place of foolish or empty talking
- Is kind and forgiving to others, remembering God's forgiveness received at salvation.

How to acquire this kind of life is also spelled out in these chapters. Through communication of the Word of God, an academic process, and by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, a spiritual process, a Christian replaces human viewpoint with divine viewpoint. Edification takes place and a Christian "speaking the truth in love, grows up into His in all things, who is the Head, even Christ."

Ephesians 5:2

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor.

Love is to be the characteristic of the believer's life.

God commands believers to love everyone, even our enemies, even the most obnoxious, impossible-to-love people in our lives. The ability to love everyone in the world, even enemies, comes only as a result of Christian growth, the development of a structure in the soul which includes the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22 ff), and the development of a Relaxed Mental Attitude as a result of having no mental attitude sins toward other people.

Any Christian who is consistently growing in Christ will have a steady advance in the Christian Way of Life, along with the ability to love other people genuinely and have an honest concern for their spiritual well-being. The following statements are a paraphrase of the description of impersonal love found in 1 CORINTHIANS 13.

Love is slow to lose patience. It doesn't demonstrate irritations or reflect anger or have a quick temper. It has fully accepted the character of the one loved.

Love looks for a way to be constructive. Love is actively creative. It is able to recognize needs. It discovers successful methods of improving or contributing to the other's life.

Love is not possessive. Love does not hold exclusive control where one is allowed little or no freedom to fulfill himself apart from the one who loves him.

Love is not anxious to impress. Love doesn't seek to make an impression or to create an image for personal gain.

Love does not cherish inflated ideas of its own importance. It is not self-centered. It has the ability to change and to accept change. It is flexible. It doesn't allow, or expect, life to revolved around itself.

Love has good manners. It has respect for others which results in a set of Christ-centered standards. It has discretion. It knows what is proper and when.

Love does not pursue selfish advantage. It does not have primary concern for personal appetites or for social status; but it shows concern for needs of the one loved and families and friends involved.

Love is not touchy. Love is not hyper-sensitive or easily hurt. It does not take things personally. It is not emotionally involved with personal opinions so that to reject ideas is to reject the one giving them.

Love does not keep account of evil. Love doesn't review wrongs which have been forgiven. It does not dwell on past sins. It destroys evidence of past mistakes wherever possible.

Love doesn't gloat over the wickedness of other people.

Love doesn't compare self with others for self-justification. It doesn't use others' sin to excuse personal weaknesses.

Love is glad with all godly men when truth prevails.

Love is in active fellowship with dedicated Christians. It is occupied with spiritual objectives.

Love knows no limit to its forbearance.

Love has the ability to live with the inconsistencies of others. It has empathy for the problems of others.

There is no end to Love's trust. Love believes in the person loved and in the person's worth without question. It has no reason to doubt the person's integrity.

There is no fading of Love's confidence. Love is not fickle. It has perfect peace and confidence that God is primarily responsible for introducing the right partner at the right time.

Love has unlimited endurance. Love is able to outlast anything. It is able to endure all obstacles and even love in the face of unreturned love.

These are the characteristics of Christ's love for us; and we are to imitate Him in our love for others.

"an offering and sacrifice to God"

Jesus Christ's death on the Cross for us, His work of atonement, is represented in the offerings and sacrifices made by the Jews in Old Testament times.

The sin offering, for example, presents Christ atoning for the guilt of sin (Heb. 13:11,12). It shows Christ as actually burdened with the believer's sin, standing in the sinner's place as his substitute. This offering tells of the Lord's death as presented in Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, and 1 Peter 2:24. It carefully guards the holiness of Him who "was made sin for us."

The trespass offering shows Christ's atoning for the damage caused by sin and has in view the injury of the sin as opposed to the guilt of the sin. This aspect of the trespass offering is seen in Psalm 51:4, "Against thee and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest."

In the burnt offerings, the idea of sin is not as conspicuous, and sets forth Christ offering Himself without spot to God to perform God's will with joy; the offering is a sweet savor to God, so-called because it deals with Christ in His own perfections and devotion to the Father's will, as opposed to the non-sweet savor offerings which show Christ carrying the believer's sin.

The sacrificial animals symbolize Christ in some aspect of His redeeming character. The ox shows His patient endurance as Savior (1 Cor. 9:9,10; Isa. 52:13-15; Phil. 2:5-8). The sheep or ram portrays Christ in His unresisting facing of death (Isa. 53:7). The goat typifies a sinner, and, when it is used for Christ, shows Him as the One who was "numbered with the transgressors." The turtledove or pigeon symbolizes mourning innocence and portrays poverty. It shows forth Him who became poor that we might become rich. (Isa. 38:14; Heb. 7:26; Lev. 5:7; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-8).

As a sweet savor offering, the peace offering shows Christ as our peace. Jesus Christ made peace, He proclaims peace, and He is our peace (Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:14-18). The offering sets forth God as propitiated and the believer as reconciled - God and the sinner brought together in peace, both satisfied with the finished work of Christ.

The meal and drink offerings typify Christ in His human perfection tested by suffering. The fine flour represented His sinless humanity. The fire is the testing by suffering, even unto death. The frankincense symbolizes the aroma of His life toward the Father (Exo. 30:34). The absence of leaven, a type of evil, shows forth His spotless character. The oil mingled with the offering speaks of his conception by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18-23). Oil poured on the offering speaks of his enduement with the Spirit (John 1:32; 6:27).

Some of the offerings are called "heave" or "wave" offerings because of the special manner in which they were presented. Those portions of the offerings which were "heaved", or lifted up, were regarded as gifts to God, and were understood to be handed over to the priests to be used only by them and their families (Num. 18:19; Lev. 22:10).

Phil. 4:18, "But I have all, and abound. I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God."

Ephesians 5:3

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints;

The first, emphatic, word here is "fornication" (PORNEIA), referring to sexual misconduct. The word "uncleanness", too, refers to general conditions of immorality.

Moral absolutes exist, and their foundation is in the Word of God.

God the Father intends that sexual activity be conducted only between husband and wife. The Bible takes a categorical and unequivocal stand

against non-marital sex and condemns any other sexual practice.

Exodus 20:14, "You shall not commit adultery."

Hebrews 13:4, "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

Judges 16:6, So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you."

Proverbs 6:32, The one who commits adultery is lacking sense; he who would destroy himself does it.

Topic: Sexual Health in the Bible

"**covetousness**" is "ruthless greed", selfish indulgence at the expense of others. A natural desire, even a desire for something good or legitimate in its place, becomes greed when one is willing to hurt other people to obtain something.

"**let it not be once named among you**" - from ONAMAZW, "to be known; to be professed; to be mentioned".

Pagan vices should not exist among Christians. A Christian should not be known by these immoral characteristics.

Ephesians 5:4

Neither filthiness, foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

The apostle uses three more words to describe conduct and speech that is to have no place in the Christian's life.

"**filthiness**" is AISCHROTEIS, refers to "all that is shameless; all that would make a morally sensitive man ashamed." It must be excluded!

Then he mentions "**foolish talking**". Plutarch described this type of talk as "the kind of talk that comes from a drunken man, words without either sense or profit."

Then, "**coarse jesting**" is EUTRAPELIA, literally "a witty or clever turn of speech". This type of speech is not sinful, as such. But there are two things that can make it inappropriate. First, witty speech may fail to meet appropriate standards and play, too often, on the borderline of impropriety. Then, such speech replaces what is expected, namely praise.

"**giving of thanks**" is EUCHARISTIA, "gracious speech", parallel to the idea found in:

Eph. 4:19, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers."

Ephesians 5:5

For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

"For this you know" - shows that Paul expects his readers to be aware of these facts. They have "learned Christ"; therefore, they can be expected to be aware of the consequences of following a sinful pattern of living.

These things characterize the "children of disobedience". But the Christian is not immune from these things. In fact, the urgent warning of chapter 4, verses 17 and following, is that believers must make the choice to "walk not as the other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind..."

"**whoremonger**" is PORNOS in the Greek; "fornicator". The word "whoremonger" is an archaic English term meaning "one who sells whores" or "a pimp". The Greek word, however, does not carry this meaning. PORNOS is, rather, used for a person who has a life filled with sexual sin, "fornication", a much broader classification.

The word "unclean" is used in several places in the New Testament, usually in connection with ceremonial uncleanness. In Acts 10:14, where Peter states that he has "never touched anything

unclean", he refers to food that is ceremonially unclean under Jewish law.

In the Christian life, an unclean person is one who refuses to walk in the Spirit or to be occupied with Christ, a person who refuses to confess sin and acknowledge God's sovereignty in his life.

Topic: LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

Topic: UNCLEANNESS IN THE LEVITICAL SYSTEM

A Christian is always "in Christ". Eph. 1:3,5,7. So confession of personal sin is extremely important to the personal spiritual relationship that you have with God.

God requires confession of sin as the means of maintaining a close personal walk with Himself. He requires a continual acknowledgement of His rulership; and confession of sin is the means by which you express your yieldedness and surrender to the sovereign will of God on a moment by moment basis. The Lord wants you to have a very useful and happy life, and part of His plan for providing this sort of life is confession of sin.

I John 1:9 tells us that God will "cleans" a person who confesses. The person who does not confess sin does not receive cleansing and is, therefore, "unclean".

A "covetous" man is one who is a slave to the details of life; he is totally oriented toward material things. Not finding peace and happiness in a relationship with Christ, he is engaged in a continual search for happiness in the things of this world: e.g., money, recognition, friendships, social life, sex.

A person walking in sin will not enjoy the inheritance which God offers.

Topic: VOLITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

To inherit from God, a person must possess the life of God, that is, salvation resulting in eternal life. An unbeliever will not inherit anything from God.

Titus 3:5-7, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 John 5:11,12 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

Therefore, salvation is the qualification for inheriting from God. Col. 1:9-14

We have an inheritance because we share the destiny of Christ. The true doctrine of predestination is that we share Christ's destiny.

Eph. 1:11, also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance. Eph. 1:14

Ephesians 5:6,7

Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them.

The judgment of God comes upon those who reject Christ, the "children of disobedience". Apart from the gift of forgiveness, men stand under the wrath of God because of sin, subject to His judgment.

Men cannot regard these sins lightly. These sins break the bonds of marriage, destroy the structure and strength of the family, and cause children to be born without parents responsible for their upbringing. The sins named here are among the most socially devastating.

But verse 7 makes it plain that Christians must choose not to partake of the sins of the

unbelievers. Clean living is not an automatic feature of the Christian life. We must make a daily choice to walk with the Lord, to stay in the Word, to confess sin, and to avoid what the world offers.

Ephesians 5:8

For you were at one time darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

There is an absolute difference between the unsaved life and the life in Christ. God is light! (1 John 1:5) Light expresses God's holiness and glory.

The opposite of the wisdom and majesty of God is DARKNESS; the world that is estranged from God lives in this DARKNESS.

People who have found life in Christ have been transferred from the realm of darkness to the realm of light.

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."

Rom. 13:12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

2 Cor. 4:6, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

See also Col. 1:13 and 1 Pet. 2:9.

Note: we are "made" light in the Lord, but we must also choose to "walk" as children of light.

Ephesians 5:9

(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.)

The discussion on this verse is from "The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians", by Francis Foulkes.

"The same thing can be described in another way as bearing the 'fruit of the light.' This reading, accepted by all the recent Versions, has better authority in the manuscripts than the KJV "fruit of the Spirit". Paul may not consciously be thinking of the light as the seed planted in the life, and in due course having fruit there, but rather of the natural results that should follow, the kind of character that should be seen in the life of the person who has been 'enlightened' by Christ.

"In many passages righteousness is spoken of as a fruit of the life in Christ (Rom. 6:21ff; Phi. 1:11; Heb. 12:11). All that is corrupt and unjust in man's relationship with his fellows must have no place. Then instead of 'all malice' (4:31) there is to be 'all goodness', the active seeking of good in every part of life."

Ephesians 5:10

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Verse 9 in parenthesis, so this statement follows closely the statement in verse 8. The person who is a child of light, and who is walking in light, will act on the will of God as a matter of choice.

To do what is acceptable to God one first has to know what is acceptable, then choose it. The light of God is given, but that does not free us from the responsibility of thought and choice. Romans 12:2 deals with the same subject, that of 'proving' what is good, acceptable, perfect of the will of God.

Ephesians 5:11,12

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

There are times when a Christian must stand against the works of darkness, even to the extent of voicing a reproof. The Christian leader, for example, has the duty to "speak, exhort, rebuke" to "set in order the things that are wanting." (Titus 1:5 and 2:15). And the Bible speaks of people being convicted by the Law (James 2:9),

by conscience (John 8:9), and by the working of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

Ephesians 5:13

But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light, for that which makes manifest is light.

The meaning here, however, is predominantly that the Christian's life is to be a rebuke to those who are still living in darkness. "That which reproves is light." There is a sense in which a very strong reproof is felt, even when there are no words spoken. Calvin said of ungodly people, "they neither see their own baseness, nor think that it is seen of God." But then the light of Christ, shining from the lives of those who have come to know Him, breaks in. [Foulkes]

Some men hate the light and try to avoid it; they do not want their works exposed. Others allow their lives to be exposed and are "made manifest by the light". (1 Cor. 14:24ff)

Ephesians 5:14

Wherefore he says, Awake you that are asleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

"Wherefore" = "because of which". That is, "because you are an edified believer who has put aside the 'old man' and 'put on the new man', and because you are 'light in the Lord', you need to get into fellowship with the Lord and stay there, and Christ shall give you light."

This verse is speaking of practical progress in the Christian life through edification. The objective of this section is to present some of these principles. Three analogies are used in verses 14 to 16, AWAKE, ARISE, and WALK.

One of the words used in the Bible to describe Christian growth is edification. Edification is the process of spiritual growth in a Christian who is living according to the plan of God and who is fulfilling the command to "grow in grace and in the knowledge" of Jesus Christ.

The Greek word which is translated "edification" is (oikodome), a noun found in a number of New Testament passages:

Rom. 14:19; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; Eph. 4:12,16,19; 2 Cor. 14:5,12

In all these passages, edification has two meanings.

- Collectively it refers to the building up of the body of Christ. In Eph. 4:16, you can see that the edification of individuals results in the building up of the church.
- For individual believers, edification refers to the spiritual growth and momentum in the Christian way of life, resulting in the glorification of God.

To grow in Christ, a Christian must be positive to God's plan and towards Bible teaching.

The word "awake" is the imperative of EGEIRW, "to arouse; to excite; to raise from the dead; to rebuild; to restore; to awaken from sleep". The verb is in the 2nd person plural, indicating that all believers are being addressed.

Now, this command is meant figuratively, not literally. The context indicates what is meant, that there are at all times adverse conditions in the world which require that Christian be awake, yet many Christians "sleep" when the danger is the greatest.

"you that are asleep" - present active participle of KATHEUDW. Many Christians have gone to sleep at the switch. Ephesus is a church of great potential but needs jolting awake. "Awake you that are asleep" is the equivalent of saying "have a positive attitude toward the Word of God".

This command precludes all excuses; the issue is cut and dried. There is only one way to be edified, and it requires massive intake of the Word of God and continuous walking in the Spirit.

"arise" is the imperative of ANISEMI, "to stand up again". This refers to the restoration to fellowship which occurs when a Christian confesses sin. (1 John 1:9)

"from the dead" is temporal death, the state of being out of fellowship.

Topic: CONFESSION OF SIN

Topic: DEATH IN THE BIBLE**"and Christ shall give you light"**

This is the future active indicative of EPIFAUSKW, "to shine upon someone or something." The word was sometimes used in speaking of producing inner light, as in "A person lights up" when he is happy.

In this context, this phrase speaks of edification in the soul, the full and applied knowledge of God's Word that gives a Christian wisdom and prudence, divine viewpoint with which to make correct decisions and solve problems God's way.

John 8:12, "Then Jesus spoke again to them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Ephesians 5:15

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

"See then" - from BLEPW, "to see; to glance". But this is in the imperative, so the meaning is "be alert; be aware".

"that you walk" - this is another imperative, of PERIPATEW, "to walk; to live".

"Walking" is the normal manner of life for a Christian.

The Greek word (peripateo) means to walk or to walk around. It is used for literal walking in Matt. 4:18. But peripateo is used primarily for the function of the plan of God in the Church Age in such passages as:

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk (peripateo) in newness of life.

Gal. 5:16,17 But I say, walk (peripateo) by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in

opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Eph. 4:1,2 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk (peripateo) in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love,

Eph. 5:1,2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk (peripateo) in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

"circumspectly" - AKRIBEIS, "accurately" or "with accuracy".

Walking accurately requires a certain amount of God's Word stored in our souls. The degree of one's growth in Christ will determine the accuracy of the Christian walk. People who ignore the Bible will not walk circumspectly.

Col. 1:9,10, "For this reason, we also, from the day we heard, do not stop praying for you. In fact, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, for the purpose of pleasing Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good thing; in fact, constantly growing spiritually by means of doctrine from God."

Topic: THE CHRISTIAN WALK**"not as fools, but as wise"**

"fools" is ASOPHOS - "without wisdom"

"wise" is SOPHOS - "with wisdom" This person knows the Word of God and is using it.

The result of having Bible truth in the spirit is wisdom. Wisdom is divine viewpoint, God's way of looking at things. Wisdom gives a person the ability to make decisions according to the will and plan of God. Wisdom permits a person to solve his own problems according to God's viewpoint.

The "fool" is the person who is ignorant of Bible teaching. There are at least two types of fools:

1. The fool who says "No" to scripture teaching. He is either absent when the Bible is taught, or when he is present he's not paying attention.
2. There is the fool who says "No" after he has intellectual comprehension. He understands the doctrine but does not apply faith. Example: a person may understand what confession of sin is all about yet never actually confess sin.

Ephesians 5:16

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

"Redeeming" is the present middle participle of EXAGORADZW, "purchasing; buying up; making the most of". When this refers to time it means "allowing no time to be lost".

The Greek word comes from AGORA, the central "market place" in a Greek city. EX-AGORA means to purchase something "out of" a market place.

There is money involved in this word, in its ordinary usage. To be able to redeem something, to buy something "from the market place", you have to have enough resources with which to make the purchase.

God, in His grace, has provided us with the capital for living the Christian life. This "money" is the Word of God. But money can't be used when it's sitting in the bank; it has to be spent for things of value.

To "redeem the time", then, means that we must use the Word of God, applying the Word from our minds to our spirits and our lives.

"time" - KAIROS, "era; the critical moment" The meaning here is that a believer should purchase his whole lifetime on this earth, the "critical era".

"because the days are evil" - the conflict between Jesus Christ and the forces of Satan is intensified during the present church age. Evil refers to Satan's plan for this world, and the

Christian must be every alert, using all available spiritual resources to make the time count during his lifetime.

A Christian lives one day at a time, and redeems the time each day.

When a Christian develops and lives an edified life, he regards every day alike. (Rom. 14:5,6)

The study of Ephesians 4 shows how the edified life is constructed, and this chapter assumes that the Christian is edified, that he is mature and spiritually self-sustaining.

Every day is a precious gift from God. Each day can be purchased:

1. By the filling of the Holy Spirit
2. By daily Bible study which brings about spiritual understanding and wisdom

The only time we have to glorify God during our lifetime is the number of individual days allotted to us. (James 4:13-17)

Psalm 90:12, "So teach us to organize our days"

God provides the operating capital to make each day count for Him. This is called "more grace" in James 4:6, and refers to spiritual intelligence, the "engrafted, engenerated Word" of James 1:21.

Every day is a special day in a Christian's lifetime. No day is holier than any other day. John 11:9,10.

Every day, a Christian must avoid mental attitude sin, which produces misery, bitterness, unhappiness, lack of joy, and chastisement. Prov. 27:1.

It is only during our lifetimes that God can demonstrate his Grace and Love to us under circumstances of suffering and pressure. Psalm 102:1-3.

Ephesians 5:17

Wherefore do not be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

"Wherefore" = "because of this", reference to the command to live one day at a time and redeem it.

"be not" = "stop becoming!"

"unwise" - AFRON, "senseless; witless; crazy"

The word "unwise" is a reference to a Christian without doctrinal understanding. This person has a very low spiritual IQ. His applications will always be wrong. Because he doesn't know God's will, he begins to sublimate, to look for cheap substitutes, to be a slave to details of life. He falls for movements which emphasize the emotional; he may fall for any system of pseudo-spirituality.

How does a person stop becoming a fool! He enters a crash program of "understanding".

"but understanding" - the present active imperative of SUNIEIMI, "having technical and categorical knowledge; to know the objective truth about something; to have a useable frame of reference". Spiritually, this word refers to having the Word of God in the mind and in the soul. This is an edification word. Understanding is a result of growth in Christ.

Edification results in one's being oriented to grace, being occupied with Christ, having inner happiness that does not depend on people or things, having a relaxed mental attitude and the ability to love all people, being a master of the details of life.

"what the will of the Lord is" - THELEIMA, "design; purpose; will"

God's will IS God's plan from eternity past. God's will is the presentation of His plan to our thinking and volition; we respond when His will is presented.

God's will is NOT "what am I going to do?"
God's will IS, "What is God doing?"

There is a cardinal principle of divine guidance. 1 John 3:23, "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

God's will, first of all, it to believe in Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross. Then, for the believer, God's will is to "love one another".

This is the basis of divine guidance. The first part encompasses salvation; the second part is actually produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The book of Ephesians is all about God's plan for your life. His whole plan for your life is laid out in the Bible. Of course you will look in vain for details about your physical life, items such as job, geographical location, marriage, and the general course of your life. But be assured, if you are operating according to God's known plan for your life, all of the details will fall into place easily.

Ephesians 5:18

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.

The problem that is dealt with in this verse was one which was affecting the ministries of individual believers at Ephesus, excess drinking.

Every believer is in full-time Christian service. The Bible does not distinguish between clergy and laymen. In the Bible sense, we are all laymen, with some of us having duties of service as communicators (pastors, elders, evangelists), or as servants (deacons), and so forth. But every Christian is a priest and a full-time ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ, a witness for Christ, a representative of the kingdom of Christ on this earth.

"be not drunk" - this is the Greek verb METHUSKO, from the noun METHEI, "strong drink". The English prefix "methyl" is a cognate, so we have "methyl alcohol" in English, which is a redundancy when the Greek is considered.

The believers were apparently getting drunk often enough to be causing a problem, and the command is to stop!

This negative command sets up a contrast with the second half of the verse, and it is the second command which is the primary teaching.

The idea is this, that alcohol (or drugs) in large amounts changes the mentality, character, and personality of the imbiber. And the principle is that things that we have on the inside change us, for better or for worse.

We are both activated and motivated by what is on the inside of us. On the negative side - alcohol. On the positive side - the Holy Spirit!

The Ephesus believers were probably using alcohol for the usual reasons, that is, for sublimation or as a tranquilizer. This means that alcohol was taking the place of the daily function of God's system of Christian joy and peace.

A person who has JOY does not need to sublimate. A person who has PEACE does not require a tranquilizer.

When alcohol, or any other drug, is used in this way, a believer fails to acquire edification. Edification cannot occur when the brain is not working. Since the main objective in the Christian life is to grow in grace, it is vital that nothing be done which prevents that happening. A Christian drinker fails to utilize the grace provision of the indwelling Holy Spirit, receives no edification, and fails to develop a divine frame of reference of wisdom and prudence.

"with wine" from OINOS, "by means of wine"

"wherein is excess" - ASWTIA, "which is dissoluteness, prodigality." This word refers to the removing of inhibitions or debauchery.

"but", a conjunction of contrast which sets up the analogy between the negative and positive principle.

"be filled" present passive imperative of PLEIROW. This means: (1) to fill up a deficiency; (2) to fully possess; (3) to fully influence, (4) to fill with a certain quality.

The Holy Spirit's filling satisfies deficiencies in the Christian's life, deficiencies in knowledge and function. The Christian way of life is a supernatural life and requires supernatural execution, which only the Holy Spirit can accomplish.

The verb "be filled" is a command! But it is in the passive voice, which means that the filling is accomplished by the Lord, not by ourselves.

"of the Spirit" - "by means of the Spirit".

It is very important to distinguish between the INDWELLING and the FILLING of the HOLY SPIRIT. These terms are not synonymous, and they refer to quite different functions in the Christian life.

The INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit lives permanently in every Christian and is automatic at salvation. Rom. 8:9; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; 1 Cor. 6:19,20.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is called the "unction" in 1 John 2:20, and "anointing" in 1 John 2:27. These are synonyms for "indwelling."

The prophecy of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is found in John 7:37-39; John 14:16,17.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit must be distinguished from the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ indwells the believer for the purpose of fellowship, Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5.

The Holy Spirit indwells the believer for the purpose of function, Gal. 5:22.

The FILLING of the Holy Spirit

Maximum fellowship with Christ comes through the function of the Holy Spirit in edification and grace living.

The Filling is a function of the believer's volition and may be lost through carnality, Eph. 4:30.

The Filling is commanded, Eph. 5:18. Because it is a command, it is obvious that the Lord expects us to take some action to be filled. That action is repentance and confession.

The Filling is regained through confession of Sin, 1 John 1:9; Prov. 1:23.

The Holy Spirit's functions in the intake and application of Bible truth, John 14:26; 16:12-15;

1 Cor. 2:9-16; 1 John 2:27. This is the "how to" of edification.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is necessary because of the spiritual conflict in "high places" (spiritual warfare), John 7:37-39.

Ephesians 5:19

Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.

"psalms" indicates that the content of the Bible is the basis for communication among believers.

"hymns" refers to songs of victory celebration.

"spiritual songs" are songs which carry doctrinal content.

"making melody" from PSALLW, "to sing accompanied by a harp or other musical instrument" (From Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, by Moulton and Milligan; and Greek-English Lexicon, Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich)

"to the Lord" - we communicate among ourselves by means of psalms, and the singing of songs of celebration and spiritual songs in our hearts as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:20

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Refer to the topic of PRAYER]

Ephesians 5:21

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

"submitting" is the present middle participle of the verb HUPOTASSW, "keep on being subordinate". HUPO means "under" and TASSW refers to military "ranks".

Hence, the idea is to continue being subordinate, and the middle voice means that the subject of the verb, the Christian, receives the benefit of the action of the verb.

Submission to authority means doing the unpleasant thing as well as the pleasant. Therefore, there is a need for self-discipline. Gal. 5:23 and 2 Thess. 3:8-15 point out that self-control is a result of Christian growth. The entire book of Proverbs deals extensively with this issue. The believer can expect that as he grows in Christ his desire to be submissive to the Lord will grow, as will his ability to be a faithful servant.

Scripture references to local church authority are found in Titus 1:4-16; 2:15 – 3:2; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Matt. 16:16-19; 18:18,19.

In becoming part of a local church, a Christian tacitly approves of the leadership structure of that church. By remaining with that congregation, he signifies that he accepts the pastoral teaching authority and the leadership of others in authority. The Bible commands submission to local church authority.

1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble."

To submit means to recognize the chain of command and to refrain from undermining that authority. This is a command to all believers; and nearly all trouble in local churches comes from the violation of this principle. The troublemakers in a church are those who undermine authority by criticism, by conspiracies, or by other methods. It is the duty of the pastor-teacher to guard against this and to nip it in the bud. The early Christians willingly placed themselves under the leadership of the pastor and deacons because they were known to be ordained of God and that one could profit from their guidance and leadership.

Ephesians 5:22

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

The rest of Ephesians 5, verses 22 to 33, provide an extensive analogy between the institution of godly marriage and the relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ to His body, the church.

Verses 23 and 24 are addressed to the Christian woman who is married to God's choice for her. Verses 25 to 29 show the leadership responsibilities of the husband and extend the analogy. Verses 30 to 33 indicate the results in marriage and conclude the doctrinal analogy.

The word "**submit**" is HUPOTASSW (see vs. 21 above). It derives from a term referring to military subordination in the case of a commander and one who responds to a command. This is a word about Chain of Command.

When there is proper authority, there will be a proper response. In any chain of command there is an initiator and a responder. In a marriage, the initiator should be the husband and the responder the wife.

"**your own husband**" means "your own private husband". This has to do with a private citizen, one who keeps to himself. This simply means that a wife's response, and her subordination, is only to her husband.

These verses do not teach that a woman, in general, is expected to be subordinate to all men! These verses are not intended to make sure that women are "put in their place"! In fact, the purpose of this passage is to make sure that the Lord Jesus Christ stays in His place (in people's thinking).

Read Ezekiel 16.

Ezekiel 16 uses marriage for another analogy. In that chapter, as the Lord is to Judah, so a husband is to his wife. So - Judah becoming apostate and getting involved with false religion is analogous to a wife becoming involved with another man.

There is a direct parallel between Ezekiel 16 and Ephesians 5, except that Ephesians 5 does not discuss the "down" side of marriage, the broken relationship that occurs because of infidelity. As you read Ephesians 16, then, take careful note of the spiritual and social problems caused by Judah's apostasy, and try to infer from those facts things that would result from a broken marriage.

Ephesians 5:23

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the savior of the body.

The key to understanding this passage is the concept found in the whole biblical category of authority. And this subject must be well understood by Christians who want to grow in Christ and have productive lives of ministry.

But a great problem among many believers, in the U.S. particularly, is a disregard for all types of authority. There are many reasons for this, including mental sin, jealousy, arrogance, and other sin patterns. This disrespect derives from the Sin Nature and is an expression of one or more of the lust patterns, such as power lust, approbation lust; so that when some people receive approval or recognition, others are deeply disturbed in their souls.

There is, as well, a considerable lack of knowledge and misunderstanding of the importance of authority and discipline in human affairs. And there is a principle of scripture, that anyone who fails to recognize the function of authority in the human race, and between God and man, destroys the function of his own free will.

Of course you have the right to your own private thoughts; and as long as you do not communicate your thoughts, they remain private, between you and the Lord, that is. Privacy of thought is a freedom that everyone possesses, and it is in this area where every person has some dignity.

You have certain freedoms as long as you do not break the law. Laws are, in the best sense, restrictions on freedoms that allow other people to enjoy their own freedom of thought and person.

In the Bible, a believer is seen to be in many relationships which require a proper response to authority. Employee-employer (slave-master). Judge (police) - citizen. Teacher-student. Parent-child. Husband-wife. In each relationship there is a person who has a leadership position and one who is subordinate.

A pastor and elders of a church have the authority deriving from their spiritual gifts. A believer submits to the teaching authority of a pastor, or other Bible teacher, in order to learn Bible truth. In any teaching situation there must be respect for the one who teaches. You might have some kind of hangup with a teacher, but this is really irrelevant; the teacher is the authority in the classroom, and you have submitted to this authority by coming to the class.

Why all this authority? Because we are engaged in the most ferocious warfare imaginable, the conflict of the forces of Satan with the Lord Jesus Christ. And in any battle, obedience and discipline, and recognition of and submission to authority is vital to success.

Authority was designed for our protection and blessing.

See in this verse, "He is the savior of the body." This refers both to the Lord and to the husband. The husband is the protector and provider for the wife; Jesus Christ is the protector and provider for His body, the church.

If anyone removes himself from the sphere of Christ's protection and provision (apostasy), it is equivalent of going into battle without armor or weapons. Look ahead at Eph. 6:10-19. Now imagine that you have not obeyed the command to "Put on the whole armor of God". The battle still rages about you, but you are going out against the enemy in your underwear, and with your bare hands!

The principle of authority in marriage is that a married woman be able to carry out her own duties as wife, mother, and productive Christian, in the sphere of her husband's protection and provision.

Ephesians 5:24

Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

"**Therefore**" - lays the stress on the application of the analogy being discussed here.

"**as the church is subject**" - another use of HUPOTASSW, "to submit". The church, that is the believers in the church, submit to Christ. From the time you accepted Christ as Savior until your body is saved at the resurrection, and on into eternity, the object is to submit to Christ.

"**unto Christ**" - Christ is the Head, the Chief. The Word of God spells out the commands of Christ, and it is to His instructions that we are to submit.

"**so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing**" - this takes the analogy back to the beginning. \

This refers to the design of God in making a wife a responder to her own man. A woman responds to a man in all of the functions of her soul: self-consciousness, mentality, volition, emotion, and conscience. The woman responds in her soul and body. The man fulfills her in soul and body. This is the supreme human relationship, and marriage is designed to demonstrate to us, in a wonderful way, how great is our relationship with our matchless Savior.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it.

Man is the initiator, his wife is the responder. Man is the provider, his wife benefits from what he provides. This command to men has to do with mental attitude love, the love that is the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:26

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word:

The word "that" introduces a purpose clause; here is the planned result of Christ's love for the church and His sacrifice for it.

"**might sanctify**" is the aorist active subjunctive of the verb HAGIASW, "to set apart". This is a reference to sanctification that takes place during a Christian's lifetime, the development of the Christian life through edification.

The church is "set apart" by its response to the Word of God.

"and cleanse it"

The word "cleanse" is KATARIDZW, "to purify; to cleanse". The English word "catharsis" is a cognate. This verb is an aorist participle. In Greek grammar the action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb. Therefore, the cleansing precedes the sanctifying. A Christian is cleansed, then set apart.

The word "washing" is in the instrumental case, therefore the cleansing takes place "by means of washing of water by means of the Word." The Word goes into the believer and has a cleansing action.

We can see, then, that there are two main parts to cleansing in the Christian life. First, when we sin, we can receive cleansing when we confess our sins.

1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Then, as we walk in fellowship and are occupied with Christ, we take in the Word of God, which has a continual cleansing function in our souls.

The apostle Paul told Timothy, "Keep yourself pure...". Good advice for a young man in the ministry. And when you look at all of the passages in the Bible that have something to do with personal purity, you realize that this Christian characteristic has a prominent place in God's plan for the Christian believer.

1 Timothy 6:9-11

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

"But you O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

Jesus Christ exalts purity to the realm of the spirit, a type of purity that is far greater than the ritual purity of ceremonial cleansing seen in Jewish and other religions. This paper is aimed at showing you what Christian purity is (and is not) and how you can grow to have this purity.

The New Testament Greek word for purity is KATHAROS. It is found in several New Testament passage, notably in Titus 1:15, "Unto the pure all things are pure..." KATHAROS is the usual Greek word for purity and was used for several types of purity in the Greek world:

- Ceremonial purity of a physical object, such as a vessel in a temple
- Ceremonial purity of a temple worshipper
- Purity in the spiritual nature of a person

In the ancient world, ceremonial cleansing would have been by some ritual. In the New Testament, there is a deeper meaning: purity refers to the result of cleansing of the soul by God. In this context, purity is a characteristic of a believer in fellowship who has experienced the "cleansing from all unrighteousness" promised in 1 John 1:9 to the one who confesses sin to God.

Titus 1:15, Unto the pure all things are pure...

Reading this phrase, a cynical person may draw the wrong conclusion, namely that a totally pure person can touch anything or think about anything and remain pure as the driven snow. But this thinking involves lifting this phrase out of the whole context of the Bible in order to make it meaningless and false.

This does not mean, "All things are pure in the judgment of the pure."

It's true that a pure-minded man will not usually put evil constructions or interpretations on things. But to say that something is pure because he judges it to be so, or because he cannot be defiled, is false. The context of Titus 1 makes it

clear that the apostle Paul is referring to matters of Judaistic practice, ceremonial purifications, among other things, that have been misconstrued by false teachers.

1 Peter 1:18-23

"Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

"Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

"Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently:

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever. "

Salvation is not by ceremony, but by the sacrifice of Christ. Morality is not by ceremony, but by the purification of the soul through the Word of God.

What is Christ's purpose for the Church?
 "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:25,26)

Purity is brought into the Christian's life and maintained through (1) Confession of sins which maintains fellowship with God and (2) edification, which is the basis for growth in all areas, including having victory over sin

Ephesians 5:27

That he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

"That he might present" - from PARISTOMI, "dedication; presentation"

This word was used in the ancient world for the man being presented to the woman in marriage. The woman's response often indicates which way the relationship will go.

In the same manner, a Christian's response to Bible truth will determine whether a person has a wonderful relationship with the Lord or a very unhappy life.

"to himself" - Jesus Christ is the groom. Since the Body is not yet complete, we now looking ahead to the time when the Body will be complete, at the end of the church age when the Lord returns for his Bride. The church age is the period of "courtship". How will it be determined how the relationship will go? By the response to Bible doctrine on the part of individual believers!

"glorious" - ENDOKSOS, "splendid; gorgeous; glorious", this is a reference to glorious clothing. **Compare Luke 7:25.**

"not having spot" - "not holding" any spot. "Spot" is SPILOS in Greek, meaning "stain" (English cognate: "spill"). This is a reference to moral stain, the function of the Sin Nature.

"or wrinkle, or any such thing" - all aspects of the former sin nature are to be removed by Jesus Christ. This refers to the future when the believer receives a resurrection body.

"but that it should be holy and without blemish"

The contrast is between the believer during his lifetime who is part of the Body of Christ, and that same believer at the Rapture who is part of the Bride of Christ. This verse describes the final two of the three phases of sanctification. Phase I is salvation when we receive imputed righteousness. Phase II occurs during the course

of our lifetime, during which sanctification is a process of edification. Phase III happens when we enter eternity and receive a glorious resurrection body.

Ephesians 5:28

So ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loves his wife loves himself.

This verse brings us back to the marriage relationship, the original analogy.

"ought" is OPHEILW, "to owe; to be indebted; to be under obligation". The man in the marriage is responsible to make this happen, to be the initiator, the aggressor. This is a perpetual obligation.

"husband" is ANER, "noble man"; he is his wife's personal hero.

The man's capacity to love and to carry out any responsibility comes from the Christian growth he has experienced in his walk with the Lord. This is the love described in the previous lesson, where there is the absence of pride, bitterness, jealousy, vindictiveness, implacability, hatred, etc.

When this attitude is present in the man, he will love his wife's soul and body in his heart, so that as age comes on, she will still glow with the reflected glory of her husband. The man is the custodian of the woman's soul and body. The woman's body changes, but his mental attitude does not change. A man, growing old, does not stop loving his own body. There, his correct attitude is that he will not stop loving his wife's body.

Application: the mind of Jesus Christ is Bible truth. And truth is for the believer as long as he is on this earth. It is available all the time. There are wrinkles, there are stains, there is scar tissue and callous, there are spots, but the Lord always loves His own body. The Bible is the mental attitude love of the Lord, 1 Cor. 2:16.

Ephesians 5:29, 30

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

This is a fitting analogy. When the word "body" is used to refer to the church, the idea is that the Body responds to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The believer in Christ is designed to respond to God. The human spirit, given at salvation, is designed for rapport with God through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is give so that the believer can respond to God. The whole function of edification and Christian growth is aimed at improving our response to God.

Christians often ask "How can I be of service to God?"

Service to God does NOT begin by running out and doing something for God. There are good works that we are to do, but the primary service to God is not the good works. A Christian's response to the Lord, and service, begin with his attitude toward the Lord, his devotion to Him.

Devotion to the Lord is based on your position in Christ, in your status as a believer in Christ. So the first part of the plan of God for your life is "I am a member of His Body..."

In this passage, the concept of this relationship is explained by comparing it to a proper marriage relationship.

Ephesians 5:31

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

The Christian, at the time of salvation, is designed to be a responder in his soul. He is designed to respond to God's overtures of love through grace. God initiates His love through the Word of God, the mind of Christ communicated to man.

Production in the Christian life occurs ONLY after this relationship is fully and properly

established, AFTER truth is present in the soul, AFTER a Christian is edified.

The Christian life is not a program of activities, it is a relationship with Christ, which will, in due time, result in "children", just as in the proper marriage the relationship is established and stabilized well before children are brought into the world.

Ephesians 5:32

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

The gospel was fully revealed to them, and people were saved by grace through faith in Old Testament times as they are today. They also understood the resurrection and the ascension of Christ, the tribulation and the millennium, and many other facts.

The mystery not understood by OT prophets is the relationship between Christ and the church, a doctrine which was not revealed to the Old Testament prophets.

Col. 1:25,26; Rom. 16:25,26; Eph. 3:1-6.

Another way of stating this verse is: "This doctrine is an important teaching which has, up until the church age, been unknown to man. I speak with reference to Christ and the Church."

Ephesians 5:33

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

In this passage, a known doctrine from the past is linked up with a new (mystery) doctrine; a teaching principle.

The whole doctrine framed in this chapter is summarized and reinforced in this verse.

Ephesians, Chapter 6

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

The word "**children**" is TEKNON, referring to a child in relationship to his father and mother.

The word "**obey**" is HUPAKOUW, meaning "to listen under authority", or "to listen in submission."

This is an interesting word. From the Greek word AKOUW we get the English "acoustics". In Greek it means "to hear". The prefix HUPO means "under". HUPAKOUW was used in ancient Greek for the action of a porter who was answering the door. He first "heard" the knock, then acted by opening the door.

The meaning here is that the child is to "listen", then act in accordance to what he hears.

"**parents**" - the establishment of authority, and the proper response to it, begins in the home. Respect for authority, or the lack of it, is the result of home teaching, or the lack of it!

When children do not have respect for their parents, they reject all forms of authority in life. They become misfits before they become adults. As children grow older, they must decide whether they will submit to their parents teaching. Each generation determines its role in life on the basis of recognition of authority in the home.

Children are obliged to obey their parents, whether their parents are right or wrong. Parents will not destroy their children by enforcing the principle of obedience; but they can harm their children through lack of teaching obedience.

PARENTHOOD

1. Parents are the basic authority in a community or a nation. Parenthood is God's primary institution for governing society.
2. It is a great advantage to children to have their parents living during their childhood.
3. Children begin life helpless and ignorant. The child's survival depends on the parents to provide food, clothing, shelter, and TRAINING. Prov. 22:16.
4. Parents must train children in self-discipline, respect for authority, respect for the rights

and privacy of others, respect for other people's property.

5. Christian parents are responsible for the evangelism and Bible training of their own children.
6. The proper training and instruction will minimize many of the problems associated with disobedience and lack of respect.

"in the Lord" - this is positional truth for parents and children. This is part of the believer's union with Christ.

Children obey their parents as part of their own full-time Christian service. This is a command, and it is the first thing a child is responsible for in his life. When a child asks "What is God's will for my life?", the first answer is "Obey your parents".

"this if right" - or, "this is just". This is a permanent principle, it is right, and it will always be right.

Ephesians 6:2,3

Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise.

That it may be well with you, that you may live long on the earth.

"honor" is TIMA, "to hold worthy; to value; to respect". The noun form TIMEI, refers to a "place of honor or rank".

This refers to the respect and honor accorded parents by a responsible child. This is not the childhood obedience to authority discussed in the first verse. But it is the ongoing respect for parents that continues for a lifetime.

"That it may be well with you" - or, "that it may become well with you..." The verb is GINOMAI, which means "become", not "to be".

Each generation has the opportunity to make its own way. If the previous generation has thoroughly messed things up, obedience to this principle will allow the next generation to straighten things out for themselves. One does not become what he is because of heritage, but

by his response and obedience to the things of the Lord and yieldedness to Biblical principles.

The verb is in the SUBJUNCTIVE mood, indicating that the well-being is only a potential. Every generation makes its own choices. The history of the past generation does not determine the history of the present generation.

Hegel: "We learn from history that we learn nothing from history."

When a generation lives without being obedient to divine or human authority, the suffering is intense, whether for individuals or for nations.

Read Judges 19:2-21, Romans 1:18-32

2 Tim. 3:1-7 [NASB] "But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

"For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

"unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

"treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God;

"holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these.

"For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses,

"always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

"that you may live long" = MAKROCHRONOS, MAKRO + CHRONOS, "a long time". Disobedience and lack of honor for parents leads to shorter lifetimes!

Ephesians 6:4

And you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"**Father**" is PATERES, "parents".

"**provoke not to wrath**" is PARORGIDZW, "to provoke to anger". It means, "do not exasperate" your children.

It is not given here just how the children are made angry or exasperated. There is no description of what parents are not to do so that their children are not provoked.

However, the antidote IS given in this verse, "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

When parents do not train their children in the things of God, they sent them up for very bad times in the future.

"**bring them up**" is EKTREPHW, "to raise from childhood".

"**nurture**" is PAIDEIA, "training, discipline, education"

"**admonition**" is NOUTHESIA, "to put something in the mind; a warning; a reproof"

What is the training and reproof of the Lord?

READ 1 Cor. 10:1-11. Notice that the apostle Paul describes the Old Testament practices of the Jews as a warning to the Corinthian Christians not to fall into the same patterns of disobedience.

Notice Titus 3:10. What is a heretic? One who refuses reproof. He doesn't want the "mind of Christ", he wants his own mind.

Col. 3:16, Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing (NOUTHESIA) one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Notice in Col. 3:16 that "wisdom and teaching" precede the "admonishing".

Rom. 15:14, And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another.

But notice that the teaching of Romans 15:1,2 precedes the admonishing of Rom 15:14.

Rom. 15:1,2, Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.

Ephesians 6:5

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ.

"**Servants**" is DOULOI, "the slaves". Since the word can be used for both servants and slaves, note the following remarks.

1. The word "servants" here had the original means "one who is a slave". Many slaves were Christians, and many worked for non-Christian masters during this period of time.
2. While slavery was a great evil in the Roman Empire, as it is at any time, Paul did not become sidetracked by condemning the practice of slavery. Some aspects of slavery are discussed in the letter to Philemon, but the New Testament does not deal with slavery as a social issue.
3. Instead, Paul declared the greater issues of the gospel and edification, and how God's plan provides for believers who are categorized as servants, or laborers.
4. Even under conditions of slavery, Christians can have inner happiness and other blessings compatible with their function during the church age. Whether slave or free, every Christian functions under the Plan of God and the grace system for spiritual growth and production.
5. The application of this passage in modern times is to the employee, in contrast to those who are in management.
6. In this passage we are dealing with the results of Christian growth, and the emphasis is placed on the development

of a mature spiritual life through edification, and the confident, stable mental attitude that results from living according to a divine frame of reference.

"be obedient" - the present active imperative of HUPAKOUW, meaning "to be under authority; to concentrate. This is a command to all believers, because all Christians are in full-time Christian service.

There is no excuse for Christians to offer less than 110% of his effort for the people who are paying him. Jobs are provided by the grace of God; the prosperous nations with their capitalistic systems only exist by the grace of God.

"to them that are your masters" - KURIOS, "lords". This word is used for deity and for human authority.

READ Romans 14:1-8.

"according to the flesh", or "according to human standards"

"with fear" - PHOBOS. The word is translated "respect" in 5:33 and refers to "respect" or "reverence". Respect for authority on the job is part of a Christian's full-time service for Christ.

"trembling" - TROMOS. This does not mean that you shake with fear when the boss walks by. This refers to maximum exertion on the job, digging in and working until the job is finished, whatever it.

The combination of PHOBOS and TROMOS was used to mean "great zeal", the emotion that you have preceding the big game, a combination of stage fright and determination to succeed.

See 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 7:15; Phil. 2:12.

"in singleness of heart" - this is the preposition EN "by means of", plus an adjective APLOTEIS, "probity; integrity of mind; simplicity". Therefore we have "by means of integrity in your mind" the believer does his work.

Mental attitude sin, toward the boss, towards other workers, or just in a general disgruntled

frame of mind, will ruin a believer's ability to perform good work.

"as unto Christ" - all authority comes from the Lord. Therefore, your boss's authority comes from the Lord. A Christian must work as if he were working for the Lord Jesus Christ as his boss.

Topic: CHRISTIAN IN THE WORKPLACE

Ephesians 6:6

Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

From this passage we learn that a Christian is involved in his job with his complete soul, as well as his body. In fact, the word "heart", in the King James version above, is actually PSUCHEIS, meaning "soul".

Every part of a Christian's soul is involved in his work:

Self-consciousness: self-discipline and concentration on the job.

Mentality - this refers to the two different functions of a Christian mind, perception, and divine viewpoint. Perception is the understanding part of the mind; and the soul's mentality contains the Word of God, the Plan of God, which keeps the believer in a stable mental attitude, free of mental sins.

Volition - the Christian makes decisions, based on divine viewpoint, which are compatible with doing the best possible job as unto the Lord. When others are goofing off, you work! When others conspire, you refuse!

Conscience - divine standards by which the Christian makes correct decisions.

Emotion - a person's appreciation of the Lord will cause him to do his job as unto the Lord.

Col. 3:16,17, "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And WHATSOEVER YOU DO in word or

deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

"not with eyeservice" - a very interesting word in Greek! OPHTHALMODOULIA.

Notice the two parts. OPHTHALMO refers to "eyes". We get the English word "ophthalmologist" from this, an "eye doctor". DOULIA is from DOULOS, a "slave".

This word means to do one's job to gain attention, to win approbation, to stimulate pride, to call attention to oneself.

But a Christian does not advance himself! God does the promoting. In every sense, you are not promoted, or recognized, until God promotes you!. The Christian does his job as unto the Lord, and waits for the Lord to take care of the advancement.

When a Christian understands this principle, and can have a relaxed life because he trusts the Father to handle all promotion and prosperity, it will take him a long way toward being a master of the details of life.

"as men pleasers" - refers to people who try to please the boss, often at the sacrifice of the actual work.

"but as the servants of Christ" - on the job, we are the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"doing the will of God" - the verb POIEW and the noun THELEIMA. This refers to a believer's duty to KNOW the plan and purpose of God for his life, and to DO it!

"from the heart" - not KARDIA, but PSUCHEI, "out from the soul".

Ephesians 6:7

With good will doing service, as the Lord and not to men.

"with good will" - that is, "accompanied by good thinking". "Good will" is EUNOEWS, EU "good" plus NOEW, "to think". In God's plan, good thinking is thinking from His point of view, from a frame of reference coming from doctrine applied in the soul.

With divine viewpoint, a Christian has divine standards, uses divine principles for making decisions and solving problems, is free from mental attitude sins, and has the motivation to learn and do the job as well as possible.

"doing service" - to serve, doing even menial tasks, as unto the Lord, associated with a good mental attitude.

"as to the Lord and not to men" - discussed in verse above.

Ephesians 6:8

Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether bond or free.

"knowing" - from OIDA, means that the believer is edified, knows the "mind of Christ", and recognizes the divine principles involved in this passage.

"that whatsoever" - NOT "whatsoever", but "each one" - refers to each believer being in the direct mind of God and recognized by Him.

"good thing that any man does" - AGATHOS. Divine good; that which is produced by the Lord in the life of a Christian who is walking in the Spirit, living in the Word, occupied with Christ, and through whom God is producing "gold, silver, and precious stones".

Good work on the job is a function of the control of the Holy Spirit and results in divine production. The Christian is witnessing on the job by performing to the best of his capability with a great mental attitude.

A Christian who has an ordinary job, and does it "as unto Christ", is in the will and plan of God, and is performing a much greater service than any missionary or pastor who is laboring in the flesh!

"the same shall he receive" - future middle indicative of KOUMIDZWN, "to be rewarded; to recover with interest". The future tense refers to the time of the judgment seat of Christ, when the rewards are handed out to those whose labors were "not in vain". The middle voice indicates that the believer benefits from these rewards.

"of the Lord" = "from the Lord". The believer on the job will be rewarded just as much as any pastor, missionary, Christian worker. There is no hierarchy of jobs in the Christian life, not jobs that are more important, or more spiritual, than others.

"whether bond or free"

Ephesians 6:9

And you masters to the same unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with Him.

"masters" refers to those in authority. KURIOI - "lords"

"do the same unto them" - authority demands a sense of responsibility. The more authority one has, the less time there is for fun, pleasure, avocations. The boss has a lot to do for and with his employees.

"forbearing threatening" - ANIEMI "to suspend", plus APEILE, a noun meaning "unfair treatment" (rather than "threatening"). So - "suspend unfair treatment".

This does not mean that management does not have the right to fire or discipline workers. But it means that treatment of laborers must always be fair and just, as unto the Lord, according to the function of Grace.

Even in Grace, God the Father will chastise one of His children who is living in sin. In an analogous way, someone in authority has the duty to bring someone into line. The parent, the child. The judge, the criminal. The employer, the employee.

Warning: do not try to bring someone into line over whom you have no authority! A person who does this is a "busybody", a person who steps into someone else's position of authority. This is a dreadful and very sinful practice.

"knowing that your Master" - the Christian employer's responsibility is to God. Economic failure of a company has often been attributed to the failure of management. A person who abuses his employees is not managing as unto the Lord,

and certain laws of economics may be violated, leading to bankruptcy.

"is in heaven" - God is always in His place of authority.

"respect of persons" is PROSWPOLEIMSIA, "receiving face to face", or, literally, "to receive a face". Used by the Greeks to mean "partiality" or "respect of persons". This would, of course, constitute gross unfairness. God is not unfair and treats all people the same.

God is fair in His character or essence. Therefore, God will not tolerate unfairness or partiality. Note that God deals with mankind fairly, offering salvation to any person without partiality.

God loves every believer equally, and offers all blessings to all Christians, equally. God is fair in His blessings; God is fair in his discipline.

Therefore, Christian management should have this kind of grace orientation.

Ephesians 6:10-13

The apostle Paul had a lifelong contact with the Roman army. He was a Roman citizen and very patriotic; and his admiration of the fighting forces of Rome was great.

The Roman army was at its peak of efficiency during the early Christian era. It served as police and frontier guard over all of Europe, the borders with Asia, and North Africa. Paul had many dealings with Roman legionnaires.

- A Roman soldier delivered Paul from the mob in Ephesus.
- Roman soldiers saved his life when the mob in Jerusalem wanted to kill him in the temple area.
- The Roman soldiers were able to deliver Paul out of Jerusalem from the hands of the religious leaders who wanted him dead, and they brought him safely to Caesarea.
- It was Roman soldiers who escorted Paul on the trip from Caesarea to Rome, the voyage on which Paul suffered shipwreck.

- Roman soldiers delivered Paul to the Roman garrison of the Praetorian Guard for his imprisonment.

The Praetorian Guard represents everything that is famous in Roman history. Their ranks were made up of the best and most experienced combat tested centurions, comparable to the finest from West Point, Sandhurst, St. Cyr. They were comparable to the best combat units of modern times, such as Special Forces, 1st Marines, Patton's 3rd Army, the Coldstream Guard, Big Red One, etc. In Roman history, the man who wanted to be Emperor had first to win the favor of the Praetorian Guard.

Every man in the ranks was a centurion, the most highly trained warrior in history. The commander of the Guard was a chiliarch who maintained the strictest discipline and combat training, even though all ranks were seasoned combat veterans.

The emperor of Rome at the time of Paul's first imprisonment was Nero (Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus), a member of one of the most distinguished families of military men and politicians; a family of genius, but Nero himself was insane. As long as Nero listened to the counsel of Seneca, he was more or less an enlightened monarch; and he managed to judge Paul fairly during the first imprisonment.

Paul wrote the epistle to the Ephesians during the period of his house arrest in Rome while he was guarded by a centurion of the Praetorian Guard. Paul witnessed to many guards during his two years under house arrest; and as these men were posted to other countries, they carried the gospel with them. Paul recognized the mission field of the military and understood very well God's plan in having him in Rome under these conditions.

This passage of Ephesians has as its background a large number of Roman military metaphors, as you might suppose. Military terminology is seen in a great deal of Paul writings; for example:

- In Gal. 6:17, Paul talks about bearing in his body the "mark" of the Lord Jesus. In

history, this mark was a brand placed on the back of the left hand of a Roman soldier who had finished basic training. It was a high honor and the sign of a "man's man."

- Note the military terms in 2 Tim. 2:3,4. Paul wrote 2 Timothy during his second imprisonment.
- Roman military drill is the background of the terminology in Gal. 5:25; 1 Thess. 5:14; Col. 2:5.
- 1 Cor. 15:20-23 describes the doctrine of the resurrection of believers in terms of a military parade. There are two "battalions" of believers "passing in review", first those who were dead, then those who are "alive and remain".
- In 1 Cor. 14:8, Paul described the military commands given by a trumpet. The idea here is that those who speak in tongues cause confusion in the ranks.
- In Gal. 1:6, Paul speaks of legalists as having gone AWOL from the Gospel.
- In Phil. 4:6,7, Paul refers to the mounting of the guard.

Eph. 6:10-12 provides, in military terms, an "estimate of the situation". Such an estimate is based on facts gathered and analyzed by reconnaissance and intelligence personnel. Questions to be answered are:

- Who is the enemy?
- Where is the enemy?
- What are his strength and disposition and his supporting units?
- What is his logistical support and where are his supply lines?
- What are his weaknesses?
- What is the terrain like where the battle will be fought?

Ephesians 6:10

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

finally ...literally, "as to the remaining", but in this context, "now to get down to the final planning for attack". Paul wants the Christian to go on the offensive against unseen forces, the forces of Satan.

be strong...from the present passive imperative of ENDUNAMAO, a reference to inner strength or moral courage.

Success in battle is always based on moral courage. The present tense used here indicates that moral courage must be used continuously. The passive voice shows that this courage is received by the believer from the Lord as a product of Grace. The imperative is the mood of command; "You are ordered to receive great moral courage!"

This courage comes through Christian growth in maturity, the faith/grace process for Biblical perception and application.

Read 2 Cor. 10:3-6. Our weapons are the weapons of the soul; this is how the believer receives strength. The basic emphasis in Christianity is not "doing something" but "thinking something". Divine production follows divine thinking. The soul is "armed" when the believer is edified.

Bible truth applied to the life will include orientation to Grace, a relaxed mental attitude, a capacity for personal and impersonal love, great inner peace and happiness, and a divine frame of reference. These are all ingredients of moral courage.

in the Lord... the Lord is the source of our strength and training.

in the power... the instrumental case of KRATOS, meaning "inner power" or self-discipline.

of his might... genitive of source of ISCHUS, "endowed power". The source for everything is the Lord Himself. See Acts 1:8. This takes us back to Eph. 5:18 and reminds us of the necessity of the Holy Spirit's control.

Eph. 6:10 "As to the remaining teaching, receive great inner strength from the

Lord and in the inner power of His endowed power."

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the whole armor of God, wherewith your shall be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Put on... refers to the soldier picking up his equipment and weapons. This is an imperative (command) verb in the middle voice, indicating that the believer receives benefit from putting on the armor.

the whole armor... PANOPLIA, "all armor and weapons"; so, "all military equipment". [The English cognate is "panoply".]

There were three types of soldiers in the Roman army that wore armor and carried these types of weapons.

The hastati (from HASTA, "javelin") were less experienced soldiers under training. They were usually not well trained with the more sophisticated weapons such as the spear, machaira sword, or bow. These troops were usually not used in the main battle, but only in the opening skirmish when javelins were thrown at the advancing enemy. The new believer is the hastati in the Christian life. He is not trained with much in the way of weapons because he is still ignorant of a lot of God's Word.

The principes were somewhat more advanced. This was a young, vigorous, strong soldier, equivalent in this analogy to the vigorous advancing Christian who is beginning to operate on a divine frame of reference.

The third line of battle was composed of the triarii, the veterans, soldiers who could move into any area of combat and were well-trained with all weapons.

that ye may be able... DUNAMAI, the ordinary Greek word for "ability". This is the ability which is the result of edification; and it is the main source of strength in the angelic conflict.

to **stand**... HISTOMI; this is the readiness of the combat soldier, the Christian "centurion", armed, tough, unyielding, with pride and motivation.

"Standing" is the first thing taught in unarmed combat or martial arts. One of the first things taught in Judo, for instance, is how to "break the stance" of the opponent. The Gauls, against whom the Romans fought many campaigns, under Julius Caesar and others, were human "tanks" in the sense that their ability to take a very strong combat stance made them difficult to defeat in individual combat.

Every believer is a member of the combat team and is required to take his own part, to stand on his own. We are armed with spiritual gifts and equipment, provided by Grace, to fight against the forces of Satan.

against the wiles of the devil... METHODEIA, "face to face with the strategies" (methods) of Satan.

Eph. 6:11 "Put on all of your spiritual military equipment so that you may have the ability to stand in the ranks, face to face with the strategies of Satan."

Ephesians 6:12

for we wrestle ... refers to any sort of personal combat. In the military sense, it refers to military contact with the enemy.

not against flesh and blood ...that is, "not face to face with human beings".

but ... "in contrast to the foregoing"

against..."face to face with" the following roster of the Satanic organization.

principalities... ARCHON, a word in Greek for one of the highest rulers.

This word first shows up in the Attic Greek (Athens) in the days of the Athenian democracy. The archon was the president or preeminent decision maker in Athens. The number two man was called bassilius archon, or "king-ruler". The third man was called polymark, a military ruler. The following six leaders in Athens were the thesmoteitai or "legislators". Even though there

was democracy, there was no anarchy in Athens because these leaders kept things under control.

The Satanic organization has a number of supreme rulers; how many is not known.

powers ... from EKSOUSIAS, "commissioned officers"; therefore, a secondary group of demon rulers.

rulers of the darkness of this world .. the phrase "ruler of this world" is all one word in Greek: KOSMOKRATOR ["world" + "ruler"]. The word SKOTOS follows; therefore the phrase should read "world rulers of darkness".

These demonic rulers are Satan's supporting organization; analogous to logistics, intelligence, special weapons units, etc.

Satan has a special force of high ranking demons to make attacks against prominent officials and heads of nations.

In Daniel 10:13f, the term "prince of Persia" refers to a fallen angel, a demon, who was busy attacking the ruler of Persia. Gabriel was delayed in bringing a message to Daniel because he was in conflict with this kosmokrator demon. The archangel Michael came to help and released Gabriel to come to Daniel.

In Dan. 10:20, the "prince of Grecia" is mentioned, referring to the demon in charge of mounting attacks against the ruler of Greece who was Alexander the Great at that time.

The principle is that Satan will vigorously attack any nation which protects the divine institutions, allows personal freedom to its citizens, and protects the nation against immorality. In nations like that there is evangelism and missionary activity, so demon activity will be stepped up with respect to those countries.

In addition, all Christian believers are placed under direct attack in the world system, with particularly heavy attacks against those who are advancing in the Christian way of life.

spiritual wickedness in high places ... literally, "spirits of evil in the heavenlies". This refers to the rank and file of demons which perform numerous functions.

Eph. 6:12 "Because our combat is not face to face with human beings but, by contrast, is in confrontation with demon rulers, military commanders of Satan, world-rulers of the darkness, and spirits of evil in the heavenlies."

Ephesians 6:13

The question arises as to why God allows the Angelic Conflict to continue. One reason is that in every generation, God permits Satan to use his genius to attack the Plan of God and the principle of Grace in the plan. Pressures are brought to bear on believers so that the divine provisions of Grace may be made manifest.

wherefore..."because of". Refers to the previous statements regarding spiritual warfare against demons. Hence, "Because of Satan's organization and activities, take the whole armor of God..."

take... imperative of ANALAMBANO, "to take; to seize" with a prefix which adds the idea of repetition to the verb. We must "seize or take again and again" the armor of God. As an example, one piece of the armor is "truth" (verse 14). This piece of armor must be "put on" every day.

In any group of Christians there are two types, those who are "ready" and those who are "not ready". A uniform of armor must be taken up and put on whenever combat is anticipated. For the Christian, combat is continuous. The emphasis of this verb is "Don't get caught without your armor on!"

the whole armor of God...PANOPLIA. The hastati, the princeps, and the triarii all wore the same basic armor. In the following verses, the individual parts of the armor are described.

that ye may be able to stand...

The following passages of scripture provide excellent illustration of the concept of the Christian's "stand".

1 Cor. 15:57,58

Psa. 16:8; 21:7; 55:22; 125:1

Gal. 5:1

Phil. 1:27

1 Pet. 5:5-11

Psa. 46:5; 66:9; 112:6; 121:3

Prov. 10:30

1 Cor. 10:12

Job 11:14,15

Acts 11:23

Phil. 4:1

1 Thess. 5:21

2 Thess. 2:15

Heb. 3:6; 4:14; 10:23

against the wiles of the devil...

See Topic: Satan, particularly concerning his strategies. Also, refer to notes on demon activity in the previous discussion on v. 12.

and having done all, to stand.

Eph. 6:13 "Because of this, continually take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to take your position in combat, and when all is finished that you may remain standing."

Ephesians 6:14

With this verse begins the categorization of the Christian's armor, using by way of illustration the armor of the Roman soldier.

stand therefore... aorist active imperative of HISTOMI, the ordinary verb for standing, but in this context "to stand in military rank".

Grammar Note: In verses 14 to 17 there is a string of verbs, all of which are aorist participles in the middle voice. These are the verbs such as "take" or "put on" associated with putting on the pieces of armor. The Greek aorist participles have the same standing in a context as the English past participle in that the action of the participles precedes the action of the main verb in the sentence. The idea is that before a soldier can take his place in the ranks, he must be outfitted and trained.

having your loins girt about ...aorist middle participle of PERIZUNUMI, "to put around".

The Roman soldier put around his waist a very wide belt which was the holder for a lot of equipment. There was a loop, for example, for the scabbard for the machaira sword. Other loops held ropes and a rations sack. When the legions conquered a city, the soldiers would empty out the ration sack to make room for gold, jewelry, and other loot they picked up.

There were loops on the belt for darts. The belt was tied in several places to stay in place, so that no matter how the soldier moved about, fell down, climbed hills, etc., the belt was always in place with weapons at the ready. There were designs stitched into the belt which designated various campaigns in which the veteran had fought. Instead of campaign medals or ribbons, the soldier would weave into the belt something he had taken during the battle.

with truth... ALEITHEIA, refers to truth taught accurately. This is the belt of the Christian soldier.

and having on.. "having put on" the breastplate of righteousness.

the breastplate... THORAKA, [Engl. cognate "thorax"]. This was attached to the belt and provided protection for the upper torso, front and back.

In the ancient world, breastplates were of layers of cloth, sometimes with metal greaves attached. The Greeks introduced a bronze breastplate, with bronze plates covering vital areas or the torso, held together with leather or cloth connections. Some Samaritans noticed that horses' hooves, cattle horns, etc., were made of very hard material, so they began to use horn sewed to cloth to protect from blows.

The Romans had the ideas for armor design which provided light weight combined with ease of movement and protection from blows. The best type was called the thorax stadias, or "breastplate which stands by itself". This breastplate was attached to the belt by leather thongs passed through rings on the bottom to keep it solidly attached. It was anchored to the

belt, and it was above the belt. Note: the belt had to be put on first, then the breastplate.

of righteousness... The righteousness of God is basic protection for the believer. The belt of truth combined with the breastplate of righteousness is the basis for the edification of the Christian.

Eph. 4:12,16,29

Eph. 6:14 "Stand, therefore, having about your waist the equipment belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of divine righteousness;"

Ephesians 6:15

And your feet shod ..."to bind with sandals". The sandal was the GI boondocker for the Roman army. This is a reference to the foot soldier slogging it out. The infantryman fights with the least glamor and the highest casualties.

While the Greek soldier wore greaves to protect his ankles, the Roman soldier wore a heavy soled sandal which had metal studs on the bottom for good footing on uneven or slippery ground. This shoe was known in Latin as the caligula, so the foot soldier was called caligatus. Officers wore different footgear.

with the preparation of ETOIMASIA, refers to full preparedness, being able to march great distances in order, with others, and over a long period of time, to use weapons effectively.

the gospel of peace...we are to be ready at any time to minister the gospel. Note that all believers are included in this command. Every Christian is in full time Christian service, always on the front line.

Even a Christian who doesn't want to fight is in the conflict. A soldier may be untrained or in poor condition and drop beside the road before the enemy is reached. Or he may be killed in the first skirmish.

The primary thrust of evangelism is through the individual. There is a place for those with the spiritual gift of evangelism; but these men can reach only a specialized segment of the population. Individual believers circulate

throughout the community in various functions. They have jobs; they belong to clubs; they have certain friends. The principle of witnessing for Christ is that you do it in your own environment.

Preparation implies the ability to fight. Preparation means flexibility and the ability to use God's Word in witnessing. Knowledge of the basic doctrines of salvation is necessary for witnessing (not salesmanship techniques). You need to know about Reconciliation, Propitiation, Redemption, Imputation, Regeneration, and The Barrier, as a starter. You don't have your shoes on your feet without this preparation.

Notes on personal witnessing

- Witnessing for Christ is the responsibility of every believer. Acts 1:8; 1 Pet. 3:15; Mk. 5:18,19.
- The effectiveness and clarity of the believer's witnessing depends, in large measure, on his understanding of the Last Judgment. Sins will not be the issue! The only reason that a person will stand at the Last Judgment is that he rejected Christ during his lifetime. John 3:18; 3:36. All sins have been judged at the Cross, and there is no double jeopardy.
- The basis for the indictment of unbelievers is human good, not sins. The witnessing Christian must make the issue clear.
- Witnessing is impossible apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit. John 16:8-11. And the Holy Spirit must minister to the unbeliever to apply the doctrine of salvation.
- The context for witnessing is that part of the Word of God called the Gospel. 1 Cor. 1:18; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12.
- The dynamics of witnessing depends on the believer's mental attitude. One cannot be an effective witness if he is ashamed of the Gospel, if he does not have the capacity to be occupied with Christ, or if he is not oriented to Grace.
- In Rom. 1:14-16, the apostle Paul says "I am debtor", "I am ready", and "I am not ashamed". A fisherman has a desire to fish.

One is not a "fisher of men" without a desire to win souls.

- There are two sources for a Christian's witness: (1) the testimony of his life, 2 Cor. 3:3, and (2) the testimony of his lips, 2 Cor. 5:14-21.
- There is a reward for witnessing. 1 Cor. 3:11-16; 2 Cor. 5:10. Rewards in heaven are an extension of edification; the only things that are rewarded in heaven is what is done on the basis of Grace. Thus, every reward in heaven is an eternal memorial to the grace of God. Grace means that rewards do not reflect any personal glory or merit. It is the Lord who enables us to labor for Him and who provides the divine production in the life (gold, silver, and precious stones).

Eph. 6:15 "Having shod your feet by means of full preparedness in the good news of God's peace."

Ephesians 6:16

above all ...or, "in addition to all". This phrase does not mean that the following item of equipment is greater, but that it is simply to be added to the above.

taking ... aorist active participle of ANALAMBANO, "to pick up something, as from the ground, repeatedly". The main verb is "stand" in v. 14, so this action precedes the action of the main verb.

the shield of faith ...THUREOS.

The Romans had a long, rectangular, knees-to-chin shield which protected from arrows and spears and could be knelt behind during an arrow barrage. It was quite a bit heavier and clumsier than the smaller Greek circular shield; but there was a series of exercises, a manual of arms, designed to give the soldier flexibility and strength in the use of the shield. Groups of soldier who were besieging a town could form close together and hold their shields over their heads to make a huge testudo, or "turtle", to protect the group from missiles.

The Romans were known by some of their enemies as the soldiers who carried a "door"

(thureos) into battle. The Franks of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul ridiculed these smaller men because of the great cumbersome shields they carried. But the barbarians were surprised in battle when the little Romans, with their great discipline, their consummate fighting skills, and their mental attitude of victory, wiped up the ground with the disorganized, vacillating Gauls.

In this verse, the Roman shield stands for the faith of the believer in the promises of God. The value of faith lies not in the person exercising it, but in the object. Faith is something that all people possess and use every day. It is a non-meritorious system of thinking and decision making. Most of what we learn, we learn by faith.

Topics: FAITH; FAITH-REST

wherewith ... "by means of which"

ye shall be able ...future active indicative of *dunamai*, a verb of ability or power. Implied in the future tense is that there will be a training period in the use of the shield before battle comes. In the Christian life, the training period is the time during which promises and doctrines are learned and practiced.

to quench ... aorist active infinitive of *SBEINUMI*, "to extinguish, to break off, to chop off".

the fiery darts ... "missiles which have been set on fire", a reference to fire arrows.

Persians used fire arrows against the Greeks in the days of Xerxes. Herodotus makes reference to these in his description of the attack against the citadel at Athens, referring to arrows dipped in tar and set afire before shooting them.

Thucydides, in his book on the Peloponnesian wars describes the Spartans in the siege of Platea, "The Plateans constructed a wooden frame which they set upon the top of their own wall opposite the mound (built by Spartans). [They were trying to outbuild each other to get the high angle of fire for their arrows.] They also constructed curtains of skins and hides to protect the front of the wooden platform. These were designed to protect the woodwork and the

workers against the blazing arrows of the Spartans."

The Roman historian Livy, in his "History", described the siege of Saguntum in which the Saguntians had designed giant darts to be fired by a catapult. "There was used by the Saguntines a missile called *follerica*, with the shaft of a fir tree, and round in all its parts, except at the point from which the iron projected. This part, which was square, they bound with tow and smeared with pitch.

"But what caused the greatest fear with this weapon, even though it should stick in the shield and did not penetrate into the body, was that when it was discharged with the middle part on fire, it bore along a much greater flame produced by the mere motion, and obliged the soldier to drop his shield and expose himself."

of the wicked ... literally, "of the wicked one", the source of the fiery darts.

Eph. 6:16 "In addition to all this, having taken up the shield of the believer's faith, wherewith ye shall be able to extinguish or cut off the fire arrows of the wicked one."

Ephesians 6:17

and take ... "receive, (imperative), as an item of equipment"

the helmet of salvation ... the *PERIKEPHALAI*A, literally "something placed around the head", so, in the military, "helmet".

It is the soul which is said to be saved; and the soul is in the head (with its mentality, volition, self-consciousness, emotion, sin nature). So it appropriate that the helmet is used to represent salvation.

The Romans had the best helmet of the ancient world. Many other nations used helmets of cloth wrappings, animal hides or bones, or hooves, etc. The Roman helmet had chinstrap, visor, and came down to cover the back and sides of the neck. Officers' helmets had a ridge on top on which was mounted plumage or some sort of brush, depending on the rank.

The parts of the Roman helmet were: a lining of leather, softened for comfort and good fit; the helmet itself which was a bronze casque for the soldier, or iron alloy for officers; a metal crest for the plume; and a chinstrap. The highest ranking officers had gold and silver alloy helmets for parade dress.

The helmet represents many principles of doctrine associated with salvation.

Topic: Salvation Doctrines

and the sword of the Spirit ... the MACHAIRA mentioned before. The word machaira was chosen here, and in Heb. 4:12, by the Holy Spirit during inspiration.

There were many types of swords used in the ancient world:

The *romphaia* was a broadsword used mostly by the Gauls of Julius Caesar's time. It was used with both hands, was six to eight feet long, sometimes with one edge, sometimes two, and used to hack off limbs and heads. The "barbarian" soldiers made great slicing sweeps with the broadsword, leaving himself open for thrusts of the *machaira*.

The Persians used the *zephos*, a thrusting weapon with a point, rounded like a pencil, but with no cutting edge.

In the *akinakes* sword, the emphasis was on the handle and the ornate decoration. It was actually a dress sword and was not considered a serious combat weapon. The *dolon* was a sword hidden in a cane or riding crop and used mostly by assassins.

The *machaira* is described by Vegetius in his Military Instructions to the Romans. "They likewise taught not to cut, but to thrust, with the sword. For the Romans not only made jest of those who fought with the edge of a weapon, but always found them an easy conquest. A stroke with the edge, though made with ever so much force, seldom kills, as the vital parts of the body are defended both by bones and armor. On the contrary, a stab, although it penetrates only a few inches, is usually fatal. Besides, in the attitude of striking [with the broadsword], it is

impossible to avoid exposing the right arm and side. On the other hand, the body is covered when a thrust is given, and the enemy receives the point before he sees the sword."

The user of the machaira is always covered, always protected, always on balance, and always ready for defense or attack.

of the Spirit, the Word of God..."the sword from the source of the Holy Spirit, namely, the Word of God.

Maturity and the ability to do God's work comes through years of study of God's Word and practice in using doctrinal principles. Following is a review of the doctrinal ideas found in:

2 Timothy 2:15.

Study ... from the Greek word *spoudzo* meaning "to be industrious, eager, to be diligent, to exert oneself". It has a stronger meaning than "study". It is actually a way of life which includes the proper mental attitude and motivation to learn Bible doctrine daily. This word could be translated "make every effort". And it is a command.

to show yourself or, "to make every effort to represent yourself...". It means to make every effort to concentrate, to be objective to doctrine. to give priority to the Word of God. The reason that you are entering the Lord's work is to live the life of Christ.

approved ... "to pass an exam". The emphasis is on success, not failure. To be a successful Christian worker, you must study (Test #1), and you must use what you study (Test #2). Can you teach to the glory of God? The test is on the accuracy of what you teach. Can you work to the Glory of God? The test comes when you apply, whether you use Grace or legalism, whether you depend upon man or God. Can you fix a car, iron a shirt, type a letter to the glory of God? The test is on whether you know how to do this.

workman ... *ergateis*, an agricultural worker, a laborer, a routine worker. This word indicates one who is involved in the mundane, routine, ordinary, distasteful, or dull things in life. In the

ancient world it meant feeding the cattle, working in the fields, cleaning out the barn, etc.

Any task can be done as unto the Lord; the Christian life is fantastic. The emphasis here is on doing small, routine things as unto the Lord. Stay in fellowship and wait for God's promotion.

needeth not to be ashamed ... literally, with the previous word, "a not-ashamed workman". You don't have to be ashamed of your station in life if you have an honest vocation. Every believer is in full time service. A Christian worker must keep grace oriented and not despise the ordinary things, or those who live an "ordinary" life. And he must have these qualities before moving out.

rightly dividing with the word of truth ... "to cut straight, to line out a straight path." Use Bible doctrine to keep from straying into the

cults, into the movements, to stay with accurate interpretation and application of the Word of God. This enables a life with no detours, no hangups, no blind alleys. Therefore, the verse says, "Making every effort to represent yourself approved to God, an irreproachable worker cutting a straight path with the Word of Truth."

Eph. 6:17 "And receive the helmet of salvation, and the sword provided by the Holy Spirit, which is the Word of God."

Note: There are no notes available for the portion from Eph. 6:17 to the end of the chapter.

Categorical Studies (Word Studies and Doctrinal Topics)

Adoption

The word adoption in the New Testament is translated from the Greek word **huiiothesia**, which means "the placing of an adult son" and refers to the formal act of recognizing the maturity of an adult son. The word is found in five New Testament passages: Rom. 8:15,23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5.

The new-born baby is **brephos**, as in "the babe (**brephos**), lying in a manger...". The word sometimes refers to the fetus, as in "...the babe (**brephos**) leapt in her womb...". The believer is also called **teknon**, a child which is growing up but which is still under parental care. Hence John 1:12, "...to them gave He power to become the sons (**teknon**) of God." But the believer is also in union with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is called **huios**, "an adult son". So, in union with Him, we are said to be adult sons also, although we may be **brephos** or **teknon** by experience.

To the people living in the predominantly Greek and Roman culture of the 1st Century A.D., the word **huiiothesia** would bring to mind the ceremony of *toga virilis*, in which a 14-year-old boy went through an investiture ceremony with the adult male members of his family. At this ceremony, speeches of challenge to the youth would be made, and offerings would be made to the gods. Then, the boy would stand in the center of the group and take off the child's garment that he wore. A new adult man's robe, or *toga*, would be placed on him. This was the *toga virilis*, the "robe of a man".

At this time, the 14-year-old was given adult privileges and responsibilities. He could conduct business in his own name, could buy and sell property, could marry, could vote in the Assembly, and in many other ways could carry on as an adult citizen. Of course, he was not mature enough or wise enough to exercise all of the privileges he had; and he was not experienced enough to live up to all of the responsibilities. But the seriousness of his position as a citizen was impressed on him; and if he was intelligent and hard working, he would grow up to be an adult having integrity and character.

Application

The spiritual use of the word "adoption" signifies the placing of a newborn child, in the spiritual sense, into the position of privilege and responsibility attached to an adult son. The question arises as to why a naturally born child needs to be adopted. Are we not, after all, "born again"? It is here that the true meaning of "adoption" comes in; because in the New Testament, "adoption" refers to a positional advance. The new believer is advanced positionally to his majority, even though at the time of salvation he is spiritually immature, a "babe in Christ".

Because spiritual adoption takes place at the moment of salvation, there is really no period of childhood experience recognized for believers. The Christian has been placed into the privilege, liberty, and duty of a full-grown adult. Spiritual adoption imposes the same way of life on all children of God. This requirement is reasonable because the Christian life is to be lived in the sustaining and upholding power of the Holy Spirit. And this provision is available as much for one person as for another.

Anger

Everybody gets angry. (Well, I do, anyhow, and I suppose other people do, too.)

We know that we all have sin natures that have areas of strength and weakness. You may be strong where I am weak, and vice-versa. So it may be that you would never think of committing a particular sin that I might be having a great deal of trouble with.

But, in one way or another everyone has problems with anger. Sometimes the anger is a quiet, seething resentment or indignation at some large or small offense, real or imagined. Sometimes anger explodes into a rage that can turn into retaliation, violence, or murder.

When we are angry we hurt people, usually those who are closest to us. And we really hurt ourselves; an angry person is his own worst enemy, as we shall see in this topical study.

But Christians can have victory over the sin of anger! This study is written to lay out what the Bible says about anger and to answer questions like the following:

What's the difference between sinful anger and righteous indignation?

Does God get angry?

What causes me to get angry, and what can I do about it?

How can I have victory over the sin of anger?

Definition

The Bible describes anger as a sin - a sin of mental attitude. As a sin, anger expresses antagonism, exasperation, indignation, resentment, outrage. Anger often produces an emotional feeling, but the feeling is not the anger. The thought pattern which produced the feeling is the sinful anger.

In the Bible, the type of anger which is not sinful is more properly called "righteous indignation".

The Bible uses two Greek words for anger: orge, referring to mental anger, and thumos, for mental anger. It's possible, but not common, to have mental anger without an emotional response. In Eph. 4:31, both types of anger are related to bitterness.

Anger is a sin which promotes sins against other people, such as gossip, self-righteous judging, maligning, complaining.

Both anger and righteous indignation are mental reactions to events or circumstances. If the mental reaction is unjustifiable, it becomes an emotional reaction such as irritation or exasperation, and may lead to irrationality.

But if a reaction is justifiable, it is never irrational. An example would be righteous indignation regarding heresy.

Righteous Indignation

Righteous indignation is not sinful anger. It is a clear understanding of a bad situation because you have a clear understanding (from the Bible) of what God thinks about. Therefore, there is no reaction which leads to anger and sin.

In Mark 10:14, Jesus became opposed to the disciples when they forbade the children to be brought unto Him. This was not anger, it was an understanding of a wrong.

Jesus expressed righteous indignation in Matt. 23:13-36 when he condemned the scribes and Pharisees. And He wasn't angry when He told Peter "Get behind me, Satan, you are a stumbling block to me. You have not concentrated on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Another example of righteous indignation is a Christian's mental attitude toward criminal activity. You can pursue, prosecute, and sentence a criminal without compromising such principles as grace, forgiveness, or impersonal love. You are aware that the criminal's act is wrong and that he must be stopped. That is righteous indignation. But you don't hate the criminal or fall apart emotionally

because of sinful anger. Impersonal love is a result of Christian growth and allows believers to have a regard for even the most obnoxious people that does not depend on their character or behavior.

It is righteous indignation that allows God to be “angry” about sin but to love us anyway. His love for us depends on His character, not on ours.

Characteristics of Sinful Anger

Anger is sin from the sin nature. Gal. 5:19-21, “Now the deeds of the flesh [sin nature] are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these...”

Anger is related to foolishness. Eccl. 7:9, “Do not be quick to be angry in your heart, for anger resides in the bosom of fools.”

The Bible defines a fool as a person without divine wisdom. He may be a genius, but his thinking is from human viewpoint. He thinks and acts apart from God’s standards and controls. The paramount fool (and the beginning of foolishness) is the person who has “said in his heart, There is no God.”

Look at Romans 1:18-31 for a detailed description of the results of deliberately turning away from God. A fool is on a rapid downward slide towards destruction, both in this life and the one to come. In the list of terrible sins which characterize the ungodly are several which are either causes or results of anger.

Anger is associated with grieving the Holy Spirit. Eph. 4:30-31, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” Notice the contrast here between conditions of anger and the results of impersonal love.

Anger is a violation of the Christian’s code of conduct as a member of the Body of Christ. Col. 3:8,9, “But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, {and} abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its {evil} practices”

Anger hinders effective prayer. 1 Tim. 2:8, “Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.”

Anger is always accompanied by other sins. Prov. 29:22, “An angry person stirs up strife, and a hot tempered person abounds in transgression.”

Anger promotes the sins of gossip, self-righteous judging, maligning, revenge, complaining, bitterness, and many others. Heb. 12:15, “See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.”

Anger makes a person his own worst enemy; he brings misery upon himself. Prov. 22:8, “He who sows iniquity will reap vanity, And the rod of his fury will perish.” The unhappiness comes from many sources: failure to be occupied with Christ, failure to maintain a relaxed mental attitude, failure to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, thus, failure to grow in Christ. Lack of growth means lack of joy, lack of love, lack of divine viewpoint.

Anger promotes jealousy and cruelty. Prov. 27:4.

Anger causes misery for loved ones, friends, and community. Anger destroys a nation. Prov. 21:19; 22:24; 24:25; 29:22. Amos 1:11, “Thus says the Lord, "For three transgressions of Edom and for four I will not revoke its {punishment}, Because he pursued his brother with the sword, While he stifled his compassion; His anger also tore continually, And he maintained his fury forever.”

Other Bible Teaching on Anger

Eph. 4:26 says “Be ye angry, and sin not.” or “Although you may have become angry, stop sinning.”

This verse is quoted from Psalm 4, which is about David’s righteous indignation at the revolt of his son Absalom. He is resisting the temptation to become angry. “Tremble with anger, yet do not sin.” He was tempted to become angry at Absalom because Absalom had used his position to start a revolution against his father. but he didn’t become angry, he trusted the Lord (Occupation with Christ), and he asked the army to spare Absalom. 2 Sam. 18:5.

It is possible to respond to unfairness or offense without sin. A person may sin against you, yet you can remain without sin. You can put the matter in the Lord’s hands, stay in fellowship, and maintain a relaxed mental attitude. Furthermore, because you stay in fellowship, you are in the best position to be of service in the situation. You can forgive the other person and be open to any reconciliation he might offer. You will at least do your part to keep lines of communication open.

The Bible continually emphasizes righteousness maintained in the face of unfair treatment.

You cannot build your happiness on someone else’s misery. This is what retaliation tries to do. But you’ll never obtain happiness through revenge or by straightening out the other person. To punish someone else using verbal sins or violence is a revenge operation; worse yet, it obstructs divine judgment and discipline. “Judge not, that you be not judged” is intended to warn us to let The Lord handle matters of sins against Himself. The angry person who arrogates to himself the position of judge is in a position of compounded divine discipline himself, worse off than the one who originally caused the trouble.

The Anger of the Lord

The Lord is said to have anger, or to be angry, in several places in the Bible. The word “anger” is used as an anthropo-pathism, a word or phrase that ascribes human characteristics or feelings to God, who is not human. God never reacts emotionally. He is never surprised, shocked, or outraged. But He does have an attitude of wrath or anger against some things.

The phrase “the anger of the Lord” is used in the following passages:

Num. 25:4; 32:14; Deut. 29:20; Judg 3:8; 10:7; 2:14, 20; 2 Kings 24:20; Lam. 4:16; Jer. 4:8,25,37; 30:24; 51:45; 52:3; Zeph. 2:2,3; Psalm 2:5.

The phrase “the wrath of God” is used in the following:

2 Chron. 28:11; Ezra 10:14; Psalm 78:31; John 3:36; Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; Rev. 14:10,19; 15:1,7; 16:1; 19:15.

Victory Over the Sin of Anger

Recognize the sin of anger and confess to the Lord when you become angry. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9. This will help you maintain your walk with the Lord and be controlled (filled) by the Holy Spirit.

Continue to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Forgiveness is an important part of grace being used by a believer. The more you are oriented to God’s plan of Grace, the more adept you will be at using the assets He provides.

Practice trusting God (or, using Faith). God says, “Cast your care on Me, because I care for you.” When you are in bad situations, tell the Lord about it and let Him handle it.

Apostleship

Introduction

The word “apostle” (apostolos) is from the Greek, meaning “an ambassador; one who is sent; a delegated authority.” The word was used for high-ranking naval officers in classical Greek times. An apostle of Jesus Christ was the highest ranking official in the local churches, 1 Cor. 12:28.

Apostles of Jesus Christ were appointed by God the Father for the purpose of establishing churches and spreading new truth, Eph. 3:1-10. There were both the spiritual gift and office of apostleship. The spiritual gift was the divine enabling to function as an apostle, Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor. 28,29. The office of apostleship was the authority to function as an apostle, Rom. 1:5, ACTS 1:25, GAL. 2:8.

Some of the uses of apostolos outside of the Bible are:

- In the classical Greek period (4th and 5th centuries B.C.), apostolos was used by Lysias and Demosthenes to refer to the commander of a naval expedition. When the Athenians went to war, there was a number of men qualified to command the fleet. One of these was elected by lot and sent to the fleet to command it. He was called apostolos.
- During the Hellenistic period (323 B.C. and following) apostolos was used to refer to a person commissioned and authorized by one of the gods.
- In the Papyri of the koine period apostolos was used to refer to a civil agent sent to transact official business.

In the New Testament, the apostles of Jesus Christ fall into two classes:

- The apostles of Jesus Christ to Israel, Luke 6:12-16. These were appointed by Jesus Christ according to the will of God the Father. These men were authorized to announce to Israel that their Messiah was present; and they were endowed with miraculous powers, Luke 9:1,2.
- The apostles of Jesus Christ to the Church. These included the eleven disciples (Acts 1:26), Paul (Rom. 1:1, etc.), James the brother of Christ (Gal. 1:19), Barnabas (Acts 14:14), Timothy and Silas (1 Thess. 2:6,7 cf. 1:1).

The Qualifications of an Apostle

An apostle had to have the spiritual gift of apostleship. The gift was provided by Jesus Christ after His ascension into Heaven, Eph. 4:8-11. The gift was imparted by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, 1 Cor. 12:11; Acts 2.

The apostle received his gift and office by the sovereign decision of God the Father, 1 Cor. 1:1; 12:18; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1.

The apostle had to have been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord, Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1.

The Credentials of an Apostle

An apostle was endowed with miraculous powers of miracles, Heb. 2:4; 2 Cor. 12:12.

An apostle had success in evangelism, 1 Cor. 9:2; 2 Cor. 3:1-3; Gal. 2:7-9.

An apostle had the capacity to suffer patiently, 2 Cor. 12:12.

The Function of an Apostle

Apostles received and communicated new revelation, Eph. 3:2-6.

Apostles communicated the gospel effectively and people accepted Christ in response to their preaching, 1 Cor. 9:1; Gal. 2:7-9.

Apostles helped organize local churches and appointed officers, Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5.

Apostles trained new believers in doctrine, 1 Thess. 1:5 to 2:12.

Apostles had the authority to administer discipline to believers, Acts 5:1-10; 1 Tim. 1:20; 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 13:2.

The apostle had authority over all local churches because he was the channel of New Testament revelation. Since the time of the apostles, no one has been given authority over more than one local church.

The apostle Paul was the most Grace-oriented apostle. He realized that he was the least deserving to be an apostle, 1 Cor. 15:9. He was the most productive because of Grace, 1 Cor. 15:10.

There were false apostles who communicated false information, 2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2.

Baptism

Introduction

The word "baptize" (from the Greek baptidzo) means "to identify" or "to be made one with". In early Greek, the word had both religious and secular meanings. In general, it refers to the act of identifying one thing with another thing in such a way that its nature or character is changed, or it represents the idea that a real change has already taken place.

As a reference to identification, "baptize" means to place a person (or thing) into a new environment, or into union with some one or something else, so as to alter his (its) condition or relationship to the previous environment.

There are seven types of baptism mentioned in the Bible. Four of these are real baptisms and three are ritual baptisms.

Real Baptisms

- The Baptism of Moses
- The Baptism of the Cross (or Cup)
- The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- The Baptism of Fire

Ritual Baptisms

- The Baptism of John
- The Baptism of Jesus
- The Baptism of the Christian Believer

These seven baptisms are described in the sections below.

Real Baptisms

A baptism is called "real" if it involves actually identifying a person with something or someone.

The Baptism of Moses

The baptism of Moses was a double identification, the children of Israel are identified both with Moses and with the cloud (Jesus Christ) as they passed through the Red Sea. There was no water involved (remember, they went through the sea on dry land when the waters were parted). 1 Cor. 10:1,2.

The Baptism of the Cross (or Cup)

Jesus Christ "drank" the Cup filled with our sins. Another way of expressing it is that all the sins of the world were put into one cup and poured out on Christ while He was on the Cross. God the Father judged our sins while they were on Christ. Christ was identified with our sin and He bore our sins on the cross. He was made sin for us. 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24.

In Matt. 20:22 Jesus speaks of the cup he is to drink as he makes a reply to the mother of Zebedee's children. In Matt. 26:39, He prays to the Father to "let this cup pass from me". Nevertheless, He determined to drink from the cup, as seen in John 18:11, "the cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink from it?"

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a real baptism. When a person accepts Christ as Savior, he is placed into the body of Christ. He is identified as a believer. The mechanics are given in 1 Cor. 12:13.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit did not occur in Old Testament times. The first occurrence was on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit placed the new believers into the body of Christ.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the basis for Positional Truth. Believers are placed "in Christ", and in this position have access to many kinds of privileges and blessings. Ephesians 1 has a good description of what it means to have "all blessings in heavenly places in Him."

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was prophesied by John the Baptist, Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16. And it was prophesied by Jesus Christ, John 14:16,17; Acts 1:5.

The implications of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for all believers in the family of God, are given in Gal. 3:26-28.

The principle of retroactive identification with Christ is brought out in Rom. 6:3,4 and Col. 2:12.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience. It is not accompanied by speaking in tongues or any other kind of feeling or behavior. The things that happen to believers at the moment of salvation are accomplished by the Holy Spirit, not by us, and these things are not experiences.

The Baptism of Fire

There is a judgment coming at the 2nd Coming of Christ when all nonbelievers are taken from the earth. They will join the rest of the unbelievers in Torments (Sheol-Hades-Hell) to wait for the Last Judgment (The Great White Throne Judgment of Rev. 20) at the end of the Millennium. This removal of unbelievers for judgment is the baptism of fire.

Fire is a symbol for judgment all throughout the Bible. Examples are the fire which burned the sacrifice on the Hebrew altar, and the fire from God which burned the watered down sacrifices of Elijah and the prophets of Baal.

The doctrine of the baptism of fire is stated in Matt. 3:11,12; Luke 3:16,17; and 2 Thess. 1:7-9.

The Lord Jesus taught several parables regarding the end times when believers and unbelievers will be separated. The believers are to go into the millennium, the unbelievers are "cast off" into fire. These parables are analogies to the baptism of fire.

Wheat and tares - Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43.

Good and bad fish - Matt. 13:47-50.

The wise and foolish virgins - Matt. 25:1-13

The sheep and the goats - Matt. 25:31-46

Ritual Baptisms

A baptism is called a ritual baptism, or a ceremonial baptism, when water is used as a symbol for something else. It is a representative identification. The individual is placed in the water, which means, symbolically, that he is identified with that which the water represents.

The Baptism of John - Matt. 3:6-11.

Here the water is symbolic of the Kingdom of God which John was preaching. When a person was baptized by John, he was testifying to his faith in the Messiah and his identification with Christ's kingdom. The new believer was "identified" with the water, but the water represented a spiritual identification.

The phrase "Kingdom of God" is a general term referring to all believers from the time of Adam until the end of the Millennium. At the time of John the Baptist, all believers were pre-Church Age Christians, although many lived on into the Church Age (which began at the Day of Pentecost).

The Baptism of Jesus

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan by John the Baptist, the water was symbolic of God's will in salvation, namely that Jesus would go to the Cross.

Bible Goals for Children

This paper is not a how-to article on training children, but it gives you some general ideas about the goals parents can set in child training. You will probably have your child in the home for about 18 years, and during that time it is your responsibility to see that the child is educated, trained, and brought to enough spiritual maturity to make the step into Christian adulthood. You can set up a life "curriculum" for your child, for every year of his life, which will enable him to reach his potential in God's plan for his life.

The following are the main principles found in the Bible dealing with parental responsibilities:

- Children are a gift from God to parents. There are both privileges and responsibilities resulting from this gift. Gen. 48:9; Psa. 127:3; Isa. 8:18
- The chief responsibility of parents is the teaching and training of their children. Deut. 6:6,7; Prov. 22:6; 2 Cor. 12:14; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; 1 Tim. 3:4,12; Tit. 2:4; Deut. 4:9; 31:13
- Parents' duties include providing for children's physical needs. 2 Cor. 12:14
- Parents are expected to administer correction involving discipline. Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 3:4; Deut. 4:9; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13

In all eras of Bible history, parents brought their children to public Bible teaching. Josh. 8:35; 2 Chron. 20:13; Neh. 12:43; Prov. 8:17,32; Matt. 21:15; Psa. 34:11; Prov. 3:1

See related passages also in Josh. 1:8; Heb. 3:13; Acts 2:46,47; 5:41,42; 16:4,5; 17:10,11

The Word of God is administered to children in large doses. 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Sam. 2:26; Luke 1:80; 2:49

Parents must realize that children who, in later life, dishonor their parents, bear heavy consequences as the result of divine discipline. Deut. 21:20; 27:16; Prov. 15:20; 30:11; Micah 7:6; 2 Tim. 3:2; Matt. 15:4; Isa. 45:10.

A SET OF BIBLICAL GOALS

The following goals are derived from Scripture context, and they relate to the spiritual development of a Christian of any age. You would like to see your child advance as far as possible toward these goals during his childhood and adolescence. Each of the goals stated arises from a specific Bible promise relating to God's plan for the Christian Way of Life and productivity during the believer's lifetime.

- Christian parents want salvation for their children. Many Christian parents lead their own children to Christ.
- Another goal for children is that they have the ability to live in fellowship with God, through Biblical confession of sin, to support daily growth in the spiritual life.
- You want your child to have inner happiness, the peace of God that passes understanding, and great inner joy that doesn't depend on the details of life. Isa. 26:3; Psa. 128:1,2; Prov. 3:18; John 13:17, etc.
- You want your child to be mentally stable and psychologically normal. A child can be fully adjusted to circumstances whether they are pleasant or adverse. This requires learning to have a relaxed mental attitude which results from claiming the promises of Scripture, executing the commands, and learning doctrine.
- Another goal is that your child have respect for authority, of all kinds: parental, political, spiritual. As a child observes his mother's submission to his father, or his father's submission to legal authority, he will have a very positive object lesson in proper response to authority. Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18
- Your child can have a mastery of the details of life, such things as money, job, health, status, friends, social life, possessions, entertainments, etc.

Mastery of the details of life means:

- (1) having the ability to enjoy the details of life without being a slave to them, and
- (2) having perfect inner happiness in the absence of one or more details of life.

While there are differences in how much parents can provide in actual details of life for their children, any parent can train a child so that he does not seek his satisfaction in those things or make them objects of a search for happiness.

- An important goal is teaching a child about the production of divine good, the lifelong production of "gold, silver, and precious stones" rather than "wood, hay and stubble". A life of witnessing is included in this, as well as the exercise of spiritual gifts, regardless of vocation.
- A child must learn as early in possible the means of having victory over sin, from the standpoint of staying in fellowship with God and in developing freedom from chronic, fear, worry, cruelty, bitterness, envy, hatred, maligning, gossiping, judging, revenge seeking, and

so forth. Along with this is the freedom from the need to sublimate through alcohol, drugs, or fornication.

The result of victory over sin patterns in the life is the freedom from divine discipline and from the self-induced misery caused by sin with and the accompanying neuroses and psychoses brought on by chronic sin.

- In all phases of life, your child should develop a set of Bible standards by which to make decisions which come from divine viewpoint.
- A child can develop the ability to give and receive love, first of all to love and be occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ, then to have a genuine impersonal love for others, and to be able to exhibit true rapport love for friends, family, and spouse.

Along with this is your desire that your child will have the wisdom to be able to distinguish God's choice for marriage partner. This includes an understanding of biblical principles of Christian courtship and marriage, the ability to distinguish true love, and the knowledge of how to set the pattern for a successful marriage, even during the dating years and engagement period.

HELP IN THE PROJECT OF TRAINING CHILDREN

There is no question that parents have the responsibility for training children, but there is a lot of help available, especially in the local church. The church provides opportunity for parents and children to be trained in the Word of God with doctrines essential to family life and Christian living. Both the pastor's public teaching and the ministry of other mature believers in the church, some of whom have "faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly", are sources of help to parents in achieving the goals stated above.

A parent can sometimes delegate academic education responsibility to school teachers whom he regards as competent, people who will reinforce with the child the doctrines and standards he learns in the home and at church. The Christian school, for example, can help parents by providing competent academic instruction in an environment parents with which the parents can be comfortable. The Christian school also provides a format for the sharing of spiritual gifts of teachers along with academic expertise which parents may not possess. This type of school has administrators and teachers whose orientation to life and to doctrine is similar to the parents' and that provides reinforcement of the divine viewpoint taught at home.

Where suitable public or private schools are not available, the parent must consider educating the child at home. Again, there are usually many resource people in a local church who can help with curriculum, tutoring, and management of the academics.

RESULTS OF FAILURE TO FOLLOW BIBLICAL PRACTICES IN RAISING CHILDREN

When parents fail to stay in God's plan for the Christian Way of Life, they will not be in a position to lead their children in obtaining the goals listed here. Therefore, the rest of this paper is a warning to parents who are tempted to be "dropouts".

When parents fail to commit themselves to a consistent routine of Bible study and Christian growth, accompanied by the consistent control of the Holy Spirit, a condition will occur described in the Bible as "darkness in the soul" or "blindness in the soul", Eph. 4:17,18. When this happens, the following progressive negative results are observed, all of which have an enormous negative impact on children, as you can see.

- Soul darkness leads to a breakdown in the faith system of acquiring wisdom, a lessening of the understanding of God's point of view, and a cessation of spiritual growth.
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- In the place of divine standards come human standards, criteria, programs, false standards. This results in subjectivity, unhappiness, frustration.
 - Without a true source for happiness, the believer's frustration leads him to a frantic search for happiness through the details of life. He becomes a slave to those details.
 - The believer also begins to produce his own misery. God's chastisement is compounded daily. Neuroses and psychoses are developed from chronic mental attitude sins. And all this is aggravated by his having no defense against the attacks of Satan. The Christian is still in the battle, but he doesn't have his armor on. He becomes a casualty in the spiritual conflict.
 - Meanwhile, arrogant self-righteousness replaces the righteousness of God, Rom. 10:3. This leads to systems of pseudo-spirituality in which the believer sets up his own system for pleasing God and obtaining His blessing. At the same time he becomes even more alienated from the Word of God, which is the only solution to his downward slide.

When parents are alienated from the Lord, the results in the lives of their children are, of course, catastrophic.

- First, the child adopts the negative viewpoint of his parents toward the Word of God; so he doesn't get into his own program of doctrinal intake.
- Then, his parents' human viewpoint becomes his own; he adopts their standards, their criteria, their doctrine, their methods, etc.
- Further, his parents' pursuit of happiness through the details of life influences his value judgments, his career plans, his orientation to God and God's Word. So children are sometimes further isolated from Bible teaching than are their parents because they never achieve the initial momentum with which their parents may have started.

This is the progression of sin which the Bible says is visited upon the succeeding generations of children.

- The only ray of encouragement in this description is that a child has his own volition and may at some point in his life become positive to Grace on his own. He can certainly recover from his parents' backsliding, but he will experience the effects of poor child training all of his life.

There are many principles for parents to learn from the Bible about avoiding the pitfalls in child training and to help their children make rapid progress in the Christian way of life. I hope that this paper has whet your appetite to follow through on the responsibilities God gives you.

Bitterness

Bitterness is one of the most crushing mental problems in a person's life. When a Christian is bitter, there is a loss of close fellowship with the Lord and a hindrance in one's relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.. Bitterness causes a loss of many of the blessings of the normal Christian life, including emotional stability, peace, and joy. And bitterness results in the loss of production of good works (gold, silver, precious stones) which are a major source of blessing and reward in the plan of God.

Bitterness is a devastating mental attitude sin, and it triggers a wide range of other sins, such as:

- Hatred
 - Cruelty
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- Antagonism
 - Self-pity
 - Unteachableness (implacability)
 - Vindictiveness and desires for revenge
 - Proudful ambition (arrogance)

Bitterness is neither consistent nor rational. A bitter person is his own worst enemy. It is very difficult to maintain any kind of relationship with a chronically bitter person; and bitterness is a major contributing cause of marital and family problems.

The objective in this short article is to provide Christians with a thorough look at what the Bible says about bitterness, including many Scripture examples, then to offer some direction about how to have victory over bitterness.

There are quite a few companion studies in the Grace Notes library which can help identify the mental attitude sin of bitterness and help deal with it from divine viewpoint.

Definition

In English, the concept of mental bitterness comes from the idea of something that has a sharp or unpleasant taste. We speak of something being bitter if it causes grief or is hard to bear; "a bitter defeat", "bitter failure". We also speak of a "bitter loss" when someone's death has caused great grief.

Then, bitterness has come to be used of those things that cause pain or grief, such as "bitter remarks" or the actions of "bitter enemies." We say "he fought to the bitter end", meaning a struggle in the last extremity.

The biblical Greek words for bitterness are PIKROS = "bitter" and PIKRIA = "bitterness", and other derivatives. PIKROS originally meant "sharp", or "pointed". Then it was used more generally for anything that was penetrating to the senses, something that had a pervasive smell or a "shrill" noise. PIKRIA was used for the bitterness of the taste of some plants, and finally found use in speaking of personal experience when something was unpleasant, undesirable, or when something bad was unexpected.

The words PIKROS or PIKRIA are used about 40 times in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament), only rarely to refer to literal bitterness, such as the reference to "bitter" water in Exo. 15:23. Usually it is a reference to men who are (pikroi) "the bitter ones" when they are soured or cruel (Ruth 1:20; Hab. 1:6).

There are seven instances of these words in the New Testament: Matt. 26:75; Luke 22:62; Acts 8:23; Rom. 3:14; Eph. 4:31; James 3:11,14.

So, in the Bible, except when it is obvious that the actual taste of something is meant, PIKRIA refers to intensity of suffering of mind and body, something that is difficult to bear, something that causes animosity and reaction, something that is brought about by hatred or antagonism.

Bible Examples of Bitterness

- Women are bitter because they cannot have children, 1 Sam 1:10.
 - A foolish son is bitterness to his mother, Prov. 17:25.
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- Divine discipline (chastisement) of the Jewish people caused bitterness. This demonstrates the weakness and failure of the people. Bitterness destroyed the people's spiritual lives. The Jews brought on self-destruction by their bitterness.
 - Lam. 1:4; Amos 8:10; Ezek. 27:30; Isa. 33:7; 2 Kings 14:26.
 - Slavery causes bitterness, Exo. 1:14.3.
 - Suffering causes bitterness to people who do not understand the Bible's problem solving devices and principles, and who do not give number one priority to their relationship with God. Deut. 32:24.
 - Ridicule is a source of bitterness, Lam 3:14. The people ridiculed Jeremiah because of their bitterness toward him. When truth is taught, people sometimes react in bitterness.
 - Consummate human pride is a cause of bitterness, Acts 8:23.
 - Degeneracy is a source of bitterness, Rom. 3:14.
 - Cosmic involvement is a source of bitterness, Eph 4:31.
 - Husbands and wives are a source of bitterness toward each other, Col 3:19.

The Results of Bitterness

- Bitterness is antisocial. A bitter person is selfish, inconsiderate of others, withdrawn from society, indifferent or adverse to conformity with conventional standards of social behavior. Even strangers avoid bitter people, Prov. 14:10. No one is happy around bitter people.
- Bitterness is a sign of the spiritual life gone wrong, Jer. 2:19.
- A bitter person rejects Bible teaching. James 3:14, "But if you have bitter jealousy and strife, stop being arrogant and lying against the truth."
- Bitterness shows total lack of grace orientation. A bitter person does not understand the Plan of God, let alone how it affects individuals. In Job. 9:17-18, Job's complaint against God. "Why does God let this happen to me", is a statement of bitterness.
- Bitterness accompanies the sin unto death, Job. 21:25.
- Bitterness motivates complaining, Job 7:11, 10:1. People who habitually complain are bitter people; they have no self esteem.
- Bitterness motivates gossip, Psalm 64:3
- Bitterness fragments other peoples lives. Heb 12:15, "See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God and that no root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by it many be defiled.
- Bitterness is self induced misery, and it produces chain sinning. Bitterness is misery to others in the periphery. But two wrongs never make a right. You cannot build your happiness on someone else's unhappiness.

Recovery from Bitterness

Isa 38:17, "Behold, bitterness became deliverance to me. In Your love You have delivered my soul out of the pit of destruction; for You have cast all my sins behind my back."

Ephesians 1:8 tells us that we have available to us "wisdom and prudence" which are part of God's grace provision for us. Wisdom comes with a thorough understanding of Bible doctrine and the principles of Christian living. Prudence is the practical use of applied Bible truth in making decisions and solving problems in this life.

You can use the following practical methods to deal with bitterness in your life, regardless of the cause.

Many of these topics are discussed in considerably more detail in other Grace Notes articles, but this outline will give you ideas on how you can make specific application of doctrine to help with real world problems.

Confession of Sin

Personal sin leads to bitterness. You must deal with sin on a daily basis by confessing and moving on. If you don't do this, sin becomes a burden which clouds your joy, drains your spiritual energy, and destroys your productivity and vitality. In short, sin is always depressing.

1 John 1:9 states that when you confess your sins, God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

In privacy, make a list of your mental attitude sins, verbal sins, and behavior sins. Ask the Lord to make you aware of the habits of your own life. Respond immediately to the Holy Spirit when He uses the Word to spotlight your sin. Name the sin to God; then rejoice in forgiveness and cleansing and your renewed fellowship with God. All the promises and provisions of God the Father are now available to you. Make it a spiritual habit to confess sins whenever they show up in your life.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

When you have unconfessed sin in your life, the Holy Spirit is "grieved" or "quenched". But the Holy Spirit fills you and controls your life when you have no unconfessed sin in your life. This is why confession of sins is so important.

You can trust the Holy Spirit to reveal sin to you when you commit it, or even before. When the Holy Spirit is in control, He produces His fruit (Gal. 5:12). The fruit of the Spirit does not include heaviness, bitterness, discouragement, disillusion, anguish, sadness, dejection, or loss of productivity. Consider these points:

- Love is free from bitterness.
- Joy pushes bitterness out.
- Bitterness can not coexist with peace in the soul of the believer filled with the Holy spirit.
- Longsuffering gives the ability to deal with bitterness and other troubles.
- Gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance are fruits of righteousness, which is divine good. Divine good takes the place of bitterness.

Living in the Word

By constant study and meditation in the Bible you are constantly reminded of God's viewpoint, of His Plan, of His provision, or His awareness of our spirit of bitterness and what He want to accomplish in us. Living in the sphere of human viewpoint is a source of bitterness. Living in the Word gradually transplants you to a new sphere, a new environment for your life, in which there is victory over bitterness.

Furthermore, there is a continuous cleansing taking place. See especially Ephesians 5 for how the Lord Jesus uses the Word to cleanse believers.

Orientation to Grace

Bitterness is often caused by people, most of the time by people we cannot escape, or people we love, or people we cannot confront, or people we trust. Grace Orientation includes the ability to look at people and see them as God sees them. It includes the ability to let them live their lives as unto the Lord, and trusting God to make His way clear to them. This technique lets people make mistakes without your judging them. It enables you to accept criticism without hurt or bitterness. It enables you to "esteem other better than yourself", to "do nothing through strife or vainglory."

Occupation with Christ

The technique of Occupation with Christ helps to cure bitterness because it gets your eyes off your spouse, your children, your neighbors, your friends, and yourself. Instead, as you move through the day, you are thinking about the Lord Jesus Christ, His plan for your life, the Father's provision for each incident in your life, and His provision of wisdom for each decision you must make. Occupation with Christ is a by-product of the Faith-Rest Life. Bitterness is a by-product of occupation with self, with life, with problems.

The Faith-Rest Life (Trusting God and Enjoying the Peace Which Results)

Faith-Rest is believing the promises of God and then entering into the "rest" phase of Christian living by claiming and enjoying those promises. Therefore, you must search the Scriptures daily to remind yourself of promises, and to learn new ones. You must know who and what God is so that you will not hesitate to believe that He can do what He has promised to do. Study the attributes of God using verses about the Essence of God. Know Him as He reveals Himself in the Bible. Believe Him when He tells you what He will do for you. Count on it. Let your faith rest on it. Cast your burden on the Lord.

Relaxed Mental Attitude

A relaxed mental attitude is based on knowing God and on having the divine production in the soul that comes with the fruit of the Holy Spirit. A relaxed mental attitude is one of the results of Living in the Word, Walking in Fellowship, practicing the Faith-Rest Life, and being occupied with Christ.

Blessing

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings:" (Ephesians 1:3)

This is a study of the New Testament word "blessing". We expect to answer the following questions:

- What does the word "blessing" mean?
- How does God bless us? What does He bless us with?
- What are the blessings that God gives?
- How do we get these blessings, and how do we make use of them?
- How can we be a blessing to others?

THE CONCEPT OF BLESSING

There are three New Testament Greek words related directly to the English word "blessing".

(**eulogeitos**) is an adjective meaning “well spoken of; praised”

(**eulogew**) is a verb: “to speak well of; to praise; to call down God’s gracious power”

(**eulogia**) is the noun form, meaning “praise; fine speaking”

These words show up very seldom in Greek classical writing. The concepts are Hebrew in origin, and the idea of blessing permeates the Old Testament. The New Testament Greek words are direct translations from Hebrew. These same Greek words are used more than 400 times in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) to represent the Hebrew concepts of blessing

The concept among the Old Testament Jews was that God possesses and dispenses all blessing. Adam, Noah, the patriarchs, Moses - are all blessed by God.

Moses, in turn pronounces a parting blessing on the Twelve Tribes (Deut. 33:1 ff).

The idea of “blessing” was also closely related to the question of inheritance, passing blessing from father to son. Jacob blessed Joseph in Gen. 48:15, and Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob put his right hand on Ephraim’s head, although he was the younger.

In the Bible both blessing and cursing are said to be passed down through two or more generations. For example, there is the concept of the four generation curse, divine discipline for a family that is out of fellowship.

In the Christian life, the inheritance that we pass down to our children is spiritual, doctrinal.

DEFINITION

The problem of definition of the word "blessing" is that it is not a direct translation from the Greek. The word "blessing" is a borrowed word which has attained its present day meaning by reason of long usage, rather than by etymological accuracy.

From the World Book Dictionary:

- 1a. “to consecrate (a thing) by religious rite, formula, or prayer” e.g., “the bishop blessed the new church”
- 1b. “to make holy or sacred.” e.g., “And God blessed the 7th day and sanctified it”, Gen. 2:3
2. “to ask God’s favor for; to commend to God’s favor or protection”, e.g., “God bless mommy...daddy”
3. “to wish good for; to feel grateful to”
4. “to make happy or fortunate”
5. “to praise, to glorify, to call holy”
6. “to guard or protect from evil”, e.g. “God bless this house”
7. “to make the sign of the Cross over; to ward off evil”

Question: Why was the English word “blessing” chosen to represent (eulogeitos).

The answer is found in Oxford English Dictionary (OED) -> one of the world’s greatest detective books.

OED: to bless

1. “to make sacred; to hallow (something)”.

“The word “bless” is from the Old Teutonic (German) *bletsian*, from heathen blood sacrifices. German: *das Blut*. English: *blood*.

“The meaning, then, was ‘to mark (or affect in some way) with blood (or a sacrificial animal)’.

“The sense development of the word ‘bless’ was greatly influenced by its having been chosen (in the early English church ceremonies) to translate the Latin (*benedicere*) and the Greek (***eulogeitos***).”

(End of OED comment)

This concurs very well with the origin of the concept of "blessing" in the Bible In the OT, the Hebrew word (***baw-rahk'***), meaning “to kneel”, was used one way or another hundreds of times to convey the meaning of respect or adoration. You would kneel before a king in respect, or to offer thanks for something. Of course, you would kneel to God in adoration, praise, thanksgiving, supplication.

The Septuagint (LXX) translators chose the Greek (***eulogeitos***) to represent (*baw-rahk'*) (more than 400 times). So, among Greek speaking Jews, this was a common word for praise, thanksgiving, respect, etc.

Latin writers used the verb form (*benedicere*) to translate the Greek, preferring to offer the literal sense of the Greek.

I think they wanted a strictly English word so they could get away from the Catholic Latin expressions.

The word “bless” was not a literal translation, but it had religious overtones, and they used it even though it had come from a heathen source.

So, there was a long and varied series of associations - Jewish, heathen, Christian - to blend in the English use of the word “bless”.

Therefore - “blessing” is a word which has a position in Christian vocabulary by reason of long-standing usage. But it does not directly translate (***eulogeitos***)!

BUT - there is a modern version which **does** have a direct translation, and it is to this version that I pay honor. The version is the Spanish. In Ephesians 1:3 in the Spanish, the word (*bendito*) is the part participle of the verb (*bendecir*).

It means, literally, "to say good things or good words".

There is no doubt to Spanish speaking people what this word means. *Decir* is one of the most common Spanish words. The translators had no extra baggage from the English, so they translated directly from the Greek (via the Latin).

The English equivalent to *bendición* is “benediction”, also from the Greek by way of Latin.

So, (***eulogeitos***) => *benedicere* => *bendición* => benediction => “praise”

BLESSING IN THE BIBLE

The word “blessing” recognizes the existence and deity of God. It tells us that we can be aware of His existence and have inner happiness because of who and what He is.

It also tell us, from the Greek, that God was thinking about us in favorable terms, that He had a mental attitude of love, grace, and mercy toward us from before the beginning of time.

Praise, or blessing, for anyone comes from a mental attitude of love and appreciation for that person. God makes an initial move toward us because of His mental attitude of love. He provides us His

graciousness, His gift of salvation, His spiritual gifts, all of which are manifestations of His love toward us. He thought “good words” toward us.

He has provided all blessings for us as an expression of His love. Our response of blessing or praise toward God, and toward others, is a response from a mental attitude of appreciation.

Eph. 1:3 deals with God’s initiation and our response.

Blessing begins in the mind of God (Love, Grace, “Good Words”, a Frame of Reference influenced by His thinking)

...therefore, He gives us “all blessings”

...the Christian learns of these blessings through Bible study and develops a mental attitude of praise and thanksgiving, “good words” with which to express appreciation

...with these “good words” we “bless” God.

These are words of vocabulary, of thinking divine viewpoint. Blessing is not a feeling, but objective thinking based on divine viewpoint, a Frame of Reference built by knowledge of doctrine.

With edification we build the ability to think about God, which enables us to receive and enjoy blessing and to be a blessing to others.

Heb. 6:7, "For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and brings forth herbs for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God"

The most basic form of evangelism is to talk about God's blessing which are available to everyone, saved or not

HOMEWORK: from Acts 14:8-18, determine how Paul and Barnabas used the concept of blessing to evangelize people who were completely ignorant of God.

The idea for the hymn Showers of Blessing was taken, with good intentions, from Eze. 34:24 ff. [READ Eze. 34:24 to 31]

These are tremendous verses of promise and blessing from the hand of the Lord. There is no pleading here no wishful thinking, the blessings are already given to us, either now or in the future when prophecies are fulfilled.

We should plead to be made into showers of blessing, or rather, showers of (**eulogeitos**), showers of benedicere, showers of *bendición*, showers of “benediction”, showers of “good speaking”.

Study Eph. 4:29 ff on the concept of speech that ministers grace.

See also, Eph. 5, “neither foolishness ... but rather giving of thanks”

1 Pet. 3:9

Why should we not be generous? We have an enormous inheritance from our heavenly Father, enough to share with others.

James 3:10; John 7:38

We are to be fountains of blessing.

Matt. 25:34; Dan. 4:33, 34; Matt. 6:25-34; Josh. 1:7,8

Ephesians 1:3 (expanded translation) "Worthy of praise and glorification is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who has provided us benefits and every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ:"

Blood of Christ

The phrase "blood of Christ" refers to the Work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Blood represents judgment -- the judgment for our sins while Christ was bearing them on the Cross (His spiritual death).

The physical death of the animal in the Old Testament sacrifices is analogous to the spiritual death of Christ.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Pet. 2:24

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21

Every animal sacrifice spoke of the Work of Christ.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29

"He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Isa. 53:7

The animal had done nothing wrong but was judged anyway. In the judgment, the animal died physically. Jesus Christ had done nothing wrong, in fact He was impeccable. In His judgment, the sins of the whole world were poured out on him. The phrase "blood of Christ" sets up a representative analogy with the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament. The Workx of Christ was presented by means of these ceremonial practices.

After Jesus Christ's work on the Cross was completed, He said, "It is finished!" Then He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He dismissed His spirit; He did not bleed to death on the Cross.

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again..." John 10:17,18.

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: having said this, he gave up the ghost." Luke 23:46

After Jesus Christ had died physically, the soldier ran a spear into His side, and blood and water (serum) came out. The separation of the serum and blood indicated that He had already died physically. Hence, he did not bleed to death. And His throat was not cut as was the animal's in the sacrifice. READ John 19:31-34

So, the bleeding of the animal is an analogy to the spiritual death of Jesus Christ (His judgment for us). The judgment of the animal was physical death. The judgment of Christ was spiritual death.

"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. 1:20

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Heb. 10:18-20

This judgment served to remove the Barrier between man and God. There is a meeting between the two sides of the Cross, and that meeting is in the phrase "blood of Christ".

The teaching of the death of Christ for the sins of the world was, to Old Testament people, by the use of the blood sacrifices. And the significance of the analogy is that it relates us directly to the millions of people who were saved before the time of Christ. They were saved just as we are, by grace provision and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no longer a need for animal sacrifices, because Christ's sacrifice on the Cross is once for all.

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Heb. 9:22

The blood of Christ is the basis for all of the salvation doctrines of the New Testament, including the following:

Redemption

"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, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" 1 Pet. 1:18,19

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." Eph. 1:7

Justification

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Rom. 5:9

Imputation -- God's righteousness is imputed (credited) to us because our sin is imputed (credited) to Christ. 2 Cor. 5:21 (above). God looks at the believer and sees a righteousness equivalent to His own. This is possible because our sins were judged at the Cross and we were given righteousness by Grace.

Propitiation

"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:" Rom. 3:25

Cleansing and Restoration to Fellowship

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:7-9

[Read Leviticus chapters 4 and 5 for an account of the two offerings related to restoration to fellowship.]

Christian in the Workplace

Titus 2:9,10 "Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not stealing, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

These verses show in capsule form the principles which are to govern the everyday life of a Christian who is an employee and who wants to be a witness for Christ on the job.

A Christian operates on Grace principles. He is gracious. He gives evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. He uses Bible techniques such as Faith-Rest, Walking in Fellowship, Occupation with Christ, to make it through each day producing divine good.

A Christian does his job as though Christ himself were boss - "as unto the Lord." He does a more than a day's work for a day's pay. He is the first to arrive and the last to leave. He takes sick leave only when sick. He doesn't cheat on break time, lunch, etc. He works diligently, cheerfully, enthusiastically, without complaining.

Using Faith-Rest principles, a Christian trusts the Lord for salary, promotion, status. He is aware that only God knows how much prosperity he should have and when he should be promoted. He rejoices when others get ahead as evidence of the grace of God in their lives (even when they don't deserve it).

A Christian is modest, self-effacing, supportive of others, cooperative. He realizes that he is there to be used by the Lord, not only as an employee, but also as a witness for Christ.

The believer's personal life, social life, family life are happy and stable so that they enhance his work life rather than hinder him on the job.

He exercises grace principles -- recognizes fellow workers as objects of God's grace, does not bear grudges, forgives readily. Every day is a new day. He does not contribute to office gossip or politics, because he has no need to build his success on someone else's failure.

He waits patiently for the opportunity for verbal witness, which is almost certain to present itself. The stage has been set for a vital witness by his life witness which others have been able to observe.

Christian Worker Qualifications

The following qualifications apply to anyone who is going into Christian service in some capacity to minister to others. These criteria particularly apply to those who take up Christian work as a vocation, such as pastors, evangelists, teachers, or missionaries.

- The Christian worker must be born again and he must understand the Plan of God in all of its phases.
- He must exercise his spiritual gift, such as that of pastor, evangelist, teacher, helps, governments, or other gift. The spiritual gift is a divine enabling for service given at the time of salvation and developed through intensive preparation.
- He must be spiritually mature in the sense of being familiar with the whole counsel of God's Word both by academic understanding and by application in his own life.
- He must have spiritual endurance.

Maturity and the ability to do God's work comes through years of study of God's Word and practice in using doctrinal principles. Following is a review of the doctrinal ideas found in 2 TIMOTHY 2:15.

Study ... from the Greek word σπουδζω (**spoudzo**) meaning "to be industrious, eager, to be diligent, to exert oneself". It has a stronger meaning than "study". It actually connotes a way of life which includes the proper mental attitude and motivation to learn Bible doctrine daily. This word could be translated "make every effort". And it is a *command*.

to show yourself or, "to make every effort to represent yourself...". It means to make every effort to concentrate, to be objective to doctrine, to give priority to the Word of God. The reason that you are entering the Lord's work is to live the life of Christ.

approve ... "to pass an exam". δοκιμος (**dokimos**) The emphasis is on success, not failure. To be a successful Christian worker, you must study (Test #1), and you must use what you study (Test #2).

Can you teach to the glory of God? The test is on the accuracy of what you teach.

Can you work to the Glory of God? The test comes when you apply, whether you use Grace or legalism, whether you depend upon man or God.

Can you fix a car, iron a shirt, type a letter to the glory of God? The test is on whether you know how to do this.

workman ... εργατης (**ergateis**), an agricultural worker, a laborer, a routine worker. This word indicates one who is involved in the mundane, routine, ordinary, distasteful, or dull things in life. In the ancient world it meant feeding the cattle, working in the fields, cleaning out the barn, etc. Many people want to do great things for God, to get written up in articles, to get peer recognition for accomplishments.

Some people think that leading someone to Christ is more spiritual than giving a cup of cold water in the Lord's name. But this is wrong! Any task can be done as unto the Lord; the Christian life is fantastic. The emphasis here is on doing small, routine things as unto the Lord. Stay in fellowship and wait for God's promotion.

needeth not to be ashamed ... literally, with the previous word, "a not-ashamed workman". You don't have to be ashamed of your station in life if you have an honest vocation. Every believer is in full time service. A Christian worker must keep grace oriented and not despise the ordinary things, or those who live an "ordinary" life. And he must have these qualities before moving out.

rightly dividing with the word of truth. - to cut straight, to line out a straight path. Use Bible doctrine to keep from straying into the cults, into the movements, to stay with accurate interpretation and application of the Word of God. This enables a life with no detours, no hangups, no blind alleys. Therefore, the verse says, "Making every effort to represent yourself approved to God, an irrefragable worker cutting a straight path with the Word of Truth."

The Christian worker must also be able to stand the test of negative volition on the part of those he is reaching. READ ACTS 13. Nothing tests the Christian worker more than a lack of response. Paul began his first missionary journey about ten years after he was saved, when he was mature. He ran into negative volition and corrected the situation with the direct approach (ACTS 13:6-13).

Religion always has negative volition attached to it, as we see in this context. The religious people were filled with envy, jealous of Paul getting a hearing. They fabricated lies and began a vicious campaign of gossip and maligning. They "spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul". They spoke against doctrine; they didn't like Christ being called the Messiah; they didn't like Paul's authoritative teaching. They were the religious bosses and controlled everything religious in the town.

Paul and Barnabas "waxed bold" -- that is, they spoke dogmatically with authority and confidence. He said, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you (Jews)", but they ran into negative volition, "but seeing you put it from you". So Paul and Barnabas left and went to a place of positive volition (13:46-49) and had great results.

In ACTS 15, they ran into the problem of negative volition on the part of believers, toward doctrine taught categorically (Circumcision). The believers were dragging works into God's plan of Grace. The Christian worker must understand the doctrine of volition, both positive and negative aspects.

A Christian worker must also possess spiritual endurance. The idea is expressed in 2 Tim. 4:7,8 as having iron in the soul, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Or. "Iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." (PROV. 27:17).

The enemy of spiritual endurance is "brittleness in the soul", as seen in JER. 13:8-14. In the ancient world they understood how a dried out wineskin would shatter. This passage is talking about the disintegration of the soul of an individual, like PROV. 6:32. The soul becomes brittle when the believer fails to respond to doctrine and either goes into idolatry or sexual sins. The believer drinks the jug of the foam of this life and not only does the jug shatter in his face but so does his soul. It is part of the frantic search for happiness of the person who has received some prosperity, like Solomon who prospered materially but found nothing to satisfy himself (Ecclesiastes).

Brittleness in the soul can become a way of life, like the nation which goes into terrible judgment (JER. 13:19). This is the pursuit of success and happiness apart from God's Plan and provision. A brittle soul has not been fulfilled by the Lord and His Word. Instead of Grace orientation, the believer with a brittle soul has legalism, self-righteousness, pride, super sensitivity, human viewpoint, self-justification, a critical and irritable spirit, and accepts no authority but his own.

Instead of being a master of the details of life, the details master him, so he seeks satisfaction with cheap substitutes. Instead of having a relaxed mental attitude, the brittle soul has mental attitude sins: bitterness, jealousy, hatred, cruelty. Instead of a capacity for personal and impersonal love, the brittle soul has pseudo-love, a sickly sweet love accompanied by boredom and instability. Instead of perfect happiness, the brittle soul has depression, frustration, and accepts instant stimulation followed by instant misery. This condition is the opposite of spiritual endurance and has destroyed many Christian workers in all parts of the world.

The mechanics of obtaining spiritual endurance are simple, salvation plus edification. Stability and endurance come through the daily intake of the Word of God accompanied by the continuous filling of the Holy Spirit and application of doctrine to the life through faith. EPH. 4:1-13.

Circumcision

One of the first acts of circumcision in the human race involved Abraham.

Genesis 17:6-11 And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

This initial act of circumcision was the seal of Abraham's faith in God's promise of possessing the land. It was the indication that Abraham believed God's word. Abraham separated himself unto the Lord and to the Lord's promise.

Circumcision is, therefore, a sign of regeneration for the Jews. It was to the born again Jew what water baptism is to the born-again believer in the Church Age, a sign.

Circumcision is also used by God as a teaching mechanism, a visual aid to provide a picture of regeneration by faith. The circumcision of male children on the 8th day was an act of dedication by the parents. By this means they declared that they would teach salvation by faith to their children. They anticipated that their children would become believers.

Col. 2:11-13 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

Circumcision is also a picture of positional truth, especially the identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

There can be no victory in the Christian way of life without victory over the old life, over the sin nature. This is the application of positional truth to experience.

The Lord also used circumcision as a picture of Israel's restoration to fellowship and service.

READ Joshua 5:1-9

This restoration, by faith, was necessary for the victory the Israelites were about to experience (Jericho) and for the time of rest they were about to enter. There can be no victory over Canaan until there is victory over carnality (Egypt). Circumcision denotes separation from the world and the flesh, self-judgment, yieldedness, dedication, commitment.

Romans 4:9-13 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.

And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Circumcision is a sign of imputed righteousness; it is the sign that one has believed and is cleansed by the blood of Christ and has God's Righteousness credited to his account. Gen. 15:6; 2 Cor. 5:21.

The true significance of circumcision was not in the physical act being perpetuated but in the reasons the ritual was begun in the first place. Circumcision was a sign that something had already taken place, namely, Abraham's salvation.

Circumcision was also a seal. A seal indicates the validity of the thing to which it is attached. It has no significance apart from that which it covers. Circumcision was a seal attached to something valuable, salvation.

During the Church Age, water baptism is the outward sign of an inward faith. Circumcision was the outward sign for the Jews before the Church Age.

Religious Jews tried to make the seal valuable in itself. They attached spiritual value to the act of circumcision, ignoring the substance. They contended that circumcision was needed for salvation, which led to the formation of a ritualistic religion.

Abraham was saved by faith, long before he was circumcised. He is, therefore, the "father of all who believe" because he is the pattern of those who were saved in status quo uncircumcision, whether Jew or Gentile.

Confession of Sin

The presence of the Sin Nature in the soul guarantees that the Christian believer will have a problem with active personal sin for the rest of his life on earth. This personal sin causes a deep disturbance in the believer's personal relationship with the Lord. The Holy Spirit is said to be personally "grieved", and His work "quenched" by a Christian's sin, or by his attempt to live outside of the will of God.

While you do not lose your salvation each time you sin, your personal growth and effectiveness are stifled as long as there is a rift in your fellowship with God. This rift is healed when you personally confession to God the sin which caused the breach.

Confession of sins is not the basis of salvation. Jesus Christ was judged once for our sins, on the Cross; and He does not need to be judged repeatedly for our sins. The basis of salvation is your personal trust in Christ and His work, rather than confession or any other act which you might perform to try to win the favor of God. ACTS 16:31; JOHN 1:12; EPH. 1:13,14; 2:8,9; 1 PET. 2:24; 2 COR. 5:21.

A Christian is always "in Christ". EPH. 1:3,5,7. So confession of personal sin is extremely important to the personal spiritual relationship that you have with God.

God requires confession of sin as the means of maintaining a close personal walk with Himself. He requires a continual acknowledgement of His rulership; and confession of sin is the means by which you express your yieldedness and surrender to the sovereign will of God on a moment by moment basis. The Lord wants you to have a very useful and happy life, and part of His plan for providing this sort of life is confession of sin.

Etymology of the Word Confession

The word "confession" in 1 John 1:9 is the Greek verb **ohologew (homologeō)**. This word, and its derivatives, is a common term in ancient Greek and Hellenic speech, in the Septuagint Greek of the Old Testament, and in the New Testament Koine Greek. It means, literally, "to say the same thing; to agree in statement."

Xenophon uses the phrase **homologoi genesthai**, "to agree in statement." Herodotus, similarly, has the phrase **glossan homologein**, "to speak the same language." The word also appears quite often in the passive voice to say such things as "all men are agreed on the statement."

So in reviewing the ancient usages, there are found a number of such defining statements, for example:

- “to agree to the statement of another
- to confirm the receipt of money
- to agree to a proposal
- to agree to or accept a promise
- to agree with or to adopt social customs

So **homologeō** or **homologia** imply consent to something felt to be valid, and in such a way that the agreement is followed by definite resolve and action, by ready attachment to a cause.

Kittel: “The aim in **homologia** is not a theoretical agreement which does not commit us but acceptance of a common cause.” And, “**homologeō** means that “I agree with someone on something; and it embraces both the fact and event along with the act and action in which I bear witness to the agreement.”

Thus, in the Christian’s life, confession of sins is based on an established agreement and personal acceptance of God’s divine sovereignty, which includes His right as Creator and Father to set the standards by which Christians must live.

The Lord Encourages Confession

A novice believer may not be aware that it’s possible to live out of fellowship and that he needs to confess sin. 1 JOHN 1:6; 2:9,10; 2 PET. 1:9. God both commands and pleads with us to judge ourselves, to confess, and then to forget sins. ISA. 43:26; 1 COR. 11:28,31; 1 JOHN 1:9; PHIL. 3:13,14; PROV. 1:23. Any person who reads the Bible quickly becomes aware of God’s intentions in this matter.

Some Christians willfully ignore the commands to confess, leading God to employ more persuasive measures to encourage compliance. These methods include:

- Loss of inner peace, PHIL. 4:6,7
- Chastening (discipline), HEB. 12:6
- Pricking of conscience, HEB. 13:18
- Sorrow for sin, PSALM 32.

A few Christians manage to ignore even severe chastening for a long time, leading to God’s administering the “sin unto death.” The alternative to confession is discipline. HEB. 12:1-5.

The Mechanics of Confession of Sin

Confession does not provide you with a license to sin. The idea that “I can sin and confess repeatedly because God will always forgive” is sinful in itself because it indicates that he believer does not actually think the same about his sin that God does. That is, there is no real repentance or confession.

And confession of sin does not remove the buildup of callousness or hardness in the soul of the person who has lived apart from God for a long time. This removal of scar tissue is accomplished through edification, the Biblical system for understanding and applying the Word of God.

Confession of sin does not give you emotional experience, nor is it accompanied by an emotional reaction. God’s forgiveness is based on His promise to cleanse, not on how a person feels. And,

confession does not always remove the pain or suffering which is the result of the sin itself or which came as a result of divine discipline. Although the cursing is turned to blessing, the suffering may continue; but the suffering may be endured to the glory of God instead.

Some Christians try to get on God's good side through some means other than the confession which is prescribed by God. Sometimes a person thinks that a demonstration of sorrowfulness is called for, or that weeping will impress God with one's contrition. Others "compensate" for their sin by increasing their religious activities. Some will pray more often and longer and read their Bibles more. Some will try to bribe God with additional tithes and offerings, or with acts of self-denial, sacrifice, or service. Some will present themselves in re-dedication services and attend church functions more often. But these things cannot be substituted for confession of sin. God is interested only in a person's mental attitude toward the sin.

The word "confession" in the New Testament is taken from the Greek word ὁμολογέω (homologeō), meaning "to cite", "to name", "to classify in the same manner", "to agree with", "to say the same thing as". Confession acknowledges God's rulership in the matter and agrees with His judgment.

This is a method of dealing with the disharmony caused by sins which causes no merit to accrue to the person who confesses. It is strictly a Grace provision in which God makes a promise and carries out the function of cleansing. The Christian must (1) confess the sin, 1 John 1:9; (2) forget the sin, Phil. 3:13,14; and (3) isolate the sin, Heb. 12:15.

Since prayer is made only to God the Father (Mark. 2:7), confession is made only to God the Father. Upon the condition of confession, forgiveness is guaranteed and cleansing from all unrighteousness is administered (1 John 1:9). The word "cleanse" refers to the removal of the guilt of the sin. Therefore, the cleansed individual is removed from the condition of discipline, chastening is no longer being administered, and the hindrances to the ministry of the Holy Spirit are removed.

There are several synonyms in the Bible for the word "confess", as follows":

- To "yield" means to confess. ROM. 6:13.
- Putting off the old man", is tantamount to confession. EPH. 5:14.
- Judging oneself is confession, or leads to it. 1 COR. 11:31.
- Presenting one's body is analogous to confession. ROM. 12:1.

Principles Derived from the Doctrine of Confession

Walking closer to God is, in reality, an activity in which you are more consistent in your relationship with the Lord, more consistent in your confession of sin. While confession does not, in itself, cause one to grow in Christ, there can be no growth in the Spirit as long as one is out of fellowship because of unconfessed sin. Therefore, confession sets the stage for progress in the Christian life. The ministry of the Holy Spirit depends on uninterrupted fellowship. So Christian growth depends on the unhindered work of the Holy Spirit.

Confession takes the believer out of the sphere where he is producing callous and scar tissue on his soul, and it puts him back in the sphere of the Holy Spirit's control. You can thus produce "gold, silver, and precious stones" rather than "wood, hay, and stubble".

As you learn more about the true doctrine of confession, you will increase normally in your discernment about your own status of fellowship. You will know whether you are controlled by the Holy Spirit; and you will know what to do about it when you are not. You will also learn to

recognize carnality in others; but you will be more tolerant of other people because you realize better how your own standing depends entirely on the Grace of God.

Deity of Christ

Jesus Christ is eternal God. As a member of the Trinity, He is co-equal with God the Father and with God the Holy Spirit. That is, He has the same essence as God the Father. (See Topic: Essence of God) Jesus Christ has all of the divine attributes that God the Father has, including :

- Eternity -- Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 1:1,2; 8:58.
- Immutability -- Heb. 1:10-12, (cf. Mal. 3:6 and Ps. 102:25-27); Heb. 13:8
- Omnipotence -- Phil. 3:21; Rev. 1:8; I Cor. 15:25
- Omniscience -- John 2:25; 6:64; 10:15; 21:17.
- Omnipresence -- Eph. 1:23; John 14:23 (cf. Lev. 26:12); Mt. 18:20;
- Life -- John 1:4; 5:26; 10:10; 14:6; Heb. 7:16.
- Truth -- John 14:6; Rev. 3:7
- Righteousness -- Luke 1:35; John 6:69; Heb. 7:26
- Love -- John 13:1,34; I John 3:16.

In addition, the prerogatives of deity are ascribed to Jesus Christ :

- He is the creator of all things, Jn. 1:3,10; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:10.
- He is the preserver of all things, Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:17.
- He pardons sins, Luke 5:24; Col. 3:13.
- He raised the dead, and He will raise the dead, II Cor. 1:9; John 5:21 John 5:28,29; 11:25
- He rewards the saints, II Cor. 5:10
- The judgment of the world is committed to Him, Jn 5:22; Rev. 20:12
- Worship belonging only to God is freely rendered to Christ: JOHN 5:22; LUKE 24:52; I COR. 1:2; JOHN 14:13,14.

JOHN 5:18-23 expresses the equality of Jesus Christ with the Father.

- v 18, equal in being
- v 19, equal in works (what the Father does, the Son does)
- v 21, equal in power (in terms of giving life)
- v 22, equal in authority,
- v 23, equal in honor.

Demons

Demons are fallen angels under the command of Satan, those who are still free after the Gen. 6 affair. Satan is called the Prince, or Ruler, of all demons in Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15. Demons are also called the ministers, or ambassadors of Satan, Luke 4:35; 9:1,42; John 10:21. Satan

is brilliant, an administrative genius. He has an excellent organization, mentioned in Eph. 6:10-12 (READ) The Bible also makes a distinction between demon possession and demon influence.

Demon possession occurs when an actual fallen angel, a demon, enters and occupies the body of an unbeliever. Demons cannot enter the bodies of Christian believers because the Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Inviting demons can be accomplished in a number of ways.

- Through idolatry (Satan's communion table), 1 COR. 10:19-21*.
- Through drug addiction, called in Greek, φαρμακεια (**farmakeia**), "the use of drugs, potions, or spells; poisoning, witchcraft, sorcery" GAL. 5:20 ("witch-craft, sorcery"), cf. also REV. 9:21; 18:23.
- Through religious backsliding, religious sensitivity activities such as dabbling in the occult, consulting mediums, necromancy. cf. ISA. 8:19.

Demon Influence is the residence of evil in the soul; can be unbeliever (ROM. 1:23) or believer. This is the method that Satan uses to trap and neutralize the believer, by introducing, if allowed, the Doctrine of Evil inside the soul of the born-again believer. Demon influence in the believer comes about in the later stages of negativity, or backsliding.

The first stage of backsliding is some kind of reaction to life -- whether discouragement, disillusion, disenchantment, boredom, self-pity, loneliness, frustration, instability, pride complex and various sins of arrogance, revenge tactics, reaction to contemporary events or social pressures, etc. Whatever causes it, the reaction stage makes one very vulnerable to the attacks of Satan. This is not the entrance into demon influence, at this point, but merely vulnerability to it.

The second stage of backsliding is the frantic search for happiness following the trends of the Sin Nature (towards asceticism or lasciviousness). This also increases vulnerability, especially as one moves away from the protection of doctrine and Grace provision.

The third stage intensifies the reaction stage, but still has only the potentiality, not the actuality, of demon influence. It is at the fourth stage of backsliding, in which the soul is in revolt emotionally, where the possibility of demon influence comes in. Doctrinal content is located in the mentality of the soul (including standards, conscience, frame of reference, memory center, vocabulary, doctrinal storage under edification, and the area of applied doctrine resulting in production of divine good). It is the lack of doctrinal content which is the primary factor in vulnerability to demon influence.

The soul also has its area of response to outside influences, centered in the emotions of the soul. Emotion has no doctrinal content, no character of its own, no spiritual content, no ability to think or rationalize, or even to use common sense. It is designed to respond; it is not designed to lead or initiate anything. The tongues movement is an illustration of the soul's emotions being led about by falsehood. Sometimes believers in the tongues movement are under demon influence. Sometimes unbelievers are actually demon possessed.

The thing that opens the door for demon influence in the life of the believer is negative volition toward the Word of God. The believer says "Negative" to doctrine and opens up a vacuum in his soul. Whatever evil is in the neighborhood will be picked up -- false teaching, TV, newspaper...

Regardless of what causes the negative attitude, the effect is the same. It may be antagonism or a negative attitude or personality conflict with the pastor, or with other members of the congregation. It may be apathy or indifference to teaching. It may be failure to use Grace provision, Faith Rest, or inability to handle prosperity, slavery to the details of life. Whatever it is, negative volition opens up the emptiness of the soul.

As a result of evil in the soul, there is demon influence, the "darkness in the soul" of Eph. 4. There is the infiltration of the doctrines of Satan into the soul of the reversionistic person (believer or unbeliever). Here, the believer is "worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator".

There are two systems for demon possession of the unbeliever. The first is the unlawful isolation of dormant faculties. The body is brought under the control of the soul, and the soul has been given to Satan. It is like a conversion in reverse. Seances, or the ceremony called the Satanic mass, are means by which this is accomplished. This person becomes a disembodied spirit or an "adept". All of the activities of supernaturalism may be attributed to this; mental telepathy, spiritism, out of body experiences.

The second system is passive submission to demons. This can be accomplished through idolatry, through drugs, or other means. In the ancient world, the various oracles used this means in attempting to predict the outcome of events. (The "mephitic vapors" of the oracle of Delphi, which was some form of narcotic gas.) Another example is the Hindu "soma" mysteries, and the various sutras of Indian religions. There are also various systems of mesmerism or hypnotism, whether induced by one's self or another person, such as Whirling Dervishes, or unbelievers involved in the tongues movement.

Demonism is directly related to idolatry and thus to human sacrifice Ps. 136:37,39. Sacrifices to demons were prohibited by law in Lev. 17:7, "And they shall no longer sacrifice to the goat demon (or satyr) with which they shall play the harlot. This will be a permanent law in every generation." Or in Deut. 32:17, "They sacrifice to demons, not gods, new things which came lately which your ancestors did not fear." Heathen nations worship demons, acc. to Ps. 96:5, "For all the gods of the peoples are idols (**daimonia** in LXX)." It was thoroughly understood that idolatry meant demons. Capital punishment by stoning was the penalty for witchcraft, demonism, etc.

The judgment against Egypt concerning the death of the first-born was also a judgment against the demons in Egypt. Ex. 12:12, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the demons of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am Jehovah." Num. 33:4, "While the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn whom the Lord had struck down among them, the Lord had also executed judgment against their demons."

Demons are powerless to change the course of history. Isa. 19:3, "Then the spirits of the Egyptians will become demoralized within them; also, I will frustrate their strategy, so that they will resort to idle demons and to the ghosts of the dead and to mediums and to spiritists." Demonism is always subject to the justice of God and is always judged in its various forms.

The reason why the Canaanites were removed from the land is that they practiced demonism. Deut. 18:9-12 (READ). In the reign of King Manasseh, evil is associated with demonism, 2 Kings 21:2-16. Demonism brings the discipline of total destruction to a nation, Isa. 47; Jer. 27:6-10; Isa. 29:4.

Satan and demons are often used by God in the administration of the sin unto death to reversionistic believers. Ex. Hymenaeus and Alexander, I Tim. 1:19,20. The believer committing incest in 1 Cor. 5:5 was turned over to Satan, but it was so painful that he repented.

Satan's power of death is mentioned in four categories. He has the power of death, Heb. 2:14,15; 1 John 3:8. He killed Job's children, Job 1:12,18,19. He motivated Cain to murder Abel, John 8:44; 1 John 3:12.

Satan is a source of disease. Satan produced the illness in Job, Job 2:6,8. Satan uses demons to produce disease in human beings. There is therefore the principle of demon-induced illness, Matt. 12:22; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38. Certain mental diseases, and illness which are related to abnormal

behavior, may be demon induced. Dumbness and deafness, Mark 9:17; Luke 11:14; Matt. 11:22. Certain forms of epilepsy, Mark 1:26; 9:20; Luke 4:35. Satan is the source of at least ten different types of abnormal behavior which are mentioned in the Bible.

- Convulsions, Mark 1:26.
- Violence, Matt. 8:28.
- Abnormal strength, Mark 5:4.
- Raving, Mark 5:5
- Self-mutilation, Mark 5:5
- Foaming at the mouth, Mark 9:20
- Public nakedness, Luke 8:27
- Living among corpses, Mark 5:3
- A type of grinding of the teeth, Mark 9:18
- Falling into fires and throwing oneself into dangerous things, Matt. 17:15

Satan also heals. He heals by the withdrawal of demons and establishes the credentials for some of his evangelists. In Acts 19:11,12 legitimate healing by God was used to establish apostolic authority. On the other hand, healing was used by Satan in a similar way, II Thess. 2:9; Rev. 16:14; Matt. 24:24.

Satan wanted to punish Peter by using demons. Luke 22:31,32 (READ). Peter had denied Christ, and Satan had the audacity to suggest how the justice of God should function toward Peter. Of course the Lord refused this.

I Tim. 3:6,7 (READ)-- Satan is used as a warning for discipline.

The power of Satan is summarized in Psalm 109:6-13 (READ). He can blind true religion, shorten life (where God permits), remove people from authority, can kill, can persecute children, remove wealth, turn everyone against you, he can cut off posterity to the second generation. So certain powers are permitted Satan as the "ruler of this world", but they are always under the sovereignty of God.

Depression

Every Christian suffers from depression from time to time.

Sometimes depression comes through no fault of our own. There may be severe problems which are imposed by outside circumstances. There may be physical exhaustion and a weakening of physical and emotional strength. There may be serious disturbances or distress in life with a feeling of being trapped or a fear of what might happen. If the depression is not caused by a sin problem, confession is not called for. But the techniques of the Christian way of life are equally useful in combating depression in whatever form it comes.

Sometimes depression is self-induced because it is caused by sin. Mental attitude sins will bring on depression. Failure to exercise Faith-Rest principles or failure to claim promises from the Bible can cause depression. If sin is the problem, the first step to the solution is to confess sin Biblically and use the techniques of Faith-Rest, Occupation with Christ, and the Filling of the Holy Spirit to begin a quick recovery.

Depression may include one or more of the following:

- A feeling of dejection or sadness
- An attitude of self-depreciation
- A reduction in quality or force
- A lowering of vitality or functional activity

The Bible deals extensively with the subject of mental anguish, sorrow, and depression. There are many Bible words used to describe the thoughts and feelings people have when they are depressed. Studying these definitions, and the Bible passages where they are found, is a very important part of the therapy for many kinds of depression. Almost every Bible verse that has a word related to depression also has part of the cure for that condition somewhere in its context.

As you study the following verses, try to determine in each case the reasons for the state of depression and whether it was caused by personal sin (self-induced), was the result of undeserved suffering, or came from some other source. Then, try to decide on what "cure" is being suggested. In some cases, the cure will show up in the context. In others you will have to decide on a solution from categorical doctrinal principles.

The Bible deals with depression categorically using the following words:

λυπη (**lupei**), meaning "grief, sorrow, distress, suffering, a sad plight". The verb form is λυπεω (**lupeo**), "to cause pain, to grieve, to annoy". In military terminology, the word was used of troops in the sense "to harass; to annoy" the enemy. In the passive voice, where the subject receives the action of the verb, the meaning is "to be sad, to be sorry, to be grieved".

"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry." Matt. 17:22,23

"And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?" Matt. 26:22

"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." Matt. 19:22

"And he [Jesus] took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." Matt. 26:37,38

"... I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." John 16:20

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably." Romans 14:15

"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." 2 Cor. 2:4

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." 1 Thess. 4:13

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through many testings." 1 Peter 1:6

"Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb. 12:11

"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." 1 Peter 2:19

αδημονια (adeimonia), noun, "in great distress or anguish"

"My soul is exceeding sorrowful...", Matt. 27:38. See also Mark 14:33,34

"For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick." Phil. 2:26

αναγκη (anagkei), noun, "necessity, constraint, natural desire (such as hunger), bodily pain or suffering". When used with θλιψις (thlipsis), signifies a condition of necessity arising from some form of outside compulsion.

[From here on, you look up the verses for yourself. wd]

Matt. 18:7; Luke 14:18; 21:23; Rom. 13:5; 1 Cor. 7:26, 37; 9:16; 2 Cor. 6:4; 9:7; 12:10; 1 Thess. 3:7; Philemon v. 14; Heb. 7:12,27; 9:16; Jude v. 3

στενοχωρια (stenochoria), noun, "narrowness of place, a trapped feeling."

Rom. 2:9; 8:35; 2 Cor. 6:4; 12:10

συνοχη (sunochei), noun, metaphorically for "anguish or distress" caused by a compressing together or narrowing of the way.

2 Cor. 2:4

Luke 21:25

θλιψις (thlipsis), noun, "pressure, oppression, affliction."

Matt. 13:21; 24:9; Mark 4:17; 13:19,24; John 16:21,33; Acts 7:10,11; 11:19; 14:22; 20:23; Rom. 2:9; 5:3; 8:35; 12:12; 1 Cor. 7:28; 2 Cor. 1:4,8; 2:4; 4:17; 6:4; 7:4; 8:2; Eph. 3:13; Phil. 1:17; 4:14; Col. 1:24; 1 Thess. 1:6; 3:3,7; 2 Thess. 1:4,6; Heb. 10:33; James 1:27; Rev. 1:9; 2:9,10,22; 7:14

καταπονεω (kataroneo), verb, "to wear out with toil or suffering"

Acts 7:24 and 2 Peter 2:7

συνεχω (sunechw), verb, "to forcibly hold together; to contain; to constrain; to oppress" Used for holding rowers together on galley ships.

Matt. 4:24, 38; 8:37

Luke 8:45; 19:43; 22:63

Acts 28:8; 7:57; 12:50; 18:5

2 Cor. 5:14

Phil. 1:23

οδυναω (odunao), verb, "to cause pain". In the passive "to feel pain".

Luke 2:48; 16:24

Acts 20:38

θλιβω (**thlibo**), verb "to press; to distress; to trouble; to gall"

Matt. 7:14**Mark 3:9****2 Cor. 1:6; 4:8; 7:5****1 Thess. 3:4****2 Thess 1:6****1 Tim. 5:10****Heb. 11:37**

ταραχη (**tarachei**), noun, "trouble, disorder, confusion"

Mark 13:8**John 5:4**

ταρασσω (**tarasso**), verb, "to stir up, disturb, trouble; to trouble the mind; to alarm; to frighten; to throw into disorder"

Matt. 2:3; 14:26**Mark 6:50****Luke 1:12; 24:38****1 Peter 3:14****Principles of Application in Dealing With Depression**

The following ten principles are Bible techniques which you can use to deal with depression in your life, regardless of the cause. Each of these topics is discussed in more detail in other notes in this series, but this outline will give you ideas on how you can make specific application of categorical doctrine to help with real world problems.

Confession of Sin

Personal sin leads to depression. You must deal with sin on a daily basis by confessing and moving on. If you don't do this, sin becomes a burden which clouds your joy, drains your spiritual energy, and destroys your productivity and vitality. In short, sin is always depressing.

In privacy, make a list of your mental attitude sins, verbal sins, and behavior sins. Ask the Lord to make you aware of the habits of your own life. Respond immediately to the Holy Spirit when He uses the Word to spotlight your sin. Name the sin to God; then rejoice in forgiveness and cleansing and your renewed fellowship with God. All the promises and provisions of God the Father are now available to you. Make it a spiritual habit to confess sins whenever they show up in your life.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit fills you and controls your life when you have no unconfessed sin in your life. You can trust the Holy Spirit to reveal sin to you when you commit it, or even before. When the Holy Spirit is in control, He produces His fruit (Gal. 5:12). The fruit of the Spirit does not include heaviness, depression, discouragement, disillusion, anguish, sadness, dejection, or loss of vitality. Consider these points:

- Impersonal love is free from depression.
- Joy pushes depression out.
- Peace does not coexist with disillusion in the soul of the believer filled with the Holy spirit.
- Longsuffering gives the ability to deal with depression and trouble.
- Gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance are fruits of righteousness, which is divine good. Divine good takes the place of depression.

Living in the Word

By Living in the Word you are constantly reminded of God's viewpoint, of His Plan, of His provision, or His awareness of our spirit of heaviness and what He want to accomplish in us with the testing. Living in the sphere of human viewpoint is a source of depression. Living in the Word gradually transplants you to a new sphere, a new environment for your life, in which there is victory over depression.

Orientation to Grace

Depression is often caused by people, most of the time by people we cannot escape, or people we love, or people we cannot confront, or people we trust. Grace Orientation includes the ability to look at people and see them as God sees them. It includes the ability to let them live their lives as unto the Lord, and trusting God to make His way clear to them. This technique lets people make mistakes without your judging them. It enables you to accept criticism without hurt or bitterness. It enables you to "esteem other better than yourself", to "do nothing through strife or vainglory."

Occupation with Christ

The technique of Occupation with Christ helps to cure depression because it gets your eyes off your spouse, your children, your neighbors, your friends, and yourself. Instead, as you move through the day, you are thinking about the Lord Jesus Christ, His plan for your life, the Father's provision for each incident in your life, and His provision of wisdom for each decision you must make. Occupation with Christ is a by-product of the Faith-Rest Life. Depression is a by-product of occupation with self, with life, with problems.

The Faith-Rest Life

Faith-Rest is believing the promises of God and then entering into the "rest" phase of Christian living by claiming and enjoying those promises. Therefore, you must search the Scriptures daily to remind yourself of promises, and to learn new ones. You must know who and what God is so that you will not hesitate to believe that He can do what He has promised to do. Study the attributes of God using verses about the Essence of God. Know Him as He reveals Himself in the Bible. Believe Him when He tells you what He will do for you. Count on it. Let your faith rest on it. Cast your burden on the Lord.

Relaxed Mental Attitude

A relaxed mental attitude is based on knowing God and on having the divine production in the soul that comes with the fruit of the Holy Spirit. A relaxed mental attitude is one of the results of Living in the Word, Walking in Fellowship, practicing the Faith-Rest Life, and being occupied with Christ. All of the components of depression melt away when God provides this attribute.

Mastering of the Details of Life

We are all involved with details of life. Either we master them, or they master us! If you are a slave to one or more details of life, your thoughts are devoted to them, and they drive you. They dominate your thoughts, your conversation, your decisions. Slavery to the details of life leads to disillusion, disappointment, and depression.

Mastery of the details of life means that you look to the Lord for every detail. Your happiness does not depend on people, circumstances or things. You have the peace of God that passes understanding. You have learned to be content under any circumstances. You can wait for the Lord's timing in providing the details you want; you can enjoy them when you have them; and you can remain happy when the Lord sees fit Not to provide some detail.

Capacity to Love

There may be many depressing details that surround our relationships with other people or the circumstances of our lives. The fruit of the Spirit love deals with that depression by giving us the capacity to have a Spirit-produced love for God (1 Cor. 16:22); for spouse (Titus 2:4); for others (Rom. 12:13).

Inner Happiness

Inner happiness is not possible for the believer who is occupied with himself and his needs. Inner happiness is a state of rejoicing based on knowing that God is everything He claims to be and that He can do what He has promised. Inner happiness is the joy of living where every provision for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being is being made by God in the life of a Christian who is walking in daily fellowship with Him.

Edification (Growing in Christ)

Definition / Etymology

One of the words in the Bible used to describe Christian growth is *edification*. Edification is the process of spiritual growth in a Christian who is living according to the plan of God and who is fulfilling the command to “grow in grace and in the knowledge” of Jesus Christ.

The Greek word which is translated “edification” is οικοδομη (**oikodome**), a noun found in a number of New Testament passages:

Rom. 14:19;

2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10

Eph. 4:12,16,19

2 Cor. 14:5,12

In all these passages, edification has two meanings.

- Collectively it refers to the building up of the body of Christ. In Eph. 4:16, you can see that the edification of individuals results in the building up of the church.
 - For individual believers, edification refers to the spiritual growth and momentum in the Christian way of life, resulting in the glorification of God.
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- When the collective connotation is used, **oikodome** should be translated "construction, building up," or "building process." When the individual connotation is used, **oikodome** should be translated "edification."

To grow in Christ, a Christian must be consistent on a daily basis in staying in fellowship with the Lord through confession of sin, and learning and applying Bible teaching.

Edification is the means of advancement and productivity in the Christian way of life.

Doctrine that is learned must feed both the human spirit and the human soul for capacity for both human and eternal life. Edification of the soul is the result.

Love is the means of reaching maturity and being edified (growing in applied knowledge), 1 Cor. 8

The growth of Christian love is a sign that a person has been learning and applying doctrine. "By their fruit you shall know them..." The fruit of the Spirit is a result of edification.

- Personal love for God the Father is and motivation for the reception of doctrine.
- Impersonal love for all mankind is functional love. It gives one the ability to listen objectively to a pastor-teacher regardless of his personality.
- Occupation with the person of Christ is the ultimate result of love.

Synonyms for Edification

- Light. Eph. 5, "...walk as children of light.
- "Christ formed in you" Gal 4:19, connotes edification.
- "The new man," Eph 4; Col 3, refers to edification
- "The perfect man," James 1:4.
- "Imitators of God," Eph 5:

The Importance of the Pastor's Teaching in Edification.

The responsibility of the pastor in edification is found in a number of passages.

- 2 Cor. 10:8, For even if I should boast somewhat further about our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I shall not be put to shame,
- The Corinthians wavered so much that Paul really had to get tough with them and throw his rank around.
- The Corinthians were reacting to Paul's authority and so were doing many things detrimental to their spiritual life.
- "Our authority" refers to those with the communication gifts of pastor-teacher as well as apostleship, e.g., Apollos and Timothy. The pastor establishes his authority through the communication of doctrine.
- Paul makes it clear that edification depends upon accepting the authority of a pastor-teacher who communicates doctrinal information.
- 2 Cor 13:10, "For this reason, I am writing these things while absent, in order that when I am present, I may not use severity in compatibility with the authority which God has given to me for the purpose of your edification, and not for the purpose of destroying you."

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- No one can learn any subject without accepting the authority of the one who teaches.
 - Therefore, the importance of understanding that edification comes through the teaching of a pastor in communicating the mystery doctrine of the Church Age.
 - 1 Thess. 5:12, "But we request of you, brethren, that you respect those pastor-teachers who work hard among you [studying and teaching], who have command over you in the Lord and give you instruction."
 - The road to edification is paved with hundreds and thousands of lessons regarding the plan of God.
 - Heb 13:17, "Keep obeying those who themselves are ruling over you, and submit to their authority [by learning Bible doctrine], for these same keep watching for the benefit of your souls as those who have to render an account. Keep obeying them, in order that they may do this accounting with joy, and not with groaning, for this is unprofitable for you."
 - The threefold purpose of the pastor is found in Eph 4:12, "for the purpose of equipping the saints, for the production of Christian service, for the edification of the body of Christ."
 - The "saints" refer to the family of God with emphasis on the baptism of the Spirit.
 - "Equipping the saints" refers to God's grace policy and provision for the execution of the His plan.
 - "Equipping" is the function of the pastor who, through teaching doctrine, is able to see people grow and become mature, productive Christians.
 - All believers are in full-time Christian service from the moment of their salvation. Christian service is the normal result of spiritual growth but never the means.
 - Eph. 4:16, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.
 - Body function depends upon the proper use of joints. Athletic coordination depends upon the proper use of the joints.
 - The result of the communication of doctrine is edification in your soul.

The Motivation of the Believer in Edification.

There are two categories of motivation: Positive volition and humility

Positive volition is expressed in Rom 14:19. "Consequently, we run after [pursue] those things related to prosperity and edification."

- Running, not walking, expresses positive volition toward the mystery doctrine of the Church Age, which gives us all the details regarding God's plan, purpose, and will for our lives after salvation.
 - This includes the learning, understanding, and application of the mystery doctrine of the Church Age as the means of executing the plan of God.
 - Prosperity and edification go together; both are the result of continual positive volition.
 - In order for consistent perception of doctrine to occur, it is important to have a mental attitude of humility.
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- Rom. 12:2-5, And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
 - "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.
 - "For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,
 - "so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."
 - The standard of thinking from doctrine includes every aspect of divine viewpoint, orientation to life through enforced and genuine humility, and everything that makes us objective and teachable toward the Word of God.
 - "Many members in one body" emphasizes that although we have different spiritual gifts and different personalities, we all belong to one family, the body of Christ.
 - Without genuine humility, there is neither objectivity nor teachability. Without objectivity and teachability in life, you will be miserable, whether you are a believer or unbeliever, successful or not. Without objectivity and teachability, there is no edification.

Edification: The Key to the Proper Function of the Local Church.

- 1 Cor 14:12, "So also you, since you are eager to have the function of spiritual gifts, seek to abound in spiritual gifts that edify the church."

COMMENTS:

- The Corinthians were all eager to get the gift of tongues because it was spectacular, and then they could assume they were spiritual. In reality, the worst believers in the Bible are described as having the gift of tongues.
- "Seek to abound" means you should give precedence to those spiritual gifts which result in edification. The primary spiritual gift in this category is the gift of pastor-teacher.
- The pre-canon temporary gifts did not edify the church.
- 1 Cor 14:26, "When you assemble, let all things be done for edification."

There are a number of ways in which we worship God, but they must all relate to our spiritual growth. Everything in assembly worship should be done with a view toward the objective, which is edification. The objective is to communicate the Word of God, the purpose of which is to produce edification.

The key to the correct function of the local church is edification. Edification, or the advance to spiritual maturity, is the objective of the Christian way of life.

In the context of 1 Cor. 14, the gift of tongues did not fulfill that purpose. 1 Cor 14:40 concludes that the gift of tongues did not do "all things properly and in an orderly manner."

The gift of tongues illustrated how not to do things decently and in order. For tongues did not contribute to the principle of edification, nor did it contribute to doing things "properly and in an orderly manner."

The Results of Edification

You begin with a foundation of eternal salvation and a body of teaching, the revealed scriptures, "built upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."

The moment you personally believed in Jesus Christ, a foundation was constructed, comprised of the many things from God. The foundation is Jesus Christ.

The foundation is constructed on the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross, [See Topics: Redemption, Propitiation, Reconciliation, Imputation, and Justification]

- 2 Tim 2:19, Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal; the Lord knows those who are His.
- 1 Cor 3:11 No one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

With edification you become spiritually self-sustaining and you function under the privacy of your priesthood to resolve your own problems, including the greatest problems in life.

Problems are resolved in two ways: through the use of the biblical problem solving devices, and through understanding of specific principles in the Word of God. [See Topics: Confession of Sin; Faith Rest; Occupation With Christ]

Edification Motivates Believers

Edification is the motivation in the function of love in the congregation, through which tolerance provides room for spiritual growth.

- Rom 15:2, "Let each of us accommodate his neighbor for the good to edification."
- 1 Cor 10:23, "All things are lawful, but all things do not edify."
- Acts 9:31, "All the church were having prosperity, having been edified, and advancing in occupation with Christ."

Essence of God

The phrase "Essence of God" is a theological term used to refer to God's personal characteristics, or to the facets of His personality. Sometimes the term "Attributes of God" is used to refer to God's essence. The "attributes", or the "essence", of God are His primary characteristics, so they cannot be completely communicated to man. They can be described to a degree, but they cannot be fully defined.

Finite man cannot define the infinite. The Bible is the Word of God, and as such it reveals those facts about the Creator that He has seen fit to reveal about Himself.

Man suppose that God thinks like a man. We think God wants revenge, because when we're insulted, we want revenge. When we are cheated, we want immediate justice and retribution. We are indignant and shocked at the behavior of others, so we expect God to be shocked.

But God does not feel insulted. He does not feel cheated - He owns everything. He is not indignant, temperamental, or emotional. He does not throw tantrums (or lightning bolts). He is not surprised or shocked by anything. He is never depressed or moody.

God is not arrogant or egotistical. He knows Himself, is self-assured, and is humble.

God is a rational, logical, stable-minded, patient; and all of His thinking is backed up by His omniscience. And He approaches every issue from the basis of His perfect character, the subject of this study.

God approaches every issue regarding human beings out of His love for all men. His thinking toward man takes all of His attributes into consideration - but Love is always present. It is God's thinking about us, in love, that is His perfect Grace thinking. He is always gracious, always thinks Grace.

Spirituality is one of God's primary attributes. God is immaterial, in a universe that is made up of both material and immaterial. God has revealed something of what He is in the Word, but only He knows Himself fully. We must rely on what is written in the Bible for any understanding of what God is like.

The fact that God is a spiritual being means that He lives. Spirituality implies life. Jer. 10:10 and 1 Th. 1:9 tell us that God is alive and well. The life of God has no beginning and no ending. God is eternal. The Christian shares God's eternal life, but since his eternal life has a beginning at the time he accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour, his eternal life is properly called "everlasting life".

All of the characteristics of the divine essence are present in God at all times, but not all are manifest at the same time, just as while all colors are present in a ray of white light, the individual colors can be seen only under certain conditions of reflection or refraction. Various attributes of God can be seen in certain situations. For example:

- In salvation, God's love and eternal life are apparent.
- In judgment, His righteousness and justice are manifested.
- In God's faithfulness, His immutability and veracity are shown.
- In God's Plan, His omniscience and sovereignty are seen.
- In God's will, sovereignty is paramount.
- In God's revelation, veracity, love, and omniscience are obvious.

The rest of this paper is devoted to a description of the ten characteristics of the Essence of God as seen in the various Bible passages that describe them.

Sovereignty

GOD IS THE SUPREME BEING OF THE UNIVERSE.

Deut. 4:39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord, he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.

I Sam. 2:6-8 The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the refuse, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them.

I Chron. 29:11 Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. This is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

II Chron. 20:6 And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the nations? And in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

Psalm 83:18 That men may know that thou, whose name alone is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth.

Isaiah 45:5,6 I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me. That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

Acts 17:24 God, who made the world and all things in it, seeing that he is the Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.

God has a will. He is eternal, infinite, and self-determining. He makes decisions, policies, sets up principles. This is divine volition.

Daniel 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Heb. 6:13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself.

Psalm 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding.

Psa 115:3 But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased.

In His sovereignty, God decided to give man a free will. The meeting place of Man's will and God's will is the Cross. (John 3:16)

God's sovereign plan for the human race is first, salvation, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 16:31); second, during life on earth as a believer, to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to grow in Christ (Eph 5:18; I Peter 3:18); and third, to have eternal life in heaven, in a resurrection body.

Righteousness

God is absolutely holy, or righteous.

Psalm 145:17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Lev. 19:2b Ye shall be holy; for I, the Lord your God, am holy.

I Sam. 2:2 There is none holy like the Lord; for there is none beside thee, neither is there any rock like our God.

Psalm 22:3 But thou art holy, O thou who inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Ps. 111:9 He sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant forever; holy and reverend is his name.

Isaiah 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

God is good.

Ps. 25:8 Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Ps. 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusteth in him.

Ps. 86:5 For thou, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all those who call upon thee.

God is free from sin.

II Cor. 5:21 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.

I John 1:5 This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

God is perfect in His character and Person.

Deut. 32:4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Ps. 7:9 Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just; for the righteous God tests the minds and hearts.

Rom. 1:17 For in it is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written The just shall live by faith.

Psalms 11:7; 97:6; 111:3; 119:137

Jer. 23:6

John 17:25

Rom. 10:3

I John 2:29.

God is righteous in all His attitudes and actions

Deut. 32:4

2 Sam. 22:31

Ps. 119:137; 145:17

Dan. 9:14

Rev. 19:2

In the application of the concept of God's righteousness (+R) to the unbeliever, it is important to remember that His righteousness is absolute. This means that He cannot fellowship with sin. He must demand the same perfection of His creatures. Man's concept of righteousness is relative (Isa. 64:6); but no one can measure up to the divine standard nor achieve absolute righteousness by self-effort. However, the righteousness of God is freely available to all who believe. Psalm 14:3; Rom. 3:23; Tit. 3:5; Rom. 3:22

Justice

God is Just, and cannot be unfair. His justice demands that disobedience against His laws be punished. Justice administers the penalty that right-eousness demands.

Psalm 19:9 ...the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

Psalm 50:6 ...for God is judge himself.

Psalm 58:11 ...verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

Rom. 3:26 To declare at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Heb. 10:30,31 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongs unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Heb. 12:23

1 John 1:9

Rev. 15:3

God's justice is satisfied because of His grace provision of redemption. The Lord Jesus Christ, through his substitutionary, effective death on the Cross, transferred the guilt of the sinner onto Himself, thus satisfying the justice of God. God is now free to pardon the sinner and justify the one who accepts His saving grace. God is equally free to justly condemn all who reject salvation. The basis of their indictment is works, never sins.

1 Pet. 2:24

Rom. 5:12; 6:23; 3:21-28; 4:5; 8:1

John 3:18,36; 5:28-30.

Grace always precedes judgment.

Love

God is eternal and unchangeable love.

Jer. 31:3 The Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

God, in His sovereignty, decided to treat man in grace. It is His love that motivates His grace. Righteousness and Justice stood in the way because of the sin barrier between man and God. In Love, God the Father sent His Son to the cross to die for the sins of the whole world. Righteousness and Justice are thus satisfied, the barrier is removed, and love and grace can be given to men.

Eph. 2:8,9

Isa. 59:2

John 3:16.

Eternal Life

God is absolute existence.

Ex. 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

John 8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

God has neither beginning nor end.

God existed in eternity past, and He will exist forever.

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning, God...

Isa. 43:13 Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Deut. 32:40; 33:27

Job 36:26

Psa. 9:7; 90:2; 102:37; 135:13

Lam. 5:19

Hab. 3:6

John 1:1-4

1 Tim. 1:17

1 John 5:11

Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:16

The believer in Christ has everlasting life.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 10:28,29 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

1 John 5:11

John 8:51; 14:1-3

The unbeliever will experience everlasting punishment.

Matt 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Omniscience

God is all-knowledge.

1 Sam. 2:3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

Job 26:6 Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

Job 31:4 Doth he not see my ways, and count all my steps?

Job 34:21 For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

Psalms 139:1-12

Psalms 147:4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.

Jer. 16:17 For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

Matt. 10:29,30 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Heb. 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Job 37:16; 42:2

Eze. 11:5

God is infinite in wisdom and understanding.

1 Sam. 16:7 ...for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

Psalms 44:21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

Prov. 3:19 The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

Jer. 17:10 I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Jer. 51:15 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.

Matt. 6:8 ...for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

Rom. 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Psalms 147:5

Prov. 17:3

Isa. 40:13,14

Nahum 1:7

Rom. 11:33

1 John 3:20

God knows the end from the beginning (foreknowledge).

Isa. 41:26; 42:9; 43:9

Isa. 46:10

Acts 2:23; 15:18

1 Pet. 1:2

As God, the Lord Jesus Christ knew all things and all men.

Matt. 9:4

John 2:24; 19:28; 21:17

Application to believers:

Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Matt. 6:31-33 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Omnipresence

God is ever-present, neither limited by time nor space, immanent and transcendent.

Jer. 23:24

Acts 17:27

The heavens cannot contain God.

1 Kings 8:27

Acts 17:24

Heaven is His throne, the earth His footstool.

Deut. 4:39

Isa. 66:1

Man cannot escape the presence of God.

Job. 34:21,22

Psalms 139:7-10

Prov. 15:3

The Christian can take great comfort in the presence of God.

Gen. 28:15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land/ for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Josh. 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage: be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Ex. 33:14

Psalms 121:3,4

Matt. 18:20

1 Cor. 3:16

Heb. 13:5

Omnipotence

God is all-powerful and limitless in ability.

Gen. 17:1; 18:14

Job 26:7; 42:2

Psa. 24:8; 93:1; 147:5

Isa. 40:26; 50:2

Jer. 27:5; 32:27

Matt. 19:26

Mark 14:36

Luke 1:37

Rev. 4:8

God is limitless in authority.

Psa. 33:9

Rom. 13:1

Heb. 1:3 He upholds all things by the word of His power.

Rev. 19:6

Scriptures show the manifestation of God's power.

2 Chron. 16:9; 25:8

Psa. 74:13

The power of God's Son.

Matt. 9:6; 28:18

John 10:18; 17:2,3

The application of God's omnipotence to the Christian Way of Life.

1 Sam. 17:47

Psa. 27:1

Isa. 26:4; 40:29

Jer. 33:3

Acts 1:8

1 Cor. 15:43

2 Cor. 9:8

Eph. 1:19; 3:20

Phil. 4:13

2 Tim. 1:12

Heb. 7:25

1 Peter 1:5

Immutability

God is neither capable of nor susceptible to change.

Psa. 102:26,27; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:12

God is absolute stability.

Isa. 40:28

James 1:17

God's Word and His works are unchanging.

Psa. 119:89

Eccl. 3:14

Isa. 40:8

God's great faithfulness is a product of His immutability.

Psa. 36:5; 89:33; 119:90

Lam. 3:23

He is faithful to keep His promises.

Num. 23:19

1 Kings 8:56

2 Cor. 1:20

Tit. 1:2

Heb. 10:23; 11:11

He is faithful to forgive, 1 JOHN 1:9.

He is faithful to keep us saved, 2 TIM. 2:12,13.

He is faithful to deliver in times of pressure, 1 COR. 10:13.

He is faithful in suffering, 1 PET. 4:19

He is faithful to provide in eternity, 1 THESS. 5:24.

He is faithful to stabilize the believer, 2 THESS. 3:3

The faithfulness of Christ.

Heb. 3:1,2; 13:8

Rev. 1:5; 19:11

Veracity

God is absolute Truth, DEUT. 32:4

God's truth is manifested:

- in His ways.

Psa. 25:10; 86:15

Rev. 15:3

- in His works

Psa. 33:4; 111:7,8

Dan. 4:37

- in His Word

2 Sam. 7:28

1 Kings 17:24

Psa. 19:9; 119:142,151; 138:2

John 8:45; 17:17

2 Cor. 6:7

Eph. 1:13

The Veracity of the Godhead:

The Father -

Psa. 31:5

Isa. 65:16

Jer. 10:10

John 3:33; 17:3

Rom. 3:4

The Son -

John 1:14; 8:32; 14:6

1 John 5:20

Rev. 16:7; 19:11

The Holy Spirit -

John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13

1 John 5:6

Application of God's Veracity to the Christian.

Prov. 6:16,17

Matt. 5:37

2 Tim. 2:15

1 John 4:6

The Trinity

There are three distinct Persons of the Godhead, each possessing the entire essence of deity. The three Persons comprise what the Scripture represents as the ONE TRUE GOD. In the unity of the Godhead (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9) there are three Persons on one substance, power and eternity (Isa. 48:16; Luke 3:22; John 14:16; Rom. 15:30; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 1 John 4:13,14)

The full title of God is "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit". (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). Each Person is made up of the same divine characteristics, making each equal to either of the other two (John 10:30; 16:15) Therefore, when the Bible speaks of God as being One, it is a reference to Essence; when speaking of the members of the Godhead, it is a reference to the Persons.

	FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
SOVEREIGNTY	Psa. 103:19	Rev. 19:16	1 Cor. 12:11
	Rev. 7:10	Heb. 1:8	John 3:8
LOVE	1 John 4:8	1 John 3:16	Gal. 5:22
JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS	Deut. 32:4	Zech. 9:9	Called "Holy" Spirit
ETERNAL LIFE	Jer. 10:10	Col. 1:17	Heb. 9:14
OMNISCIENCE	Psa. 147:4,5	Col. 2:3	1 Cor. 2:10,11
OMNIPRESENCE	Psa. 139:8	Mt. 28:20	Psa. 139:7
OMNIPOTENCE	Mt. 19:26	Mt. 28:18	Isa. 11:2
IMMUTABILITY	Psa. 102:26,27		
VERACITY	John 17:3	John 14:6	1 John 5:6

Evil

Introduction

God's plan is that the Lord Jesus Christ be glorified during the Church Age. One important reason for this is that every human being will have an opportunity to make a decision to accept Christ as Savior. Therefore, when we say that Christ is glorified during the Church Age, we are saying that Christ is the celebrated Person of the Church Age, the focus of attention.

For this reason, one of the Holy Spirit's main functions during the Church Age is to glorify Christ and to make Him known to all people.

John 16:13,14, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.

It is also the responsibility of Christians to glorify Christ by their own lives; and the Holy Spirit provides the power for us to be able to do that. The believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and this glorification occurs on the inside of the believer.

1 Cor. 6:19,20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

And the Church (the Body of Christ) participates in bringing glory to God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph. 3:20,21 Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

But, Satan is Christ's enemy and is completely opposed to any activity that glorifies Christ. Satan's strategy has always been to oppose Christ at every turn and to turn human beings away from Christ whenever possible. Satan has specific strategies in his campaign against both unbelievers and Christians.

The unbeliever is made blind to gospel information by being distracted by Satan and by exercising negative volition toward the Word of God. While Satan does not force anyone to be lost, he uses every means to steer the unbeliever away from the truth. His ultimate weapons in this are religion and humanism. He tries to promote the glorification and deification of mankind while downgrading the Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan doesn't give up when a person accepts Christ as Savior. He has a strategy regarding believers which is very subtle and far-reaching. Satan accuses believers before God. The sins of the Christian are observed by the fallen angels and reported. Satan tries to keep the believer from the Word of God. He encourages Christians to ignore the Word and accept false teaching so that they will revert to their former manner of life.

In short, Satan does everything possible to keep people from being saved; or, if a person does get saved, Satan tries to keep that person from being effective in the Christian life.

Satan's total plan, or strategy, is known as Evil. In the Bible, "Evil" is the technical term used for Satan's world strategy. As such, "Evil" is an objective term and has specific meaning and implication. The word "Evil" is capitalized in this paper to show that it is the title of Satan's plan.

Definition of Evil

1 Thess. 5:22, "Abstain from every form of Evil."

To obey this command it is necessary to learn what Evil is and what forms it takes...

The word "Evil" has a distinct technical and categorical meaning in the Word of God. It is not simply a generic word referring to anything that is bad or sinful.

The word "Evil" refers specifically to the policy of Satan as the ruler of this world. Evil is the modus operandi of Satan from the time of his fall throughout the angelic revolution and down to the point when he became the ruler of the world.

Satan is directly opposed to anything involving the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan's is devoted to distorting or obscuring any truth related to Christ.

2 Cor. 4:3,4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Evil is Satan's system by which he administers the rulership of this world. He uses his world rulership to try to bring about the downfall of Jesus Christ. Failing that, Satan tries to turn as many people away from Christ as possible.

Through Evil, Satan brings about two major consequences on earth: sin and human good (the motivation of Evil), both of which are based on errors in thinking. The sin of self-righteousness combined with human good or sincerity produces a saturation of Evil in a nation.

One of the main reasons for learning about Evil from the Bible is to learn that **man cannot solve his problems by human solutions**. Any effective solution to a human problem is a divine solution. And there is an answer in the Bible for every human need or problem.

Anything that is outside of the plan of God is part of Satan's strategy of Evil. Therefore, any person who is consistently involved in the cosmic (Satanic) system is directly involved with Evil.

Evil results in the destruction of society, the malfunction of society. Evil causes the removal of legitimate authority and its function under the laws of divine establishment. Just as grace and doctrine represent the genius of God in relationship to the human race, so Evil represents the genius of Satan in relationship to the human race.

Therefore, what you and how you think is very important.

There are two ways of thinking:

Divine viewpoint is thinking doctrine, which glorifies Christ.

Human viewpoint is thinking Evil, which dishonors Christ.

Therefore, the issue is thought vs thought.

Evil attempts to produce a human good panacea which is expected to solve the problems of life **apart from doctrine and divine establishment**. So, Evil is often a distortion of doctrine or a distortion of the laws of divine establishment. Satan's original sin was a distortion of doctrine.

Evil comes in many forms:

- Altruistic humanitarianism
- Philanthropy
- Religion
- Legalism
- Reversionism
- Socialism
- Political internationalism
- Government interference
- Distortion of the law
- Bribery in government
- Reducing the military
- Sociology
- Public welfare

Evil produces the erroneous concept of "brotherly love." The whole idea of government trying to abolish sickness, mental illness, economic problems, frustrations, and human problems by legislation and human solutions is Evil.

The world's problems can never be solved apart from Bible doctrine and the laws of divine establishment.

Evil also includes:

- Social action
- Restriction of human freedom for the greater good
- Distortion of law to solve social and economic problems
- Interference of government in business and free enterprise
- Government quotas

Satan: The Originator of Evil

Evil originated and existed before human history. The means by which it was transmitted from previous creature existence to human history is Satan himself.

The origin of Evil is Satan's genius to devise a system to oppose God.

Evil originated in angelic creation in the greatest creature to ever come from the hand of God.

Satan controls most of Christianity through his cosmic system. The thing that makes people function in the cosmic system is arrogance.

Satan's plan is related to beating Christ to the Millennium with his own attempt to produce a perfect world. The more the world follows his plan, the greater the degeneracy which occurs.

Satan's plans always look good to the stupid, but it always results in degeneracy.

Refer to L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, pp. 100-101, 108-111.

1 John 3:8, "When anyone commits a sin, he has become the agent of the devil."

- The sin nature is usually the source of temptation; volition is the source of sin.
- Your decision to sin puts you immediately into the cosmic system, making you the agent of Satan.
- The works of the devil can only be destroyed by functioning inside the plan of God. We are the products of our own decisions; therefore, we bring disaster on ourselves.

Biblical Conclusions About Evil

The mature believer should be able to distinguish between sin and Evil.

Heb 5:13-14 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and Evil.

Motivating Evil exists in the thought pattern of the soul. Evil and degeneracy start with a thought. It takes lots of doctrine to reject Evil. The Christian walk is the only real protection against Evil.

Matt. 6:23, "But if your eye is Evil, the entire body is full of darkness [cosmic involvement]."

Matt. 15:19, "For out of the mind come Evil thoughts."

"Love" refers to the spiritual love which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Personal love *can* think Evil, but impersonal love, a function of the royal family, cannot think Evil.

1 Cor. 13:5 Love does not behave dishonorably, is not preoccupied with self, is not hypersensitive, does not think Evil."

God protects the believer who is occupied with Christ and who has positive volition to doctrine.

Prov 12:21, "No Evil happens to the righteous."

Ps 37:17 "But the Lord sustains the righteous."

Ps 91:10, "No Evil will befall you; you who love the Lord hate Evil. The Lord preserves the souls of His mature ones; He delivers them from the hands of the Evil one."

Ps 121:7, "The Lord will protect you from all Evil; He will guard your soul."

Prov 2:11-13, "The wise sees the Evil and hides himself, but the stupid goes on and is punished for it."

A believer who walks in the cosmic system can expect to be frustrated by Evil.

Rom 7:19, "For what I desire I do not do, but what I do not desire [Evil], this I keep practicing."

The believer is warned to beware of those who practice Evil, Phil 3:2. Not tavern owners and drug dealers, but the respectable ...

Even legitimate things are mutilated or distorted. To beware does not necessarily mean to avoid but to understand.

Sincere do-gooders are the major practitioners of Evil. The more involved you are in sincere human good crusades, the more you intensify your Evil.

3 Jn 11. "Beloved, do not be imitators of the Evil but of the good."

Those who are under the influence of Evil always have a price.

It is a dangerous temptation to any poor believer to chase after money so as to neglect Bible doctrine. Actually, this verse applies to the love of any detail of life.

1 Tim 6:10, "The love of money is the root of all Evils."

Influence by Evil explains why prayers are not answered.

Job 35:12, "There they cry out, but He does not answer because of the pride of Evil men."

This explains the pattern of saying "no" to truth, building callous on the soul, intensifying arrogance into self-pity, self-righteousness, and guilt, and therefore coming to believe the lie.

Believers are often led into the cosmic system and Evil by their Christian friends.

1 Cor. 15:33, "Evil companions corrupt good morals."

2 Thess. 3:2-3, "That we may be delivered from perverse and Evil men, for all believers do not have doctrine; but the Lord is faithful and He will strengthen you and protect you from Evil."

The attitude of the mature believer toward Evil is stated in:

Ps 84:10. "For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand days in the cosmic system. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of My Lord than to dwell in the tents of Evil."

Submission to the authority of establishment prevents Evil and the influence of Evil, Eccl 8:2-5.

The laws of divine establishment are designed to protect the citizens of the nation from Evil.

Rom 13:3-4 implies that the unbeliever can function successfully within divine establishment when he follows establishment truth. "Do you desire not to fear the authority? Therefore, keep on doing the good and you will have recognition from it. For it [government] is a minister of God to you for the purpose of good. But if you do Evil, be afraid. For he does not wear the sword for nothing."

By protecting against Evil, the laws of divine establishment give freedom and protection for evangelization and for the teaching of Bible doctrine. The only limitation on crime is humility and respect for authority. Micah 1:12 teaches that our failure to cope with Evil leads to destruction of the nation.

Amos 5:14-15, "Hate Evil, love good, and establish justice in the court; consequently, the Lord God of the armies will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph."

Evil is distinguished from war and disease, Jer 28:8. Sin and Evil occur in war, but war as a category is not Evil. War brings national freedom. War is not sin; it is inevitable and a necessity. Disease in itself is not sinful, though sin and Evil are associated with disease. Not all people who are sick are being disciplined by God.

The Relationship of Evil to Arrogance

Mental attitude arrogance is anything related to preoccupation with self to the point of sin, human good, or Evil. It is satisfaction with self and dissatisfaction with others and with God.

Negative volition arrogance is related to preoccupation with self and causes apathy toward doctrine. The authority of the pastor or the message of the Bible is rejected.

Impulsive arrogance is any abuse of authority.

Blind arrogance is the arrogance of legalism. In this a person is partially divorced from reality (sociopathic rather than psychotic). This includes self-righteous arrogance, in which a person fails to see in himself what he criticizes in others.

Arrogance toward institutions is rejection of the authority, policy, and purpose of a bona fide organization.

Conspiracy arrogance follows institutional arrogance and results in a conspiracy to overthrow the purpose, policy, or authority of an organization.

Criminal arrogance seeks to solve problems through violence. It is totally divorced from reality. It includes terrorist and revolutionary activities.

Crusader arrogance is the self-righteous arrogance of trying to straighten out the world. A person places his personal standards above the law or any form of establishment or authority. When criminal arrogance interlocks with crusader arrogance, there is terrorism or revolution.

Psychotic arrogance is total divorcement from all reality. It is a result of bad decisions, not genetics. It is intense concentration on self. It is the emotional control of reason.

Sexual arrogance is preoccupation with sex and self-gratification. It is preoccupation with the body to the exclusion of the soul.

Genetic arrogance is assuming that greatness in life is inherited. Parents who seek recognition through the achievement of their children have this type of arrogance.

Political arrogance is a result or companion of crusader arrogance. It tries to offer human solutions to life's problems. Liberals and conservatives both suffer from political arrogance.

Client nation arrogance emphasizes the laws of divine establishment and the function of government leadership in terms of arrogance versus humility.

Client nation arrogance is the failure of our elected representatives and arrogant bureaucracy to control the government.

Client nation arrogance is the collective arrogance of a people living in Satan's world.

Monarchy is the rule of one man in the interest of the common good. Under arrogance this becomes tyranny, i.e., the rule of one man for his own advantage.

Aristocracy is the rule of a group in the interest of the common good. This degenerates to an oligarchy, which is the rule of a group for their own benefit, as the cosmic system influences the nation.

A republic is the rule of the better part of the people in the interest of common good. But when arrogance comes, it degenerates into a democracy, which is the rule of the worst part of the people for their own benefit.

In authority arrogance, the individual fails to make the most difficult transition of temporal life, which is going from the authority in the home to freedom in life. The home is organized humility. The parents' authority is enforced humility, and child's response to enforced humility produces genuine humility. Rejection of overt authority in life results in rejection of inward authority of the soul, and that destroys a person's self-discipline.

Arrogance of Ignorance. Genuine humility is necessary for the transition from authority in the home to freedom in life and from ignorance at salvation to wisdom at spiritual maturity. Genuine humility is teachability to make that transition. The arrogance of ignorance is the failure to make that transition from ignorance to cognizance in the Christian way of life.

In the arrogance of unhappiness, self-centeredness eliminates any capacity or possibility for happiness. Involvement in the world guarantees unhappiness and leads to erroneous ideas about what constitutes happiness. This means you expect others to make you happy. Entertainment and marriage is for people who are already happy. But with the arrogance of unhappiness, you have a martyr complex which results in trying to control people by giving them a guilt complex. This is how the weak control the strong.

The arrogance of morality is the self-righteous arrogance of superimposing false standards of morality on others. People major in one moral thing so they can rationalize and say they are better than everyone else in that area. This is superimposing a false standard of morality on others or taking a true standard out of its context, e.g., salvation. Morality is designed to protect human freedom.

The arrogance of emotion is irrationality. Arrogant people stop thinking and so their emotion becomes their substitute for thought. This is total preoccupation with self related to emotion. Knowledge is the environment for thinking. Bible doctrine is the environment for decisions. Emotional arrogance fantasizes and therefore collapses under pressure.

In the arrogance of pseudo-generosity, a person gives because of a desire for attention, approbation, or to buy friendship or happiness. 2 Cor. 9:7-11 teaches that the function of genuine generosity is found in the mind.

Arrogance of Christian service. Loss of momentum comes from rejection of doctrine and substituting Christian service for spirituality. Christian service becomes a distraction to momentum. Production is a result of growth, never the means. Perpetuation of Christian service while in the cosmic system is the arrogance of Christian service. Arrogance mistakes Christian service for growth and momentum.

The arrogance of discouragement is preoccupation with self under pressure and testing. Unexplained disaster tempts the believer to feel sorry for himself. Being maligned, treated unfairly, or facing the death of loved ones are the kinds of disaster or pressure that bring this on.

Matt. 26:58

1 Kings 19:10.

Arrogance of Lust. When legitimate desire is linked with arrogance, it becomes lust. Inordinate desire is lust. Desire is not wrong, but lust is. Lust is arrogant preoccupation with one's desires.

Pseudo-intellectual arrogance is the superimposition of human I. Q. over spiritual IQ. Arrogance rejects divine viewpoint. It glorifies human speculation to the exclusion of Bible doctrine, or seeks to reconcile Bible doctrine with false philosophical, psychological, and scientific speculation; e.g., gnosticism.

The Results of Negative Volition to the Word of God

Negative volition to doctrine. A person resists doctrine because he is antagonistic to truth, to God, and to the things of God. He is the enemy of God's plan. Evil, before it ever becomes a function or action, is a thought or motive. **People are degenerate because of the way they think, not because of what they do.** You have to be preoccupied with yourself before you can be negative to doctrine. This is characterized by antagonism toward everyone associated with the Christian life. There are three categories of negative volition:

Negative volition at God-consciousness. This is the point of accountability which occurs at different ages depending on the culture. God-consciousness can occur in a number of ways.

- Teleological thinking says a structure demands a designer.
- Cosmological thinking says the intuitive law of cause and effect demands the existence of God.
- Ontological thinking says that since the human mind possesses the idea of a perfect Being, such a Being must exist. There must be an absolute which gives character to the relative.
- Anthropological thinking says that man's soul possesses both volition and conscience with an urge to choose right rather than wrong, and that the structure of society is based on the recognition of virtue and truth.
- Theological thinking says that God must exist because men universally believe in His existence. Heathen are heathen because of negative volition at God-consciousness or Gospel hearing, Rom 1:18-25.

Negative volition at Gospel hearing. Rejection of Jesus Christ leaves a person outside of God's plan: 1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 4:3-4; 2 Pet 2:20-22.

Negative volition to doctrine. The believer immediately enters this area when he rejects the communicator or the message. Emotional arrogance is a big reason for this.

2 Cor 6:11, "You are hindered by your own emotions."

The negative Christian becomes selective in what he thinks, thus rejecting anything resembling truth. Then he leans on his emotions for pleasure, thereby misusing emotion, Rom 16:17-18.

Worldly (cosmic) degeneration occurs when a Christian becomes antagonistic to truth and enters into a state of degeneracy. Degeneracy is in the mind long before it is in actions. Rom 1:24-27 illustrates, "they who exchange the doctrine of God for a lie."

Anti-establishment activity occurs when the soul is antagonistic to the laws of divine establishment and authority. 2 Tim 3:2-3 teaches that this begins in the home with "disobedience to parents." This is ingrained antagonism toward authority.

Rom 1:28-32 is the best illustration of anti-establishment thinking and activity.

Panaceas are Man's attempts to improve the world and are always sponsored by Satan. Any solution sought apart from divine truth is a cosmic panacea. A cosmic panacea is an Evil (Satanic) solution which tries to keep the Lord Jesus Christ out of the picture.

The world's panaceas reject any salvation by grace or spirituality by grace.

Instead of freedom, there is the demand for equality.

"The end always justifies the means," is the motto of the believer participating in this. He believes in redistribution of wealth, over-taxation, legislation to solve all problems, sameness in life, big government and little people where citizens are slaves of the state, regulation of private enterprise, confiscation of private property, and utopianism.

Cosmic panaceas lead to violence, terrorism, and revolution under the principle of social engineering.

The state trains the children to be obedient to the dictates of the state rather than to parents. There is a total rejection of freedom and authority.

Religion is Satan's counterfeit of the plan of God. Christianity is not a religion, but is a relationship with God through the person of Jesus Christ. **Religion is man by man's efforts seeking to gain the approbation of God.** 2 Cor 11 describes religious leaders. 2 Tim 3:7-8, "these religious types oppose doctrine, are men of depraved mind [degenerate], disqualified from blessing with regard to doctrine" See also 2 Pet 2:1-3.

Anthropocentric (man-centered) academic speculation is motivated by pseudo-intellectual arrogance. This is the attempt to reconcile philosophical and scientific speculation with doctrine. When this can't be done, the person rejects doctrine and seeks a substitute. The more arrogant you are, the more you are attracted to academic speculation.

Grace Versus Evil

Every generation has to choose between the grace policy of God, represented by the cross, and the Evil policy of Satan. This issue has never left the human race. The genius of God has perpetuated the issue of volition throughout human history and throughout the human race.

Therefore, the issue before the royal family is: are you influenced by doctrine or by Evil? Our parents in the Garden faced this same issue.

Grace is the means by which doctrinal principles are elucidated; Evil as Satan's policy is the means by which false doctrine is inculcated, Prov 11:18-19, 14:22, 15:3, 16:6, 22:3, 24:1-4; Eph. 5:16; 2 Thess. 3:2-3.

These passages present some of the following principles.

- Divine omniscience provides discipline for Evil and blessing for doctrine.
 - Thinking you are an island unto yourself is in itself Evil.
 - The ultimate result of the pursuit of Evil for the believer is the sin unto death. This is the most suffering any believer can ever endure, but he deserves every bit of it.
-

- Now, just as in the beginning, when you partake of the "forbidden fruit" of Evil, you receive tremendous divine discipline. Just as what you eat from a tree becomes a part of you, so when you partake of Evil it becomes a part of you. And simply by being filled with human good and Evil, you bring on yourself a whole system of self-induced misery and divine discipline.
- Eph 5:16 summarizes all these principles of Evil found in Proverbs. You redeem time by the filling of the Spirit and maximum doctrine in your soul, which at the same time kills off Evil.

Knowledge of the Word of God neutralizes Evil in the soul, Ps 54:5; Rom 12:21.

Once under the influence of Evil, the only possible recovery comes from learning doctrine.

Grace does not come through when you are under the influence of Evil.

It is impossible for any of God's attributes to be Evil. He is minus all the Evil things Satan does all the time. That there is no Evil in God indicates the great dividing line in the angelic conflict

Protection from Evil

The believer in fellowship is protected from Evil.

Satan wants you to drop your guard and go negative toward doctrine, Ps. 21:11, 23:4; Prov 12:12,20,21; Gen 48:16; Gen 50:20, "They meant it for Evil, but God meant it for good."

There is no coexistence with both Evil and inner happiness. However, sin and happiness can coexist. Do you know anyone happier than David, or anyone who lived better than David? You can be happy living in your sins.

There is divine protection from Evil for the positive believer:

Ps.37:16-19, "They [positive believers] will not be ashamed in the time of Evil; in the day of depression they will still have abundance."

Ps. 91:10, 97:10, 119:101, 121:7; Prov. 2:10-14.

Prov 1:33, "He who listens to Me shall live in security, and shall be at ease without fear of Evil."

Prov 16:6, "By occupation with the Lord, one avoids Evil."

Prov 19:23 teaches that there is divine protection from Evil all around.

The more doctrine you have in your soul, the more you will love the Lord and the more you will hate Evil. All thoughts in life are actually fighting over your soul, Prov 3:7.

The negative believer immediately finds a great deal against which he can react, and he moves into the stages of reversion. Remember that Satan offers him a pseudo-maturity status and pseudo prosperity. Satan is capable of rewarding as the ruler of the world.

So the constant intake of doctrine is the only insulation from Evil, because doctrine goes where Evil would reside; i.e., in the mind, and there doctrine combats Evil.

Faith

Belief and Believing

One of the most important considerations in the Christian way of life is the subject of the believer's faith. Several questions are always paramount in a person's thinking about faith, such as:

What is faith?

How does a person exercise faith?

How can we have stronger faith?

You will occasionally hear a person say something like this, "I don't believe anything that I can't see or feel." Or, "You really can't prove that there is a God, or that Jesus was what He claimed to be; and I'm not going to believe anything that I don't know is true!"

When a person says that he refuses to believe anything that is not proved, he ignores the fact that everyone believes unproved facts every day. If people were not willing to place their confidence in unproved facts, the whole world would grind to a halt -- no one would be able to move.

In practice, a person employs the mental process of faith dozens of times every day, just to carry out life's routines. Faith is a Standard Operating Procedure of human life. The discussion in this essay will show that God has made faith an integral part of human existence so that anyone in the world can have salvation and can experience Christian growth with all of its benefits and blessings.

Because Bible study is, in part, a study of past events and of ancient writings, the first section of this paper is a discussion of the uses of faith in the study of history. The intention of the whole paper is, (1) to give a Christian added confidence in the use of faith, and (2) to provide a fairly thorough treatment of what the Bible says about the subject. Some of the ideas herein can be used effectively in witnessing to skeptics or to those whose ideas are hazy about salvation by faith.

The second section shows how faith is used in learning Bible truth, and it includes a comparison between the three systems of learning, empiricism, rationalism, and faith.

The third section deals with what the Bible says about how Christian faith is developed and strengthened.

The fourth section contains an etymological study from the original Greek and Hebrew words used in the Bible which are translated as "faith" or as some equivalent.

We shall see that as a mental activity Christian faith is no different from everyday faith. The unbeliever can use ordinary faith, the willingness to believe something, to accept the Gospel message and obtain salvation. The believer can use faith to acquire knowledge of Bible doctrine and to make application of those principles in his daily walk with the Lord.

Faith and the Study of History

A person who studies the past, and who writes about it, is continually involved with the concept of faith. First, he must decide which of his sources are reliable enough to be believed, for only with credible sources can the historian have any chance of reconstructing accurately an event or social situation.

Then, the historian must express his thoughts in writing in a manner calculated not only to inform his readers but also to encourage their belief, their faith, in the propositions he sets forth. A careful student of history will have faith only in historians who meet his standards for honesty.

The Common Historical Bias

But there are many historians, and other people, of course, whose opinions about historical facts are colored by their religious and anti-Biblical prejudices. Many people have adopted a viewpoint which makes it impossible to view historical data objectively, especially data which deals with Biblical

events and issues. This false viewpoint, a set of biased presuppositions, includes the following conclusions:

- There is no personal God.
- Therefore, there is no supernatural and miracles are not possible.
- We live in a closed system, the earth with its human race, into which no outside force can intrude, nor over which any God has control.

A skeptic holding these views approaches the study of the Bible "knowing", for example, that Christ did not rise from the dead, because these things just cannot be. These conclusions themselves, however, amount to an exercise of strong faith, albeit in the wrong direction. Instead of beginning his study with the recorded historical data and an open mind, this individual precludes a balanced approach by a sort of metaphysical speculation.

Valid Historical Methods

All arguments and systems begin with presuppositions (even the Christian system). This does not mean that all presuppositions that one might adopt are equally desirable. In considering any important idea, it is better to begin with presuppositions of method, which will yield truth, rather than with presuppositions of substantive content, which assume a body of truth already.

No study of the past has a right to assume a closed system of causation. Historical events are unique, and the test of their factual character can be the only acceptable documentary approach.

What does the historian do, then, when he experiences a surprise which runs counter to all his expectations, counter to his convictions, against even his culture's whole understanding of truth? Why, he must say that it is surely possible; because, for the critical historian, nothing is a priori impossible! It is not the objective of the historian to construct a history from preconceived notions and then to adjust it to his own liking. He must, rather, reproduce history from the best evidence, and let it speak for itself.

History, then, is knowledge of the past based on testimony. And the plausibility, the believability, of history depends on the trustworthiness of the witnesses, not upon the erudition of the historian.

History and Bible Study

Studying the Bible in the 20th Century involves a great deal of intense historical scholarship. One begins by placing some confidence, or faith, in early Christian witnesses and authorities. This confidence may very well be tentative at first; and one may test each hypothesis thoroughly before going deeper into study, certainly before going out on a limb by making dogmatic statements. At each decision point in study, faith must be exercised.

One does not have to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus Christ was Deity. What one does is weigh the evidence, evaluate the pros and cons. The results of careful study show that Christ *must be* who and what He claims to be. In fact, many people have begun studying the claims of Christ, intending to refute the Bible statements, only to end up confirming what they had originally set out to disprove!

A criterion of absolute truth would wipe out all knowledge, because a person could never find a place to stand to begin his study. The Christian begins by accepting the proposition that the Bible is the Word of God. Then, as he learns each new doctrine, he makes decisions. First, he decides whether to believe the doctrine as he understands it. Then, he decides whether to apply the doctrine in his life through believing the teaching, by claiming the promise, or by obeying the commands given. As

each new idea is tested and put into practice, it becomes part of the foundation for further learning and spiritual growth.

HOW THE BELIEVER USES FAITH

Faith Compared with Empiricism and Rationalism

The Biblical concept of faith is that it amounts to complete confidence in something for which there is no empirical or rational proof available. "Faith is the substance of things in which one has confidence, the evidence of things not seen." HEB. 11:6

A person is said to have faith in something if he has believed it without having had a physical demonstration of it or a logical explanation of the truth behind it. Saying this another way, a person who has believed something without having it proved to him has exercised faith. Faith is, therefore, distinguished from the two other methods of learning, empiricism and rationalism.

Empiricism is a technical word which refers to the using of scientific methods to learn something or to prove something. The scientific method relies on the five senses for the proof of propositions. And each experiment produces either verification or refutation of the idea or point of view. A child who does not take his mother's word for the fact that the stove is hot may attempt empirical proof by touching the stove himself. He receives immediate experimental verification of the truth of his mother's statement.

The term rationalism is used to describe the method of arriving at proof through the logical method. This is proof by logical process of reason. In rationalism, logic produces documentation or refutation of a point of view. Both empiricism and rationalism are very useful in learning; but neither is equivalent to faith.

Faith Used in Learning

Faith can also be described as a method of perception, or learning, which accepts an established criterion as the basis of reality. It is very convenient, and necessary, to use faith in this way. If we were to demand rational or experimental proof of everything stated to us, we would never get anything done.

Suppose you were using a mathematics textbook which made the statement "The sum of the angles of a plane triangle is 180 degrees." Using faith, you could accept that statement as a true fact, and you could build your study of triangles using this fact, even though you had not seen a formal proof of its validity.

To insist upon proof of this statement, however, would mean that you would have to take a course in Geometry where the formal, logical proof of this statement is developed. But if you were a total skeptic (in the subject of triangles), you wouldn't even be able to begin the geometry course, because you would not be able to accept the statement, by faith, that "the shortest distance between two points on a plane is a straight line", one of the foundational axioms of plane geometry. You can see that faith is very useful, even indispensable, in every learning situation.

To this point in the study of faith, then, we have developed a partial understanding of what faith is and how it is used. Faith is:

- Complete confidence in something which is not subject to logical or experimental proof
 - Acceptance of an established criterion as the basis of reality
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The Christian's Faith in the Bible

The "established criterion" which the Christian accepts by faith is that the Bible is the Word of God. The Christian accepts the Bible as being what it claims to be, the "mind of Christ". By adopting this presupposition, the believer has a basis from which to delve into the whole Bible with its hundreds of concepts vital to all aspects of human life.

The faith system of learning Bible truth is the only fair way for man to know and approach God. No one can claim personal credit for having believed the Bible, because even a person of very low intellectual ability can believe and understand Bible truth. Therefore, the faith system for acquiring doctrinal knowledge is perfectly fair and compatible with Grace. It is the only method of learning which is commonly available to all members of the human race.

The value of faith does not lie in the strength or intensity with which a belief is held. (Every confidence man depends upon his victim's believing very strongly in lies.) The merit of faith lies, rather, in the idea or object which is believed. Faith is valid only when it has a valid object.

Saving Faith has as its object the Lord Jesus Christ and His substitutionary work on the Cross for man's salvation, John 3:36; Acts 16:31. A belief in any other "plan" of salvation, however strongly and emotionally held, will prove to have been faith in an invalid and useless object, Acts 4:12.

Living Faith has as its objects the facts, promises, and commands of the Bible, Matt. 4:4. Faith in Bible principles is the only method which will unlock spiritual truth, I Cor. 1:18 to 2:16. The believer who is growing spiritually receives continuous verification that the divine principles upon which he bases his life are perfectly valid, Eph. 4:11-16.

How to have strong faith

The strongest, best established faith is that which is the result of Christian edification, that process by which a believer is rooted and built up in his spiritual life, Col. 2:6,7. One of the most important results of Christian growth is the progressive increase in the believer's ability to use faith. Several important factors in the development of Christian faith are listed here along with some representative Bible passages.

Faith requires the continuous intake of truth from the Word of God. "...faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God...", ROM. 10:17.

Faith is part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit and requires the control of the Spirit for its function. "...the fruit of the Spirit is...faith...", GAL. 5:22,23; EPH. 5:18.

Faith must be exercised daily by (1) using Faith-Rest principles in day to day living, "...we who have believed do enter into rest...", HEB. 4:1-3; and (2) by using Faith Patience in all situations, "...the testing of your faith worketh patience", JAMES 1:3.

Applied knowledge overflowing from the human spirit, which refers to all witnessing, requires the exercise of faith. "...that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...", EPH. 3:17-20.

Moving towards maturity includes the development of great faith. "...this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith...", 1 JOHN 5:4,5; HEB. 11:6.

Daily occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ "completes" faith. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...", HEB. 12:2.

Undeserved suffering both tests and strengthens faith. "...the trial of your faith...", 1 PETER 1:7,8.

The Word "Faith" in the Bible

In the Greek language of the New Testament there are five words which are rendered "faith" in the King James Version. They are:

πιστις, (pistis), noun, meaning "faith; faithful; reliable; that which is believed", and, with the definite article, "doctrine"

πιστος, (pistos), adjective, meaning "dependable; inspiring of trust; believing"

πιστευω, (pisteuo), verb, meaning "to believe; to be convinced"

πειθω, (peitho), verb, meaning "to obey (in the present tense); to be persuaded (in the aorist); to have confidence (in the perfect); faith (all tenses)"

πιστωω, (pisto), verb, meaning "to show oneself faithful; to feel confidence"

In the Hebrew of the Old Testament there are ten words which are rendered in the King James Version as "faith" or as some equivalent idea of belief or trust. They are:

AHMAN, verb, "to believe without merit"

EIMOON, noun, "belief; faithfulness"

EIMOONAH, noun, "truth; steadiness; doctrine; faith"

AHMEIN, noun, "truth; doctrine"

OHMEIN, noun, "faithfulness"

EMETH, noun, one of the strongest words for truth

BAHTAK, verb, the Faith Rest verb which was originally a word used by wrestlers for giving someone a body slam. See PSALM 37:3; 91:2. It means "to slam your troubles on the Lord", and it means "faith" in the sense of the function of the Faith-Rest principles. This verb is used extensively in the Old Testament.

KAHSAH, verb, PSALM 57:1, used of a rabbit fleeing from a desert fox and finding refuge in the cleft of the rock where the fox can't reach him. Means "to believe" in the sense of finding refuge in the Word or taking shelter in the Lord.

YAHKAL, verb, "to trust" in circumstances of pressure or suffering. JOB 13:15; LAM. 3:21,24.

KAHWAH, used in the sense of binding or twisting strands of fiber together to make a rope. Threads which are weak in themselves are woven together into strength. The meaning is that we are weak and can be broken, but woven into the Lord and His Word, we cannot be broken. ISA. 40:31; LAM. 3:25.

Fellowship

The "koinonia" of the Church

This material was originally published by Chester McCalley, late pastor of Bethhaven Church in North Kansas City, Missouri.

In Acts 2, the church is born having an initial membership of something more than 3,000 men and women. The life of this group developed in four specific areas, described in ACTS 2:42. These areas were: (1) Doctrine; (2) Fellowship; (3) Breaking of Bread; and (4) Prayer.

These four areas of fellowship are described in two couplets, that is, doctrine and fellowship are linked together, and breaking of bread and prayer are linked together.

The Greek term for *fellowship* is κοινωνία (**koinonia**). The following is a brief word study on the meaning of **koinonia** as it relates to man. Fellowship with God, as described in 1 JOHN 1 is not included in this study.

Definition

The word **koinonia** carries the basic idea of having something in common. The word is related to κοινή (**koine**), meaning “common”, which we use to refer to **koine** Greek, the original language of the New Testament, which was common to many people at a certain time in history. JUDE 3 speaks of our “common (**koine**) salvation”, referring to a salvation known and shared by all believers. The best way to bring the meaning of **koinonia** into English is to speak of joint participation in something.

Areas of Joint Participation (Fellowship) in the Early Church

Koinonia in Material Things

- ROMANS 15:26,27. The word “contribution” is **koinonia** .
- 2 COR. 8:4, “fellowship”
- 2 COR. 9:1, “distribution”
- GAL. 6:6, “communicate with”
- PHIL. 4:15, “communicated”

Note that in each passage there is joint participation in something material - money.

Koinonia in Suffering

- PHIL. 3:10, “fellowship”
- 1 PETER 4:13, “partakers”. Here there is a God-believer participation in the suffering area.

Koinonia in Evil

- 2 JOHN 11, “partaker”
- 1 COR. 10:20, “fellowship”

In these two passages joint participation may be had in evil by expressing cordiality toward doctrinal error or by association with idolatry. MATT. 23:30 speaks of **koinonia** in murder.

Koinonia in the Incarnation of Christ

HEBREWS 2:14 shows that Christ became a joint participant with us when He took on a human body.

Koinonia at the Lord’s Table

I COR. 10:16 says that we have “communion” (**koinonia**) with the blood and body of Christ.

Koinonia in Spreading the Gospel

GAL. 2:6-9 tells how Peter, Paul and other apostles were given the “right hands of fellowship” indicating joint participation in the spread of the Gospel.

Koinonia in Salvation

2 PETER 1:4 says that by the Word of God we become “partakers” of the divine nature.

Koinonia in the Holy Spirit

2 Cor. 13:14 and Phil. 2:1 both indicate a joint participation of the believer and the Holy Spirit.

Koinonia in a Common Effort

Luke 5:10 expresses this where James, John, and Simon are called “partners” (**koinonia**). The joint participation was in the fishing business which they all shared.

Summary

Fellowship in the New Testament means joint participation in some area, defined by context. **In no passage is fellowship presented as a goal or end in itself** - it is merely the by-product of common goals or possessions. The more the believer discovers the salvation common to all other believers, the more fellowship occurs.

Forgiveness

The word “forgive” is a Grace word, in the English as well as in the Greek (**ajfesi**~). An early meaning in English was “to give or to grant”. Then, forgive came to mean “to remit a debt; to give up resentment or claim for requital; to pardon an offense.”

All of us are debtors to others, to society as a whole. And we often feel that people owe us many things in our human relationships. We feel we are owed courtesy and consideration. Sometimes we think that we are owed reward or status or promotion in some enterprise, or on the job. We are certainly owed fair treatment, justice, restitution and many other things.

But, many people in America are spiritually, ethically, and morally bankrupt. They simply cannot pay society what they owe! They are thoughtless, selfish, ungracious. What should a Christian do about all of the debts owed to him. Answer: forgive them, as Christ forgave you.

A Christian who practices Grace thinking (divine viewpoint) will become a forgiving person. To forgive means “to give up a claim; to cease bearing resentment”.

The rich man in Luke 7 was able to forgive the two debtors because he was prosperous. He gave to them out of his prosperity. A person can only give to others out of what God has already provided in the way of prosperity. In terms of money, the principle is “Let him that stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor, doing with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

As a growing Christian, you have many other kinds of prosperity, by the Grace of God. You have intellectual prosperity (divine viewpoint). You have spiritual prosperity (peace with God). You have emotional prosperity (relaxed mental attitude). You have financial prosperity (mastery of details of life). You have social prosperity (stable marriage, stable family life, etc.).

Wherever in your life you find that someone else owes you something, you have the wherewithal to forgive him! God has forgiven all of us who are absolutely without resources of our own. And He is not expecting or demanding some kind of payment in return for His Grace gifts. And we are to be channels of Grace to the world. “Out of your innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”

Glory of God

The following is a selection of comments on the word "glory", δόξα (doksos), as used in the Bible.

Glory is used to describe the Essence of God: ROM. 3:23; EPH. 1:17; DEUT. 5:24; PS. 21:5; MT. 16:27; LK. 2:9.

The Lord Jesus Christ is said to possess glory: MK. 10:37.

Glory is used to describe the edification structure in the believer's soul: EPH. 3:21; COL. 1:27; 1 PET. 1:8; 2 THESS. 2:14. As a believer receives doctrine, he reflects the Glory of God.

A wife is said to be the glory of her husband: 1 COR. 11:7, 15.

The Grace of God is described as his glory: EPH. 1:6.

The provision of God's grace is also called wealth, "the riches of His glory": EPH. 1:18; 3:16; PHIL. 4:19.

There is a glory in the future which is beyond human knowledge, namely, the glory of eternity: 1 TIM. 3:16; HEB. 2:10; 1 PET. 5:10; 2 PET. 1:3.

Human glamour is described as glory, though often in the negative sense: 1 PET. 1:24; PHIL. 3:19; MT. 6:29.

Glory is used to describe the wonders of the universe: 1 COR. 15:40,41.

Glory is used to describe the resurrection body of the believer: 1 COR. 15:43; 2 THESS. 2:14.

The word glory is associated with the presentation of the Church to the Lord Jesus Christ: HEB. 2:10; MT. 19:28; 24:30; 25:31.

The Shekinah Glory

from the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

The word "shekinah" is not found in the Bible, but is used in rabbinic literature to signify God's presence. In reaction to Hellenism and paganism, Judaism attempted on the one hand to preserve the biblical notion of God's presence while on the other hand emphasizing the vast gulf between the deity and mankind.

The promise that God would dwell with mankind goes back to Noah's blessing in Gen. 9:27: "God enlarge Japheth, may he [God] dwell in the tents of Shem" (cf. RSV "and let him [Japheth] dwell ..."). The Aramaic renders this verse: "He will cause his Shekinah to dwell in the dwelling-place of Shem."

Many passages in the Pentateuch affirm that the Lord came to dwell among His people Israel. First He revealed His glory-cloud (Exo. 13:21f), which represented His presence and protection in the wilderness. The cloud came to rest at Mt. Sinai and formed a canopy for Moses as he communed with Yahweh and received the commandments (Exo. 24:15-18).

The purpose of the revelation about the construction of the TABERNACLE and the commencement of the priestly service (Exo. 25-31) was to ensure that Israel might be blessed by the divine presence in its midst: "And let them make a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. According to all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and all of its furniture, so you shall make it" (Exo. 25:8f).

The divine presence was a guarantee of the covenant: "And I will dwell among the people of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them forth out

of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord their God” (Exo. 29:45f; cf. Lev. 26:11f). Only the concept of Shekinah can explain the details of Israel’s cultic, moral, and civil laws. By these means God taught Israel how to live as a holy and clean people in His presence (cf. Nu. 5:3).

When the “tabernacle” of the Lord was completed, it was crowned with the descent of the glory-cloud. The Pentateuch stresses that all Israel saw the cloud covering the tabernacle as evidence of the presence of the Lord’s glory (Ex. 40:34–38; Lev. 9:23f). Israel believed that the divine presence was particularly associated with the Most Holy Place, where Yahweh dwelt between the cherubim above the ark (1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; Psalm 80:1). The Shekinah signified God’s presence and protection; thus when the ark was carried forward an early war hymn exclaimed, “Arise, O Lord and let thy enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee”; and when it rested the response was, “Return, O Lord, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel” (Num. 10:35f). Later in Israel’s history the location of the ark signified the place of the divine Shekinah — first at Shiloh (1 Sam. 4:4) and later in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:12–19). Yahweh revealed His glorious presence again through a cloud at the dedication of the Solomonic TEMPLE (1 Kings 8:10f). Upon this occasion Solomon declared, “The Lord has set the sun in the heavens, but has said that he would dwell in thick darkness. I have built thee an exalted house, a place for thee to dwell in for ever” (1 Kings 8:12f).

Closely related to the motif of the PRESENCE OF GOD are other motifs: “the angel of the Lord” (cf. Ex. 14:19; 23:20–23; 33:1–3; Isa. 63:9; *see* ANGEL II.C), the “glory” of the Lord (Ex. 40:34–38; Ezk. 1:28; 10:18f; 11:22f), the “word” (Isa. 55:10f), “wisdom” (Prov. 8), and “Spirit” of the Lord (Ezk. 2:2; 11:24). These reveal God’s presence and the means of His judgment and deliverance.

When Judaism came into contact with Hellenism (3rd cent B.C.), it developed a theological vocabulary. Instead of referring directly to God by His names and titles, it spoke of Him in circumlocutions. The concept of Shekinah proved useful as an in-between way of speaking about God as Spirit, wisdom, the word, etc.

In the Mishnah, Midrashim, and Talmud, the Shekinah motif shows a theological rather than an apologetic development. The Shekinah, like the rays of the sun, is at many places at the same time (T.B. *Sanhedrin* 39a) and more present at some places than others. This explains Yahweh’s special presence at the burning bush, Mt. Sinai, the tabernacle, and the temple. The analogy also clarifies Israel’s special status, since the Shekinah was more real to the Israelites than to the Gentiles (T.B. *Berakoth* 7a; *Shabbath* 22b; Midr *Nu. Rabbah* vii.8) even after they had gone into exile (T.B. *Megillah* 29a). Moreover, the radiance of the Shekinah is more authentic wherever anyone practices the law of God (T.B. *Menahoth* 43b), or good works (T.B. *Baba Bathra* 10a) or is in need of the divine presence (T.B. *Shabbath* 12b; *Sotah* 17a). The Shekinah resists the proud, rebellious, sinful, and lazy (T.B. *Berakoth* 43b; *Hagigah* 16a; *Shabbath* 30b; *Sotah* 42a), but rests in large measure on the saintly, wise, leaders, affluent(!), and outstanding Jews (T.B. *Shabbath* 92a; *Sotah* 48b; *Sukkah* 28). Even the proselytes could find a special place (T.B. *Shabbath* 31a). Related designations of the Shekinah are “the Word,” “the Spirit,” “the Glory,” “the Light,” and “the wings of the Shekinah.” From the Tannaitic and Amoraic literature it is apparent that these designations of the Shekinah refer to none other than the Lord. As Urbach has observed, “a survey of all the passages referring to the Shekina leaves no doubt that the Shekina is no ‘hypostasis’ and has no separate existence alongside the Deity” (p. 63).

This is different in Christianity, however, where the NT presents the Christ as the Word, Glory, and Light of God, and also speaks of the Spirit of God. The Shekinah motif helps to explain the oneness and separateness within the Godhead. The NT authors employed this language to explain the mystery of the incarnation (*see* PERSON OF CHRIST) and the indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT (II). At Jesus’ birth the shepherds saw the “glory” of the Lord (Lk. 2:9). John observed Jesus’ glory and identified Him with the (“word”) of God: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth;

we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (Jn. 1:14). At Jesus’ baptism the Holy Spirit descended and “remained on him” (v 32). The Messiah’s glory was especially transparent on the mount of transfiguration (Lk. 9:29; cf. 2 Pet. 1:16–18). In the context of giving sight to a blind beggar, Jesus Himself declared, “I am the light of the world” (Jn. 9:5). Shortly before His death Jesus prayed the high priestly prayer, in which He stated that the Son shares in the glory of the Father and prayed that believers may also share in this glory (17:22).

In his epistles Paul used the concept of “dwelling” (Shekinah) to set forth the mystery of the incarnation (the dwelling of God in human flesh; cf. Col. 1:19; 2:9). The “glory” of the Shekinah rests on all those who are in Christ (e.g., Rom. 9:23; Eph. 1:18; 3:16; Col. 1:11, 27). Jesus is “the Lord of glory” (1 Cor. 2:8). The “glory” of the incarnate Christ has been greatly magnified in His Resurrection (Rom. 6:4). Through the Spirit, all who are in Christ already share in the benefits of the risen Christ in anticipation of His glorious appearing (cf. Rom. 8:15–18; 2 Cor. 1:20–22; Eph. 1:13f). Paul stated the Christian hope thus: “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17f).

The association of Jesus with the Shekinah is also apparent elsewhere in the NT. Paul saw the glory of the resurrected Jesus and was blinded by His brightness (Acts 9:3–9; 22:6–11; 26:12–18). He. 1:3 speaks of God’s supreme revelation in Jesus, who “reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by the word of his power.” Jas. 2:1 addresses the Christian community as those who “hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.”

The presence of the Holy Spirit is also a representation of the Shekinah. The Spirit descended and remained on Jesus (Jn. 1:33). At Pentecost the Spirit came down and rested on the 120 disciples: “And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and *resting* on each of them” (Acts 2:3, emphasis supplied).

The NT is clearly set against the Jewish background. The NT authors attributed to the Spirit and to the Son the glory associated with the Shekinah. Jesus is the *me^mra`* (“Word”), filled with the Spirit of God and full of glory, and He reflects the glory of God. The Holy Spirit bestows the glory of God on all who are filled with the Spirit, and thus they are gloriously renewed in the image of God (see Kline).

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W. A. VANGEMEREN

Barnes (**Barnes, A.**, *Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*), has the following comments regarding the Lord’s appearance to Saul on the Damascus road (Acts 9).

Barnes makes the following remarks:

- (1) God was accustomed to appear to the Jews in a cloud; in a pillar of smoke, or of fire; in that special splendor which they [named] the Shechinah. In this way he went before them into the land of Canaan, Exodus 13:21,22; compare Isaiah 4:5,6. This appearance or visible manifestation they called the “glory of” YAHWEH, Isaiah 6:1-4; Exodus 16:7, “In the morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord”; Acts 9:10; Leviticus 9:23; Numbers 14:10; 16:19, 42; 24:16; 1 Kings 8:11; Ezekiel 10:4. See Luke 2:9, “The glory of the Lord shone round about them.”

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- (2) The Lord Jesus, in his transfiguration on the mount, had been encompassed with that glory. See Matthew 17:1-5.
 - (3) He had spoken of a similar glory with which he had been invested before his incarnation, and to which he would return; John 17:5, “And now, Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was”; Matthew 25:31, “The Son of Man shall come in his glory.” Compare Matthew 16:27; 19:28. To this glory he had returned when he left the earth.
 - (4) It is a sentiment which cannot be shown to be incorrect, that the various appearances of “the angel of Yahweh,” and of Yahweh, mentioned in the Old Testament, were appearances of the Messiah the God who would be incarnate — the special protector of his people. See Isaiah 6; compare with John 12:41.
 - (5) When the Lord Jesus appeared to Saul, it would have been in his appropriate glory and honor as the ascended Messiah. That he did appear is expressly affirmed.
 - (6) This was an occasion when, if ever, such an appearance was proper. The design was to convert an infuriated persecutor, and to make him an apostle. To do this, it was necessary that he should see the Lord Jesus, 1 Corinthians 9:1,2. The design was further to make him an eminent instrument in carrying the gospel to the Gentiles. A signal miracle; a demonstration that he was invested with his appropriate glory (John 17:5); a calling up a new witness to the fact of his resurrection, and of his solemn investment with glory in the heavens, seemed to be required in thus calling a violent persecutor to be an apostle and friend.
 - (7) We are to regard this appearance, therefore, as the reappearance of the Shechinah, the Son of God invested with appropriate glory, appearing to convince an enemy of his ascension, and to change him from a foe to a friend.

Godliness

This is a study of the Greek word εὐσεβεία (**eusebeia**), used in the New Testament to express the idea of inner piety, spiritual maturity, or godliness. In TITUS 1:1, the Apostle Paul states that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the criterion of the faith of the chosen people of God who have a full and applied knowledge of the truth which is the standard for godliness.

The word **eusebeia** has an interesting history. It was first used by the Greek poet, Homer, in about 1000 BC. From Homer the word came into use in the classical Greek of Athens (Attic Greek) where it referred to personal piety in the fulfillment of human relationships. It was also used to describe a person who was faithful in fulfilling his duties to whatever Greek gods dominated the city in which he lived. The Attic Greek word always referred to the outward expression of piety, such as the giving of gifts to the god, participation in sacrifices and worship, or making a show of religion in public.

As the word **eusebeia** began to be used in the **koine** Greek, it came to mean “inner piety”, or spirituality, a duty which the believer owes to God in the inner man. The principle in the Titus context is that of the control or filling of the Holy Spirit which produces qualities of conformity to Christ.

The following scripture passages contain the word **eusebeia** , invariably translated “godliness” (in the KJV). Read these verses along with their contexts before continuing in the next section.

ACTS 3:12

1 TIM. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; 6:3,5,6,11

2 TIM. 3:5

2 PET. 1:3,6,7; 3:11

Principles of eusebeia

A true man of God has qualities of inner piety - the characteristics of a spiritually mature person. This is not a phony façade put on to please or impress people. The source of this godliness is the Word of God. The godly person has not only learned doctrine academically, but he has also seen that word applied to his life in edification over a period of years.

Spirituality is an absolute quality, depending on a believer's walk with the Lord, and particularly on his maintaining his fellowship with the Lord through confession. But none of this is visible.

So - how can you tell when true spirituality and maturity are present? Or, how do you know the difference between a godly man and one who is merely well educated and in control of himself? A carnal believer, the novice Christian, can be moral, can use the right vocabulary, can wear a suit and carry a Bible. He can fool some of the people some of the time.

But the godly believer is known by "his fruits" - the fruit of the Holy Spirit - things that an unbeliever, or the carnal believer, cannot produce. Godliness is produced in the life of a Christian who is both learning doctrine and growing thereby through edification.

Read GAL 5:19-21, the works of the flesh.

The works of the flesh are obvious enough. They are the product of an inner life controlled by the sin nature, by the trends and lusts of the soul. And as a Christian grows in Christ, he gains victory over areas of weakness. The Christian Way of Life is characterized by the putting away of negatives, the sin that so easily besets, and by putting on the new man.

GAL. 5:22-26

EPH. 4:17-25.

The new man not only lives in the Spirit (**not visible**), but he also walks in the Spirit (**visible**). One of the great themes of the Epistle to Titus is that of the outward walk, which is a demonstration to the world that the inner life which is claimed is genuine. Three illustrations are given in Titus 2.

1. In TITUS 2:4,5, young women are to be taught how to lead godly lives so that "the Word of God be not blasphemed." We have a responsibility for public opinion about the Word of God.
2. In 2:7,8, Titus himself is told to show himself a "pattern of good works" and to have "sound speech that cannot be condemned" in order not to supply detractors with ammunition for their criticisms.
3. And in 2:9,10, servants are to maintain godly lives in their relations to their masters in order that they might "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." We are to live as "decorations" to the doctrine of God.

The whole letter to Titus is an inspired document which, among other things, provides many illustrations (in chapters 1 and 2) of how godliness (**eusebeia**) is supposed to be observed in the outward characteristics of believers of all ranks: overseers and elders, older men, older women, younger women, younger men, servants, and Titus himself.

Godliness is the concept of the inward life and the outward appearance of the fruit of the Spirit.

For example, in the spiritual fruit of **love** we see genuine care and regard for people, an impersonal love for people who are different, even though they are enemies. This love results in the **philozenos** of TITUS 1:8. [See the notes on Characteristics of Impersonal Love]. Love is the absence of mental attitude sins and sins of the tongue. The negatives have been eliminated from the believer's life so that (1) he no longer hates, despises, disdains, or envies other people, (2) he no longer maligns or

ridicules them, and therefore (3) he is free to have a ministry with others that is not hindered by offensiveness or bitterness.

Joy is the spiritual fruit which enables a Christian to have happiness that does not depend on the details of life. He has a stable mental attitude from looking to Jesus and trusting the Father for everything. He does not fall into moody depression when things go wrong or he is criticized or maligned. He does not fall into wide emotional swings. He does not depend on others to prop up his happiness. I TIM. 6:6, “Godliness (**eusebeia**) with contentment is great gain...”

A believer who has **peace** is a master of the Faith-Rest technique. He is nearly unflappable, because he has a lot of practice in placing every distress, every disaster, in the hands of the Lord. He is the most relaxed person in the neighborhood. He does not have chronic worry about the present or future. He knows that the Lord can handle everything. So he is not paranoid. Even if someone is really out to get him, he is relaxed and praying, even for the enemy who is plotting against him. He places great confidence in the Lord, especially regarding death, knowing and resting in the fact that “absent from the body” means “present with the Lord.” So he is **not** one of those who “through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage” (HEB. 2:15).

Well, for homework, you can make up your own descriptions for the remaining parts of the fruit of the Spirit: Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance. Just remember that God’s plan for you is that you continue to be a godly Christian.

Gospel

The word “gospel” is translated from the Greek ευαγγελιον (**euaggelos**), which means “good news.” Bad news, therefore, such as doctrines pertaining to evil or to personal sins, do not properly belong under the category of the gospel.

The Gospel includes all of the doctrines pertaining to salvation, including: Redemption, Expiation, Reconciliation, Propitiation, Imputation, Justification, Positional Truth, and Sanctification. It also includes the doctrines pertaining to the Lord Jesus Christ, including: the Hypostatic Union, Impeccability, the Deity of Christ, etc.

There are six uses of the term “gospel” in the New Testament:

- The gospel of Christ; Rom. 1:16,17, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ...” This is an emphasis on the Person of the gospel.
- “My gospel”, Rom. 2:16. This means that the gospel belongs to every believer.
- “Our gospel”, 2 Cor. 4:3,4. This verse speaks of the believer’s possession of the gospel and the importance of communicating it as God gives opportunity in witnessing.
- “The gospel of peace”, Eph. 6:15. This emphasizes the doctrine of Reconciliation in the gospel.
- “The everlasting gospel”, Rev. 14:6. This emphasizes the proximity of eternity for unbelievers during the Tribulation.
- “The gospel of the kingdom”, Matt. 24:14. This emphasizes the fulfillment of the unconditional covenant to the born-again of Israel.

The fundamentals of the gospel are given in 1 Cor. 15:1-4.

- Christ died as a substitute for our sins (His spiritual death - “It is finished!”)

- Christ died physically, and was buried
- Christ rose from the dead

The enemy of the gospel is Satan (as the ruler of this world, 2 Cor. 4:3,4.

The believer's attitude toward the gospel is expressed in these verses:

Rom. 1:16

Rom. 1:20

1 Cor. 1:17

1 Cor. 9:1

Grace

Introduction

God the Father always thinks Grace. Whether He is dealing with nations or individuals, whether he is exercising His divine justice, wrath, love, or mercy, in whatever dispensation or time frame, at all times and in all circumstances, the Grace of God influences His thoughts and actions.

The absolute righteousness and justice of God the Father demand perfection in us. But we are "sinners, condemned, unclean." The Father's perfect justice demands a just penalty for sin - "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

But the Father, in His love for us, seeing that we could not meet His standards, sent His Son to bear our penalty so that we "might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21)

Righteousness was imputed to us on the sole condition of our faith in Jesus Christ, just as "Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness." (Gen. 15:6)

God the Father is now able to look upon us as righteous. And He is able to express His love for us in countless ways during our lifetime. The word "grace" is used to refer to God's giving to us out of His love for us, a giving that is unrestricted because our former condemnation has been removed, our penalty has been paid, God's righteousness and justice have been satisfied, and we are "in Christ" and share the love that the Father has for His own Son.

Mastery of the Bible's teaching about Grace is the most important goal of the Christian Way of Life. Your productivity as a believer, your ability to function effectively as member of your local church, your effectiveness in the use of your spiritual gifts in reaching out to others - all are absolutely dependent on how well you understand and use Grace principles. The following are some of the reasons why the subject of Grace is so important to every Christian:

- Grace is the most important single concept in the Word of God. Salvation is "by Grace through faith", and the Christian way of Life functions entirely on Grace principles.
 - Grace provides the foundational structure for all Bible study. Eph. 2
 - Knowledge of Grace principles gives believers great knowledge and confidence in God's Plan, His provisions, His blessings.
 - The doctrine of Grace gives believers confidence in witnessing and teaching, both for evangelism and the Christian Way of Life. Grace gives Christians insight into the workings of society and God's actual intentions regarding the future.
 - Grace convinces believers that human righteousness is completely out of the picture.
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- Through Grace, believers become “conduits of Grace” to society. Families become Grace families; churches become Grace churches, centers of Grace influence.

The goal of this study, then, is to learn how God thinks and how we can have “divine viewpoint” in our own thinking. With Jesus Christ as the “chief cornerstone”, we develop the “foundation” of the doctrine of Grace, from the “apostles and prophets” by studying the Bible vocabulary dealing with Grace, by developing principles of the doctrine of Grace, and by illustration and application.

Etymology: Bible Vocabulary Related to Grace

This study contains a thorough review of all words in the Bible which are related to the topic of Grace. The context of each verse was studied, especially considering it with respect to etymology, doctrine, and application. Word study and doctrinal source materials include the following:

- Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words
- Moulton and Milligan: The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament
- Kittel’s Greek Lexicon
- Various references to the Greek of the Septuagint
- Chafer, L.S.: Systematic Theology
- Books and Tapes by R. B. Thieme and Chester McCalley

The Grace vocabulary of the Bible begins with the word $\chi\alpha\rho\alpha$ (**chara**), “joy; gladness”. This word was widely used to express the idea of a joyous response to something good; it sometimes meant “festival” or “wedding”. And **chara** was widely used as a proper name, just as many girls today are named “Grace.”!

In the Oxyrhyncus Papyri [P Oxy VIII, 1162], a Christian man’s personal letter included the greeting, “Leon, elder, to the elders and deacons, beloved brothers in the Lord, fullness of joy (**chara**).” The word **chara** is used in the following Bible passages:

Matt. 2:10, “When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy (chara).”

Matt. 5:12, “Rejoice and be exceeding glad (chara): for great is your reward in heaven...”

Matt. 13:44 , “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hid in a field; when a man has found it, he hides, and for joy (chara) thereof goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.”

Matt. 18:13 describes the Lord’s joy (chara) at finding the lost sheep.

Matt. 25:21, 23, “His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter into the joy (chara) of thy lord.”

We begin to see the relationship between joy and that which causes joy, namely, the favor and bounty which we receive from the Lord.

Luke 2:10, “...behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy (chara), which shall be to all people.” This emphasizes the idea of CHARA as an occasion of rejoicing.

Phil. 4:1, “Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy (chara) and crown, so stand fast in the Lord ...”

1 Thess. 2:19, 20, "For what is our hope, or joy (chara), or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming? For ye are our glory and hope."

Related words are the verb χαίρω (**chairo**), "to rejoice; to be glad; to be joyful" and the word χαιρε, (chaire), used as a greeting "Hail! or Health!" upon meeting or separating and used widely as a salutation or closing of letters.

Acts 15:23, "And they wrote letters by them after this manner: The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting (chairo) unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia."

Matt. 26:49, "Judas...came to Jesus and said, HAIL, master; and kissed him."

"HAIL, King of the Jews..." was shouted in derision at Christ before His crucifixion.

"HAIL, Mary, highly favored..." was the greeting of the angel to Mary. Note: the verses does not say "full of grace". Mary was a recipient of Grace, not the source of Grace!

A curious use of **chairo** is seen in 2 John 10,11, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither BID him GOD SPEED (**chairo**): for he that BIDS him GOD SPEED is partaker of his evil deeds." That is, we are to offer no joy to false teachers.

The verb χαρίζομαι (**charidzomai**) is used several ways in the Bible. It means "to gratify; to bestow in kindness; to grant as a free favor." In each of the Bible passages below, try to determine what it is that shows the Lord's Grace mental attitude.

Luke 7:21, "And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave (charidzomai) sight."

Rom. 8:32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Charidzomai also has the meaning of "to remit; to forgive".

Luke 7:42, "A creditor had two debtors...And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave (charidzomai) them both..."

2 Cor 2:7,10, "To whom you forgive anything, I also: for if I forgave (charidzomai) any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes I forgave it in the person of Christ."

Application: Forgiveness

The word "forgive" is a Grace word, in the English as well as in the Greek (**carizomai**). An early meaning in English was "to give or to grant". Then, *forgive* came to mean "to remit a debt; to give up resentment or claim for requital; to pardon an offense."

All of us are debtors to others, to society as a whole. And we often feel that people owe us many things in our human relationships. We feel we are owed courtesy and consideration. Sometimes we think that we are owed reward or status or promotion in some enterprise, or on the job. We are certainly owed fair treatment, justice, restitution and many other things.

But, many people in America are spiritually, ethically, and morally bankrupt. They simply cannot pay society what they owe! They are thoughtless, selfish, ungracious. What should a Christian do about all of the debts owed to him. Answer: **forgive** them, as Christ forgave you.

A Christian who practices Grace thinking (divine viewpoint) will become a forgiving person. To forgive means "to give up a claim; to cease bearing resentment".

The rich man in Luke 7 was able to forgive the two debtors because he was prosperous. He gave to them out of his prosperity. A person can only give to others out of what God has already provided in the way of prosperity. In terms of money, the principle is “Let him that stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor, doing with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

As a growing Christian, you have many other kinds of prosperity, by the Grace of God. You have intellectual prosperity (divine viewpoint). You have spiritual prosperity (peace with God). You have emotional prosperity (relaxed mental attitude). You have financial prosperity (mastery of details of life). You have social prosperity (stable marriage, stable family life, etc.).

Wherever in your life you find that someone else owes you something, you have the wherewithal to forgive him! God has forgiven all of us who are absolutely without resources of our own. And He is not expecting or demanding some kind of payment in return for His Grace gifts. And we are to be channels of Grace to the world. “Out of your innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”

Another Grace word is the noun *χαρισμα* (**charisma**), “a free gift; a benefit; a spiritual gift.” An interesting use is seen in Romans 1:11, “For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift (**charisma**), to the end you may be established.” This is not a spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit, but a spiritual benefit which Paul wished to share with the Roman Christians. [For the uses of **charisma** as “spiritual gift”, see 1 Cor. 12:4,9,28,30,30 and Romans 12.]

Rom. 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift (charisma) of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

But how did this happen? How can God give such a gift to us?

Rom. 5:15, “But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.”

To comprehend this fully, you must study the context. The complete context of Romans 5:15 ranges from Romans 2:1 to 6:2 (at least)!

A very important Grace word is *χαρις* (**charis**), which has a variety of translations in the New Testament, including “favor; pleasure; gift; benefit; liberality; and gratitude” as illustrated in the following scriptures.

Luke 1:30, “And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for you have found favor (charis) with God.”

Luke 2:52, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor (charis) with God and man.

Acts 24:27 and 25:9 use charis with respect to pleasure.

2 Cor. 8:4, “Praying with us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift (charis), and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.”

2 Cor. 1:14,15, “As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are out's in the day of the Lord Jesus. And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit (charis).” This usage emphasizes that the benefit, or gift, is the effect of the gracious disposition of the benefactor.

1 Cor. 16:3, “And when I come, whoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring you liberality (charis) to Jerusalem.”

It is in the idea of gratitude, as the response of the one who receives a Grace benefit, that we begin to see the means by which God causes the correct response in people. A free gift brings a joyous, thankful response.

Rom. 6:17, “But God be thanked (charis) [that is, ‘grace to God’] that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you.”

2 Cor. 1:14, “Now thanks (charis) be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and makes manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place.” See also 8:16 and 9:15.

1 Tim. 1:12, “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.”

1 Pet. 2:18 to 20, “Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the unreasonable. For this is thankworthy (charis), if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when you are buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? but if, when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable (GRACE) with God.

READ also Luke 6:32 to 36

Other common Greek words for gratitude or thankfulness are (**eucharistia**) and (**eucharistos**), which are derived from **charis** as well. There are very few examples of these in the papyri, but there is a copy of a letter written by the Emperor Claudius expressing his gratification at games performed in his honor.

The Latin word *gratia* is brought into the English in the words “grateful” and “gratitude), etc. The Greek **eucharistia** is brought into the English in “Eucharist”, still used, but mainly by the high church, to refer to the Lord’s Supper or Communion service. In modern English, the connotation of Grace is barely visible in “Eucharist.”

Thanksgiving is the expression of joy towards God by a person who has been the recipient of God’s Grace. The mature Christian’s gratitude, therefore, is a part of the joy that is the fruit of the Spirit; thus it increases with edification.

Col. 2:7, “Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving (eucharistia).”

2 Cor. 4:14,15, “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving (eucharistia) of many rebound to the glory of God.”

1 Thess. 3:9, “For what thanks (eucharistia) can we render to God again for you, for all the joy (chara) wherewith we joy (chairo) for your sakes before God.” Grace on the part of the giver; gratitude on the part of the receiver - an illustration of the Doctrine of Reciprocal Grace.

READ 2 Cor. 9:10 to 12.

Eph. 5:4, “Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not appropriate, but rather, giving of thanks (eucharistia).” This leads us to a discussion of ...

The Greek word **ευχαριστεω (eucharisteo)**, a verb which has the basic meaning of “to give thanks.”

From the early Greek **eucharisteo** meant “to do a good turn to” or “to oblige”, as in the Flinders Petrie Papyrii, “by doing this you will oblige (**eucharisteo**) us”, or in Grenfell and Hunt on the Hibeh Papyrii, “so that you shall not oblige me to no purpose.”

In later Greek, this passed easily into the meaning of being grateful, or for giving thanks for something received. So in [P Oxy I (AD 303)], “so I shall be enabled to recover my property and acknowledge my gratitude (**eucharisteo**) to your excellency.”

Paul gives thanks (**eucharisteo**) for his readers in his greetings of Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, and Thessalonians. He gives thanks in Phil. 1:3 for fellowship shared with him. And he gives thanks in 1 Cor. 1:4 for God’s gifts to the Christians.

This word is used by Paul to remind believers to give thanks. “Giving thanks (**eucharisteo**) always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Eph. 5:20)

The word is used negatively in referring to the unthankful heathen. “Neither were thankful, but became vain in the their imaginations...”, (Rom. 1:21).

God’s Operating Principle

Ephesians 2:4-7 discusses Grace as God’s operating principle. Verse 4 starts with certain facts on God’s side God is the possessor of infinite resources; He is "rich in mercy", and He has "great love". Man, on the other hand, is described as "dead". Man has the deepest need; God has the greatest resources. And God has a plan for linking our need to His resources (Eph. 2:5).

Romans 4:4 states plainly that Grace is the opposite of a merit plan. Two principles of operation are stated here, a "debt" principle and a "grace" principle. In a "debt" plan, reward is given in return for effort of some kind. A "grace" principle is one in which reward is given on the basis of the merits of another, Jesus Christ. The two principles are mutually exclusive; they cannot be combined or mixed.

Romans 6:16-23 points out the contrast between "wages" and the gift principle.

Romans 4:13-16 explains that if the Law (debt principle) will make us heirs, then faith (grace principle) "is made void." This allows for no compromise. Verse 16 says "It is of faith that it might be by grace." Faith is the only action on man’s part that can appropriate blessing without ruining the Grace principle. Satan is always eager to add something to faith, because that would ruin Grace and negate divine blessing.

Romans 3:23-31 shows that, while in Grace salvation is free, yet the Law is established and upheld.

So “Grace” is the word used in the Bible to refer to all that God is free to do for mankind because of the Lord Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for sins, the Work done for us on the Cross. Grace means that God has done the work and God receives the “credit”, the glory. Man, who is unable to produce acceptable works, receives the free benefits of God’s work. Grace means that man has received from God that which he has not earned or deserved; because nothing that we are and nothing that we have is sufficient to qualify us for any of what the Lord gives to us or does for us.

Grace, or graciousness, is the most outstanding quality of the mature believer in Christ. The new believer has "tasted Grace". As he grows in Christ, he learns to "think Grace" (outward) rather than thinking pride (inward). He thinks Grace in time of doubt, in time of poverty, in time of prosperity, in suffering and pressure, and even in persecution.

The advanced Christian is gracious, forgiving, unassuming. He is uplifting, not depressing. Out of his innermost being flow rivers of living water; he is a conduit that brings Grace to a thirsty world.

Categories of Grace

In the following paragraphs, the subject of Grace is discussed under four headings.

COMMON GRACE, or Grace which is common to all mankind, saved or unsaved, such as the rain which falls on the just and unjust.

SAVING GRACE, the “gift of God, lest any man should boast”, namely, Grace applied to the lost sinner.

LIVING GRACE, the provision of God the Father for the needs of the believer for the rest of his lifetime. God provides everything that is needed for a prosperous, happy life for any believer who has “tasted grace” and avails himself of “more grace”.

SURPASSING GRACE, the Grace of God in eternity; what we will receive from God because of Salvation; what we will receive from God as crowns or rewards to be laid at the feet of Christ.

Common Grace

Every human being is born under the complete watchfulness of God. God provides each person with an awareness of the existence of God and with a bonafide opportunity to exercise a choice with respect to God.

ROM. 1:18-22

ACTS 17:22-30

Ps. 19:16

In Grace, God has provided many blessings common to all people, whether they are Christians or not. It rains on the just and unjust alike; and Bible history shows us that material prosperity is often given to unbelievers as a demonstration of God's Grace to all people. MATT. 5:43-48

God has provided Divine Institutions for the protection and preservation of the human race, and everyone profits from this. The Lord intends that people live under conditions of freedom and morality.

The institution of Volition makes it possible, among other things, for everyone to have a free will choice in all spiritual matters. The institutions of Marriage and Family provide for the orderly preservation of the human race and the growth of families in a protected, nurturing environment. The institution of Nations gives a simple structure to society so that personal freedom and individual morality are preserved. The topical notes on Divine Institutions provide more information on this subject.

God the Father provides gospel information to any person who shows any positive inclination toward Him when the individual become conscious of God. And God the Holy Spirit makes the gospel clear to the unbeliever so that he can accept Christ if he wants to.

ACTS 17:26,27; JOHN 7:16,17

Meanwhile, by Grace God withholds His judgment and wrath from mankind. He is longsuffering, giving everyone ample opportunity to repent or change his mental attitude toward Christ. 2 PETER 3:9

Saving Grace

The term "Saving Grace" covers the categories of doctrines which deal with all that Christ did for us on the Cross. The general topic of Saving Grace includes salvation and all of the teaching regarding

Positional Truth, the dozens of things God does for believers at the moment of salvation. Read the notes entitled Salvation Doctrines for a complete listing of these topics.

You can get an appreciation for the extent of what the believer receives at salvation, by reading Ephesians 1. In just the first few verses you have the following blessings:

- 1:2 "Grace to you and peace..."
- 1:3 "all spiritual blessings in Christ"
- 1:4 "chosen in Him"
- 1:4 "without blame before Him"
- 1:5 We are adopted by Christ
- 1:6 We are accepted in the Beloved
- 1:7 We are redeemed, forgiven
- 1:8 God's wisdom and prudence are available.
- 1:9 God's will is made known

ROMANS 3:24 says that justification offered on the Grace principle is "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Grace can be extended freely to us because of the price paid by Jesus Christ. The cost of salvation was the death of Christ on the Cross.

Grace is the only way that God could save man and still be consistent with His perfect character. ACTS 4:12 The Grace basis for salvation is seen in the following verses:

EPH. 2:8,9

PSA. 103:8-12

ROM. 3:23,24; 4:4; 5:20

2 COR. 8:9

HEB. 2:9

TITUS 2:11; 3:7

Living Grace

Every Christian has experienced Grace at least once in his lifetime. He has "tasted Grace." 1 PET. 2:2,3. The believer is said to be a child of God, no longer an enemy. Christ did the most for His enemies by bearing our sins when He died on the Cross. Since he did the most for us when we were His enemies, how much will He do for us now that we are His own children. The answer "much more than the most". Grace is the concept of a life in which God gives us the most then gives us much more than the most.

ROM. 5:9-17; 8:32; 11:12

HEB. 9:14

Once having tasted Grace, the believer can go on to have all of the Grace he wants. To obtain all the blessings that God provides, a Christian must exercise his free will by choosing the things of God. The most important thing is the believer's attitude toward the Word of God. The Lord provides

believers with the capacity to grow and be effective so that they can glorify God in this lifetime. In fact, the Christian is *commanded* to grow in Grace, 2 PET. 3:18.

Very little knowledge is required to accept Christ as Savior. But extensive knowledge is required during the believer's remaining lifetime in order to profit from Grace. Every facet of a Christian's life requires an applied understanding of the Word and orientation to the Grace of God.

God's Grace is always available for the believer. In fact, the Lord waits to pour out His Grace to us, ISA. 30:18–19.

Grace is sufficient for every problem.

Grace is greater than sin, ROM. 5:20.

Grace is greater than suffering, 2 COR. 12:9,10.

Grace is greater than Satan, JAMES 4:6,7.

A special provision of Grace is dying Grace, for the Christian who is in the dying stage of life, whether that stage lasts two hours or two years, PS. 23:4. Dying Grace enables the believer to enjoy dying even though he might be having great physical pain.

A Christian who neglects God's Word creates a vacuum in his own spirit, that part of him which can understand and assimilate Bible truth. Into this vacuum will come false teaching, religion, legalism, and Satanic doctrines which further distort his orientation to the Plan of God. **Eph. 4:17** and following. Therefore, failure to participate in the Plan of God is the believer's greatest occupational hazard. HEB. 12:15; GAL. 5:4.

The following are some examples of God's Grace provision for the Christian life:

- Grace in God's acceptance: EPH. 1:6
 - Grace in confidence in God's plan: 2 THESS. 2:16
 - Grace in prayer: HEB. 4:16
 - Grace in daily provision: PSA. 84:11; ACTS 4:33,34; ROM. 8:32
 - Grace in suffering: 2 COR. 12:9,10
 - Grace in God's patience with us: PSA. 103:8-12
 - Grace in releasing the power of God: 2 TIM. 2:1
 - Grace in victory over sin: ROM. 6:14
 - Grace in spiritual growth: 2 PET. 3:18; ACTS 20:32; 1 COR. 15:10
 - Grace in spiritual gifts: ROM. 12:6; EPH. 3:7,8; 4:7
 - Grace in stability: 1 PET. 5:12
 - Grace in becoming gracious: 2 COR. 8:19**; COL. 4:6; 1 PET. 4:10
 - Grace in method of living: HEB. 12:28; 2 COR. 1:12; ROM. 11:6
 - Grace in worship of God: COL. 3:16
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- Grace in the production of divine good: 1 COR. 15:10; 2 COR. 6:1; 9:8–11; EPH. 4:29

Surpassing Grace

Surpassing Grace includes all that God is free to do for the believer in eternity. This Grace is based primarily on the Christian's relationship to Jesus Christ. In addition, the believer receives rewards and crowns in heaven, which are a part of Grace provision. Study the following Bible passages:

EPH. 2:7; JOHN 14:13

1 COR. 9:25; PHIL. 4:1

1 THESS. 2:19; 4:13-17

2 TIM. 4:8; JAMES 1:12

1 PET. 1:3,4; 5:12

2 PET. 3:13; REV. 21:4

Distortions of Grace

As you can well imagine, Satan's main personal task on this earth is to distort what the Bible teaches about Grace. There are two basic ways to distort or pervert the idea of Grace (taking it to mean or imply something that it does not).

First, Grace is sometimes taken to mean that is permissible to sin. Thus, Grace is used as an excuse for licentiousness, emphasizing overt sins. This is always condemned by the Word of God.

ROM. 6:1,2; 1 JOHN 1:9 TO 2:1; JUDE 4.

Then, Grace is sometimes taken as permission to be lazy (especially to skip Bible study). This emphasizes sins of omission. But this idea violates all of the Bible's commands to study, to be diligent, to be oriented to Grace. HEB. 6:11,12; 2 PET. 1:5,10; 1 COR. 15:10

The greatest enemy of Grace is legalism. Grace and legalism are mutually exclusive, ROM. 11:6. Grace means that God does the "work" and receives the glory (credit) for it. Legalism means that man does the work and receives the credit. [Notes are available on the doctrine of Legalism.]

Grace depends solely on the character of God and entirely excludes human ability, human merit, human achievement, etc. Legalism, however, depends on human activity and ability.

Grace and legalism have opposite emphasis. Grace emphasizes what God does in the soul of man, free of charge. The production and blessings in the Christian's life are byproducts of what is first provided by God without cost. Legalism excludes the mental attitude and emphasizes overt activity for the purpose of gaining credit with God and impressing men.

Legalism hinders a person from accepting Christ as Savior, GAL. 2:21.

Legalism neutralizes the believer in the Christian Way of Life, GAL. 5:2 TO 4.

God is perfect, and His plan is perfect. Man's work is excluded from the plan of God because man is imperfect. If man were permitted to make a contribution to the Plan of God, the plan would no longer be perfect; it would be no stronger than its weakest link. Grace eliminates all considerations of human merit.

Grace, then, in the antithesis of human arrogance. An awareness of the full meaning of Grace is a giant step toward true humility. Four types of pride are noted in those who are not oriented to Grace:

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- There is pride on the part of the believer who rejects the eternal security of Grace. He thinks his sins are greater than the plan of God. He thinks that Grace is not sufficient.
 - There is pride in the believer who falls apart during suffering. He thinks that his pressures and adversities are greater than the provision and protection of God.
 - There is pride in the believer who enters into a life of false spirituality through legalism or religion. He thinks his personal works impress God and are greater than His plan.
 - There is pride in the emotional believer who thinks feelings and emotions are greater and more real than the Word of God or the Grace of God.

HOW TO GROW IN GRACE

Victory over the Sin of Pride

As we have seen, one of the greatest enemies of Grace is native human pride, one of the greatest evils since the Fall of Man. It is the worst of the mental attitude sins because it amounts to blasphemy. "I will be my own God." Remember the times that Satan said "I will..." Grace opposes human pride in every way.

There is great pressure toward arrogance in the United States. Our country has a successful, affluent society with many opportunities for achievement and rewards, from childhood on. Status and upward mobility are available to everyone, and it's easy to get the big head, to think that we have accomplished something, to have the "self made man complex." Victory over this very subtle and devastating mental attitude sin requires a thorough understanding of the doctrine of Grace.

The first step in victory over pride (and growth in Grace thinking) is to be aware that pride is part of everyone's Sin Nature. No one starts out thinking Grace!!

The second step is to pray for victory here and to ask the Lord for wisdom in the matter.

The third step is to confess sinful pride when you recognize it in yourself.

There are many symptoms of pride. Indignation at someone else's behavior, mistakes, shortcomings, lack of discipline, or failure to measure up is an indicator of self-righteousness, whose basis is pride. "Well, I never..." these are key pride words. ROMANS 2:13 commands that we should not judge others as if we ourselves had no areas of weakness. Self-promotion, and the demotion of other people is pride, it is the failure to think Grace.

Another symptom of pride is lack of forgiveness, the holding of grudges. Pride prevents a forgiving attitude. How many marriages break up because of this? How many people would be happy on the job instead of miserable if they could just forgive the boss or a fellow worker for doing something dumb? Everybody does dumb things, but failure to forgive is pride. Other indicators of pride are complaining, griping, maligning, gossiping. Most of the sins of the tongue have their roots in pride.

When you see sinful pride in yourself, confess it! If you see it in others, pray!

The fourth step toward progress in Grace thinking is to "grow in Grace"; actually this is the first and last step toward maturity. Grace thinking overcomes pride, and the symptoms of sinful pride will start to disappear. A person who was at first totally filled with himself will find that as he grows in Christ the symptoms will show up only under extreme pressure. At that time, they will be recognized and dealt with immediately to minimize the ill effects on himself and others.

Grace Orientation

The first step in Grace orientation is understanding the Grace of God, the purpose of this study. The second step is to appropriate the Grace of God through the use of the techniques of Christian living seen in the following sections. [Each of the techniques described briefly below has a complete discussion in the Bible Notes Library studies relating to each topic.]

Confession of Sin

Personal sin leads the believer away from the Christian Way of Life. You must deal with sin on a daily basis by confessing and moving on. If you don't do this, sin becomes a burden which clouds your joy, drains your spiritual energy, and destroys your productivity and vitality. The result will be that you will seek provision for your needs and desires outside of God's Grace provision.

In privacy, make a list of mental attitude sins, verbal sins, and behavior sins which bother you the most. Ask the Lord to make you aware of the habits of your own life. Respond immediately to the Holy Spirit when He uses the Word to spotlight your sin. Name the sin to God; then rejoice in forgiveness and cleansing and your renewed fellowship with God.

All the promises and provisions of God the Father are now available to you. Make it a spiritual habit to confess sins whenever they show up in your life and you will have continuous and immediate access to everything that Grace provides.

The Faith Rest Life

Faith Rest is the believing of the promises of God and then entering into the "rest" phase of Christian living by claiming and enjoying those promises. Therefore, you must search the Scriptures daily to remind yourself of promises and to learn new ones.

You must know who and what God is so that you will not hesitate to believe that He can do what He has promised to do. Study the attributes of God using verses about the Essence of God. Know Him as He reveals Himself in the Bible. Believe Him when He tells you what He will do for you. Count on it. Let your faith rest on it. Cast your burden on the Lord. Everything you learn about Grace will encourage and strengthen you.

Occupation with Christ

The technique of Occupation with Christ keeps your mind on Grace because it gets your eyes off yourself, your spouse, your children, your neighbors, your friends. Instead, as you move through the day, you are thinking about the Lord Jesus Christ, His plan for your life, the Father's provision for each incident in your life, and His provision of wisdom for each decision you must make. Occupation with Christ is a by-product of the Faith Rest Life. Disorientation to Grace is a by-product of occupation with self, with life, with problems.

Living in the Word

By Living in the Word you are constantly reminded of God's viewpoint, of His Plan, of His provision, or His awareness of our spirit of heaviness and what He wants to accomplish in us with the testing. Living in the Word gradually transplants you to a new sphere, a new environment for your life, in which there is victory through Grace.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit fills you and controls your life when you have no unconfessed sin in your life. You can trust the Holy Spirit to reveal sin to you when you commit it, or even before. When the Holy

Spirit in control, He produces His fruit (GAL. 5:12), the product of graciousness which is such a blessing to others.

Agape love is a great Grace benefit. There is joy in living in Grace. Peace does not coexist with disorientation to Grace. Longsuffering gives the ability to wait for God's Grace provision. Gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance are fruits of righteousness, which is divine good.

Orientation to Grace

Grace Orientation gives the ability to look at people and see them as God sees them. It is the ability to let them live their lives as unto the Lord, and trusting God to make His way clear to them. This technique lets people make mistakes without your judging them. It enables you to accept criticism without hurt or bitterness. It enables you to "esteem other better than yourself", to "do nothing through strife or vainglory." You will be a "conduit of Grace."

Mastery of the Details of Life

We are all involved with details of life. Either we master them, or they master us! If you are a slave to one or more details of life, your thoughts are devoted to them, and they drive you. They dominate your thinking, your conversation, your decisions. Slavery to the details of life leads to a search for happiness through the non-Grace provision of the world and Satan.

Mastery of the details of life means that you look to the Lord for every detail. Your happiness does not depend on people, circumstances or things. You have the peace of God that passes understanding. You have learned to be content under any circumstances. You can wait for the Lord's timing in providing the details you want; you can enjoy them when you have them; and you can stay happy when the Lord sees fit not to provide some detail.

Relaxed Mental Attitude

A relaxed mental attitude is based on knowing God and on having divine production in the soul that comes with the fruit of the Holy Spirit. A relaxed mental attitude is one of the results of Living in the Word, practicing the Faith Rest Life, and being occupied with Christ.

Capacity to Love

There may be many disturbing details that surround our relationships with other people or the circumstances of our lives. Love deals with that depression by giving us the capacity to have a Spirit produced love for God (1 Cor. 16:22); for spouse (Titus 2:4); for others (Rom. 12:13). This is only one of the marvelous products of Grace in the Christian's life.

Inner Happiness

Inner happiness is not possible for the believer who is occupied with himself. Inner happiness is a state of rejoicing based on knowing that God is everything He claims to be and that He can and will do what He has promised. Inner happiness is the joy of living where every provision for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being is being made by God in the life of a Christian who is walking in daily fellowship with Him.

Heavenlies

The **heavenlies** (or, "heavenly places") is the location of divine blessing, including all the blessings of Christian maturity

Eph. 1:3; 1:19-23

The **heavenlies** is the locale of the Lord's success in spiritual warfare against Satan, Psalm 103:19.

The **heavenlies** is the location of the believer's position in Christ. Thus, the believer shares the victory of Christ. The result is daily victory in the believer's life. Eph. 2:6.

The **heavenlies** is the sphere of angelic activity, Eph. 3:10.

The **heavenlies** is the battlefield for spiritual warfare during the Church Age, Eph. 6:12 ff.

Holy Spirit

The Bible teaches that God is one God and that there are no other gods. The Bible also clearly distinguishes between three parts or Persons of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, known as the Trinity.

This article has been prepared to organize the large number of Scripture passages referring to the Spirit of God to show (1) that the Holy Spirit is distinctly a Person, that is, that He has personality; (2) that He is God, that is, that He shares all of God's eternal attributes; and (3) that He has an objective, real ministry in the world during the Church Age, particularly in the lives of Christians.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PERSONALITY

The Holy Spirit has personality because He possesses the essential characteristics of personality, namely, intellect, emotion, and will.

- **His Intellect**, 1 Cor. 2:10,11, For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.
- For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.
- **His Emotion**, Eph. 4:30, And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
- **His Will**, 1 Cor. 12:11, But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FATHER

- Matt. 3:16, And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him,
- Luke 4:18, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ...
- Isaiah 61:1

HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE SON

- Rom. 8:9, However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.
 - Phil. 1:19, For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
-

THE HOLY SPIRIT SHARES THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

- **Eternity**, Heb. 9:14, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
- **Life**, Rom. 8:2, For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.
- **Holiness**, Rom. 1:4, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,
- **Truth**, John 14:17, that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.
- **Omnipotence**, Gen. 1:1,2, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.
- **Omnipresence**, Ps. 139:7-10, Where can I go from Thy Spirit? Or where can I flee from Thy presence?
- If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there.
- If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,
- Even there Thy hand will lead me, And Thy right hand will lay hold of me.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALS DIVINE TRUTH

- 1 Cor. 2:9-11, but just as it is written, " Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And which have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him."
- For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.
- For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.
- See also 2 Sam. 23:2; Micah 3:8; Acts 1:16; Heb. 9:6-8; 2 Pet. 1:15-21; John 16:12-14.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFIES THE LORD JESUS CHRIST DURING THE CHURCH AGE

After the Lord Jesus had ascended to Heaven, the Holy Spirit came to indwell all believers during the Church Age.

- John 7:38,39, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'"
- But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

The purpose of the indwelling Holy Spirit is *not* to glorify the Holy spirit, but to glorify Christ while He is absent from the earth.

- John 16:13,14, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.
- "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.

The believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and this glorification occurs on the inside of the believer.

- 1 Cor. 6:19,20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?
- For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

When a Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit (walking in fellowship), his life is written by the Holy Spirit. He is declared to be the epistles of Christ written by the Holy spirit.

- 2 Cor. 3:2-6 You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men;
- being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.
- And such confidence we have through Christ toward God.
- Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,
- who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

When a Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit, Christ is at home in the body.

- Eph. 3:16,17 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;
- so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

GENERAL WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Zech. 4:6, "... not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts."

The following is a list of activities carried out by the Holy Spirit:

- Casting out demons: Matt. 12:28
- Comforting of believers: John 15:26
- Reproving the world of sin: John 16:8
- Making believers spiritually alive: Rom. 8:11
- Making intercession for believers: Rom. 8:26
- Making able ministers of the new covenant: 2 Cor. 3:6
- Raising Christ from the dead: 1 Pet. 3:18
- Was executor of Bible inspiration: 2 Pet. 1:21
- Invites unbelievers to accept Christ: Rev. 22:17

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- The Holy Spirit lives permanently in every Christian. Rom. 8:9; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; 1 Cor. 6:19,20.
- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is called the “unction” in 1 John 2:20, and “anointing” in 1 John 2:27. These are synonyms for “indwelling.”
- The prophecy of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is found in John 7:37-39; John 14:16,17.
- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit must be distinguished from the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ indwells the believer for the purpose of fellowship, Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5.

The Holy Spirit indwells the believer for the purpose of function, Gal. 5:22.

Maximum fellowship with Christ comes through the function of the Holy Spirit in edification and grace living.

- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit must be distinguished from the filling of the Holy Spirit.
- The Indwelling is automatic at salvation.
- The Filling is a function of the believer’s volition and may be lost through carnality, Eph. 4:30. The Filling is commanded, Eph. 5:18. The Filling is regained through confession of Sin, 1 John 1:9; Prov. 1:23.
- The Holy Spirit’s functions in the intake and application of Bible truth, John 14:26; 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; 1 John 2:27. This is the “how to” of edification.
- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is necessary because of the spiritual conflict in “high places” (spiritual warfare), John 7:37-39.

THE SEALING MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The sealing work of the Holy Spirit is the basis for our eternal security. The three phases of salvation are given in Eph. 1:13.

- Eph. 1:13,14 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,
 - who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.
 - First, you must hear the word of truth, the gospel.
 - Then, you must believe the gospel.
 - At that point, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit
 - **you were sealed** is the aorist passive indicative form of the verb σφραγιζω (**sphragidzw**), which means “stamped with a seal.”
 - In the ancient world, the seal was a guarantee or a transaction, e.g., a signet impression on a ring. Sealing was used to authenticate contracts, laws, invoices, military orders. The seal was also used in the ratification of treaties.
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- Seals were used to preserve tombs, libraries, treasuries. The seal was backed up by the force of the government in charge, e.g., the seal on the tomb of Christ was guaranteed by the Roman troops.
- Seals indicate ownership; God owns the believer, having purchased him from the slave market of sin (Eph. 1:7; 1 Cor. 6:20)
- The believer is sealed as a guarantee of his eternal security.

THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When a person accepts Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit comes into (indwells) his life permanently. The Holy Spirit indwells for the purpose of glorifying Christ, but indwelling alone does not guarantee that Christ will be glorified by the believer's life. For this reason, Christians are commanded to be habitually "filled" with the Holy Spirit.

- Eph. 5:18, And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

The verb "be filled" means "to fill up a deficiency; to fully possess; to fully influence; to fill with a certain quality." Here it is in the present passive imperative, so the verb is a command meaning "keep on being filled" with the believer *receiving* the action of the verb. The filling is by means of the Holy Spirit.

The responsibility of the Christian is to confess his sins. At any point in our lives we can take ourselves out of fellowship through personal sin. When that happens, we become carnal, not spiritual. Sin grieves the Holy Spirit and causes a breach in our relationship with God. But the Lord promises that if we confess our sins, He will forgive us and cleanse us from unrighteousness. That is, upon the condition of our confession, He will heal the breach that sin has caused.

So, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, sin must be confessed. 1 John 1:9

See TOPIC: CONFESSION OF SIN

Nothing good is produced in the Christian's life apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit.

- Rom. 8:8,9 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
- However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.
- Gal. 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Results of the Filling of the Holy Spirit

- Imitation of Christ: John 16:14; 2 Cor. 3:3; Phil. 1:20
- Perception of the Word: John 14:26; 16:12-14; 1 Cor. 2:9-16
- Witnessing: Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 3:1-10
- Guidance: Rom. 8:14; Eph. 5:16-18
- Assurance: Rom. 8:14-16; Gal. 4:5,6
- Worship: Phil. 3:3; John 4:24
- Prayer: Eph. 6:18 with Psalm 66:18

- Leadership in Ministry: John 16:13; Acts 10:9,10; Acts 13:2; Acts 16:6

THE HOLY SPIRIT PROVIDES SPIRITUAL POWER

The book of Acts is the book of spiritual power - where it comes from, how it is obtained, and how it is used. The promise of Jesus Christ to his disciples was "He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth... He dwells with you and shall be in you."

The prophesy of John the Baptist in Matt. 3:11 regarding the coming ministry of the Lord Jesus also announced the ministry of the Holy Spirit for the Church Age.

- Matt. 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire:"

Examples of believers receiving the Holy Spirit:

- At Pentecost: Acts 2:3
- The Samaritan Christians: Acts 8:17
- Cornelius and his company: Acts. 10:44
- The Ephesian believers: Acts 19:6,7

The Benefits Derived from Spiritual Power

- Men receive courage to rebuke sin: Matt. 3:8
- Men are enabled to speak with confidence: Acts 4:31-33*
- Gives spiritual and moral strength: 2 Sam. 22:40; Isa. 28:56; Isa. 40:31; 41:10; Dan. 11:32; Eph. 3:16
- Provides strength in weakness: 1 Cor. 1:27; 2 Cor. 12:9; 13:4
- Provides spiritual gifts: Rom. 12:6; Eph. 4:11

THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the character of Christ being formed in the Christian who is filled with the Spirit. Gal. 5:22,23 has a listing of the types of production which are the result of the fruit of the Spirit.

Love, Joy, and Peace are fruits of mental attitude, inward thinking that reflects the lack of mental attitude sins and the relaxation which comes from knowing Bible truth.

Long-suffering, Gentleness, and Goodness are outward, or directed toward "neighbors."

Long-suffering, for example, is a relaxed attitude toward the human race and is a result of having love, joy peace. This is Faith-Rest under pressure which comes from people or Circumstances.

Faith, Meekness, and Temperance are fruits directed upward, or God-ward.

Humility, for example, is a grace attitude with regard to divine provision that gives glory to God for all support and blessing in life, rather than taking the attitude that one is self-made.

Conditions of Fruit-Bearing

The following are required in order for a Christian to have spiritual fruit:

-
- Contact with the Living Water: Ps. 1:3; Eze. 47:12
 - Spiritual receptivity: Matt. 13:23
 - Death of the old life: John 12:24
 - Chastening (pruning): John 15:2
 - Abiding in Christ: John 15:4

SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Bible speaks of five types of sin which can be committed against the Holy Spirit. Two are committed by unbelievers only; the other three are committed by Christians.

Sins By Unbelievers Only

- Resistance of the Holy Spirit: Acts 7:51. This is rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ and a rejection of the pre-salvation ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-11) through the sin of unbelief
- Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit: Matt. 12:31,32. This refers to rejection of Jesus Christ during His ministry on earth (during the previous dispensation, the Age of the Jews).
- **Sins by Believers**
- Lying to the Holy Spirit: Acts 5:3. Refers to false motivation, approbation lust sin.
- Grieving the Holy Spirit: Eph. 4:30. Refers to producing sins from the area of weakness in the sin nature. Any sin in the life of the believer which involves a moral or ethical issue.
- Quenching the Holy Spirit: 1 Thess. 5:19. Producing human good from the areas of strength in the Sin Nature. Examples: giving, prayer, witnessing for the purpose of gaining approbation. Human good soothes the conscience and keeps the believer from confessing his sin.

Hope

Hope is the mental attitude of confidence that results from learning and applying Bible truth regarding the future.

In Bible usage, "hope" (Greek: ἐλπίς) is synonymous with "confidence" or "expectation of a good outcome." Growth in confidence comes along with growth in Christ. Applied knowledge of Bible principles of time and eternity leads to supreme confidence in God's Word.

The Christian has confidence in

an eternal inheritance, **1 Pet. 1:4,5**

the new home in the future, **John 14:1-3**

the resurrection body, **1 Cor. 15:51-57**

See also **1 Th. 4:16-18; Phil. 3:21; and 1 John 3:1,2.**

The **hope** of Israel is in their coming Messiah (the Second Coming of Christ, His kingdom on earth, and the new earth of eternity).

Luke 1:67-79; 2:28-32; Acts 26:6,7; 28:20; Eph. 2:12.

The Abrahamic Covenant (amplified by the Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants) promised to Israel the land of Canaan, the eternal seed (the Messiah), and blessing (new birth). Israel's **hope** lies in these promises of God.

Abraham's **hope** was directed to the promise of a new city, the New Jerusalem, **Heb. 11:9,10.**

The **hope** for the Church is the "blessed hope" of the Rapture. **Titus 2:13-15; 1 John 3:2,3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18**

Hope is derived from such passages as **Rev. 2:14** in which it is stated that there will be no more death, tears, pain, etc.

The **hope** (confidence) we have in Christ has caused death to lose its sting and the grave to lose its victory. **1 Cor. 15:54-58.**

The word **hopeless** should never be in the Christian's vocabulary

Importance of Bible Teaching

A Christian's desire for the Truth, the Word of God, must be avid. A believer must give the highest priority in his life to learning Bible facts and principles. There are many examples in the Bible of the great effort made by people of God to obtain truth.

John 14:6 "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Matt. 6:28-34

Psalms 119:72 "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

Psalms 119:127, 162.

Prov. 23:23 "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction and understanding."

Psalms 86:11 "Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name."

Examples of Eagerness for Truth

Temple worshippers in the time of Christ: **LUKE 21:37,38**

Samaritans: **JOHN 4:39-42**

Cornelius: **ACTS 10:30-33**

Bereans: **ACTS 17:10-13**

COL. 1:9-13, 21-23; 2:1-8

EPH. 1:17-23; 3:14-19; 4:11-16

Reasons Why Bible Teaching is Important

The Bible is the only source of knowledge of how to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as "love at first sight" in spiritual things. The believer must get to know Christ very

well, and this requires the daily intake of knowledge about Christ through the Word of God, which is “the mind of Christ.”

I Cor. 2:16 “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

Phil. 3:10 “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death.”

John 14:23 “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loves me not keeps not my sayings; and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.”

Daily Bible study leads to occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ, a daily walk with the Saviour.

Heb. 12:2,3 “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds.”

Bible doctrine, learned under the faith principle of applied teaching, produces confidence during the believer’s lifetime.

2 Cor. 5:6-8 “Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, and not by sight). We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

See also JOB 5:24-27

The Bible is the only source of God’s viewpoint.

Isaiah 55:7-9 “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Bible doctrine is the basis for orientation to God’s plan during the believer’s lifetime.

Isaiah 26:3,4 “The one who is steadfast of mind thou wilt keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in thee. Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord, we have an everlasting rock.”

Bible knowledge produces sanity and stability of mind. It is very important to get the Word of God into the mind before the times of pressure come. It is not too likely that an unstable person will respond to the Word of God. God’s deals with the pressures of life using “preventive maintenance”.

James 1:8 “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

Bible doctrine is the basis for divine guidance.

Romans 12:1,2 “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Without the Word of God, the believer's mind will be corrupted by Satan and will become a repository of world-viewpoint and false teaching.

2 Cor. 11:3 "But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."

EPH. 4:17-25

Inheritance

Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, and as the victor in the spiritual conflict, is the heir of all things.
Heb. 1:1-4

Inheritance is based on sonship:

John 1:12, But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

Rom. 8:16,17, The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Gal. 3:26-29, For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

To inherit from God, a person must possess the life of God, that is, salvation resulting in eternal life.

Titus 3:5-7, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 John 5:11, 12 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

Therefore, salvation is the qualification for inheriting from God. Col. 1:9-14

We have an inheritance because we share the destiny of Christ. The true doctrine of predestination is that we share Christ's destiny.

Eph. 1:11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

As joint-heirs with Christ, we also share Christ's election.

Heb. 9:15, And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Our heritage is related to the doctrine of Eternal Security.

1 Pet. 1:3-5, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance. Eph. 1:14
Abraham's inheritance is the pattern and illustration of the heritage of believers.

Rom. 4:9-16

Law of Moses

Introduction

The Law of Moses is divided into three parts, or codes, as follows.

Code I, **The Commandments**, Exodus 20:1-17, contains the laws of divine institution and establishment, including the moral law. This is the Magna Carta or Bill of Rights of human freedom.

Code II, **The Ordinances**, or the spiritual code, included a complete Christology (doctrine of Christ), and was designed to present Christ as the only Savior. Included in the ordinances is a "shadow" Christology and a 'shadow' Soteriology (doctrine of salvation). These ideas are presented in the descriptions of the Tabernacle, the Holy Days, the Levitical Offerings, and the daily activity of the priesthood.

Code III, **The Judgments**, was the social code - the divine laws of establishment applied to social living. Questions of diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, how to spend a honeymoon, what to do about divorce, slavery, inheritances, etc., were all covered. It was a complete set of laws.

The Law of Moses is called the Book of the Covenant: Ex. 24:7,8; 34:27,28; Deut. 4:13-16,23,31; 8:18; 9:9,11,15. There is a written addendum to the Law in Deut. 29.

The prophecy regarding the breaking of the Covenant is found in Deut. 31:16,20; Jer. 22:9. The Book of the Covenant is the subject of Jeremiah 11; but it is not to be confused with the new covenant with Israel discussed in Jeremiah 31 to 33.

In the teaching of world history in universities, Hammurabi's Code is set forth as the shining example of law-giving in human history. But the Law of Moses is far more comprehensive and far reaching.

Recipients of the Law of Moses

The Law was given to Israel: Ex. 19:3; Lev. 26:46; Rom. 3:19; 9:4.

The Law was specifically *not* given to Gentiles: Deut. 4:8; Rom. 2:12-14.

Born-again believers of the church age are not under the Law. Therefore, the Mosaic Law was never given to the church: Acts 15:5, 24; Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:19.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law: Matt. 5:17, "...I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill..." He fulfilled the Commandments by living perfectly under the Law. His impeccability and perfect life fulfilled Code I. The Ordinances, Code II, were fulfilled by Christ's death, burial, resurrection,

ascension, and session. The Judgments, Code III, were fulfilled by Christ as He observed the law of the land; he lived under divine institutions and establishment.

Jesus Christ is the "end of the Law" for believers: Rom. 10:4.

Believers in the church age are under a higher law of spirituality: Rom. 8:2-4; Gal. 5:18,22,23; I Cor. 13. The believer who functions under the filling of the Holy Spirit takes up where Christ left off and fulfills the Law.

Limitations of the Mosaic Law

The Law cannot provide justification either for individuals or for groups: Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20; Rom. 3:28; Acts 13:39; Phil. 3:9.

The Law cannot give life: Gal. 3:21.

The Law cannot give God the Holy Spirit nor the divine power and energy from the Holy spirit: Gal. 3:2.

The Law cannot solve the problem of the Sin Nature: Rom. 8:3. While there were laws of punishment in varying degrees, and fear of punishment helps keep people in line, the Law does nothing to provide victory over sin.

Present Purpose of Mosaic Law

The Commandments provide laws of human freedom and provide a divine standard to which the sinner can compare himself and his actions and recognize that he is a sinner and needs a Savior: Rom. 3:20,28; 1 Tim. 1:8,9.

The Ordinances are designed to communicate God's Grace in both salvation and restoration to fellowship.

The Social Code is designed to provide a true concept of a national function and freedom under the laws of divine establishment.

Salvation in the Old Testament

Salvation is the adjustment a person makes to the Justice of God when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The justice of God was satisfied when Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross. This makes it possible for God to reconcile the believer to Himself and to impute righteousness to the believer. Gen. 15:6

The Gospel is the information provided in the Bible to give us the facts about God's provision for us.

The death of Christ on the cross was predetermined by the decisions of the Divine Decrees so that, from the standpoint of the OT times, Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement was certain to take place, even though the actual efficacious sacrifice had not yet occurred. The justice of God was satisfied.

OT believers received Jesus Christ as Savior as He was revealed in OT times. Sometimes He was called Elohim, Jehovah-Elohim, or Jehovah plus a noun (God our Righteousness, etc.). Whenever there was positive volition at the point of God consciousness, God provided Gospel information to the individual.

The first statement of the Gospel is recorded in Genesis 3, at the time of original sin, Man's fall. When Adam and Eve fell, they only had one count against them - negative volition to the command regarding good and evil. Good and Evil is the plan of Satan; so knowledge of good and evil is knowl-

edge of Satan's plan. Adam and Eve, in their innocence in the garden of Eden did not need to be introduced to Satan's plan or to be inculcated with it. Therefore, this one tree was forbidden.

Eve partook of the tree in innocence, Adam partook in cognizance. He had seen the first sinner, Eve, disobey God, but he took part anyway. Remember, there was no immorality involved here, because at the time they were neither moral or immoral. Their sin was merely rejection of what God had commanded. This brought instant spiritual death.

At this instant, man no longer ruled the world; Satan became the ruler of this kosmos. The coup d'etat was complete; and man was now subject to Satan as far as this world is concerned. Mankind immediately became marked with the "mark of Adam", the Sin Nature.

To the question "Which came first, personal sin or the Sin Nature?" the answer is that personal sin came first and caused the existence of the Sin Nature. The human spirit was cancelled out in the sense of spiritual death.

For the rest of the human race, the Sin Nature is inherited at birth, so the Sin Nature is present before there is any opportunity for personal sin. Also, Adam's sin is imputed to us, so that we are born with two strikes against us. "For as in Adam all die ..." Note : we are not called sinners because we sin; we are sinners because we are born, with a Sin Nature, and having Adam's sin imputed to us.

This is the reason that God, with His character of absolute Justice and Righteousness, is not free to enter into a relationship with us unless it can be done without compromising his integrity. And that is only possible if all the sins of the world are judged.

But the Lord has found a way to save mankind. Gen. 3:15, "I will put enmity (hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise (crush) thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The "seed of the woman" is the title for the Lord Jesus Christ in virgin birth. The Sin Nature and Adam's imputed sin is passed down through the male; and Christ was not born of a male-female relationship. He was able to avoid that result of the curse. The Lamb of God had to be without spot or blemish.

At the Second Advent of Christ, the head of Satan will be crushed, and he will no long rule the world -- Christ will rule the world and Satan will be imprisoned for 1,000 years.

The pattern of salvation in the Old Testament is exactly the same as the pattern of New Testament salvation. Gen. 15:6, "Abraham believed God, and God imputed it to him for righteousness." Imputed righteousness means that God's Justice has been satisfied. This verse is found in the context of Rom. 4:1-4.

Comments

- There never was a time, and there never will be a time when God is not saving mankind. Rom. 10:13; 2 Pet. 3:9
 - The Gospel was clearly declared in Old Testament times. Rom. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 3:18. The passage in Isa. 53:5,6 has exactly the same boundaries as are found in I Cor. 15:3. Dan. 12:2,3 has the boundary of the resurrection.
 - Regardless of age or dispensation, man is always saved in the same manner - positive volition to the Gospel expressed in a non-meritorious way, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12; Gal. 3:6-8
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- Positive volition existed in Old Testament times, both at the point of God consciousness and the point of Gospel hearing. Ex. 33:7; Gen. 15:6
 - While revelation from God is progressive, reaching its peak with the New Testament scriptures, it has always been, nevertheless, sufficient for salvation of souls at all periods of time.
 - The object of faith in salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 3:26. However, the revelation concerning Christ varies in different ages.
 - Jesus Christ was first revealed as Savior at the time of man's fall, Gen. 3:15. He is represented as the "seed of the woman".
 - Jesus Christ is usually revealed in the Old Testament by "shadows". For example, in the Tabernacle, in the feasts, in the modus operandi of the Levitical priests.
 - Another means of revealing Christ was through "inanimate revelation", that is, through things in nature like the burning bush, the Rock, the Shekinah Glory, or through the typology of the furniture in the Tabernacle (Num. 17:7). The Mercy Seat, the hilasterion, was the place of propitiation in the Holy of Holies.
 - The Levitical offerings were "witnessing by ritual". The burnt offerings taught propitiation, with emphasis on the word of Christ, the Lamb of God. The meal and fruit offerings revealed the Person of Christ on the cross. The peace offering taught about the barrier between God and man being removed.
 - The gospel was presented in the Old Testament directly in theological teaching. Isa. 53 was straight doctrinal teaching which showed that Christ carried our guilt as well as our sins.
 - Once the reality is come, we have the New Testament, which is historical Christology.
 - According to Isa. 55:6, salvation in the person of Jesus Christ, is always available. Acts. 4:12.
 - Many conversions are recorded in the Old Testament, including:
 - Noah was declared "just" in Gen. 6:8,9, and was said to have righteousness in Heb. 11:7. Heb. 11 shows the spiritual life of OT believers. The OT imputation of righteousness is seen in Psalm 24:5 and Isa. 61:10.
 - For Abraham, compare Gen. 15:6 with Rom. 4:1-4
 - Job gave perfect testimony to salvation in Gospel form -- death, burial, and resurrection. Job. 19:23-27.

Many Gentiles were saved in the Old Testament. The citizens of Nineveh responded to the Gospel when Jonah preached to them. Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32. See also Rom. 9:24,25; 9:30-33. See Daniel regarding the salvation of Nebuchadnezzar.

Levitical Priesthood

According to Numbers 16:5 the Levitical priests were commissioned by God, separated unto God, and were allowed to approach God. "Then he said to Korah and all his followers: 'In the morning the Lord will show who belongs to him and who is holy, and he will have that person come near him. The man he chooses he will cause to come near him.'"

The Levitical priesthood began with the tribe of Levi and proceeded through the sons of the family of Aaron, according to Numbers 18:1,8 and Exodus 28:1, which says, "Have Aaron you brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests." However, physical blemishes disqualified any male descendant of Aaron, according to Leviticus 21:17-23, from which 21:17 is presented: "The Lord said to Moses, 'Say to Aaron: 'For the generations to come none of your descendants who has a defect may come near to offer the food of his God.'"

The duties of the Levitical priesthood included: the teaching of the Law, Leviticus 10:11; offering the sacrifices, Leviticus chapter 9; maintaining the Tabernacle and the Temple, Numbers 18:3; officiating in the Holy Place, Exodus 30:7-10; inspecting ceremonially unclean persons, Leviticus chapters 13 and 14; they adjudicated disputes, Deuteronomy 17:8-13; they functioned as tax collectors, Numbers 18:21,26; Hebrews 7:5.

Sustenance of the priesthood occurred through the following vehicles: prescribed portions of the sacrificial offerings, Numbers 18:8-14; one habitual tithe from which tithe a tenth part was assigned to the priests, Numbers 18:21-24, cf. Lev. 27:30-33, cf. Numbers 18:26-28; along with thirteen assigned cities, Joshua 21:13-19, which provided a special tithe every third year, Deuteronomy 14:27-29; 26:12; the redemption money for the firstborn in Israel, Leviticus chapter 27; an assigned portion of the spoils of war, Numbers 31:25-27; along with the showbread, Leviticus 24:5-9.

And so that the priests would not be overworked, they were assigned assistants who were called the Levites, II Chronicles 29:34. The Levites were selected by God to aid in the sacrificial offerings and in the administration of holy things, according to Numbers 3:5ff., 8:14-19. The Levites also preserved and transmitted the written Law, Lev. 10:11; Deut. 17:18; 33:10; Nehemiah 8:9; Ezekiel 44:23. They attended the priests, Numbers 18:4; the Levites also were responsible for assembling, dismantling, and transporting the Tabernacle, Numbers chapter 4; 10:17,21. And they also taught the Torah (the word) and administered justice, Deut. 33:10a.

Levitical priests usually served for 25 years, from age 25 to age 50, according to Numbers 8:24,25, although at times older men were priests, e.g. Zacharias, Luke 1:5-25.

Other than the family of Aaron, there were three other family lines in the tribe of Levi (Numbers chapter 4): the kohathites, who maintained the furniture, vessels and veil of the Tabernacle; the gershonites, who maintained the coverings, hangings and doors of the Tabernacle; the merarites, who maintained the supports, including the planks bars and cords, of the Tabernacle.

Initially, God had selected the entire nation of Israel to be his priests, according to Exodus 19:5,6; however, after the nation proved to be inadequate as priests, Exodus 32:7-10, the Levites who supported Moses in Exodus chapters 26-28 were selected as God's priests, Numbers 3:5-9.

The apparel of the high priest is cited in Exodus chapter 28. Both the priests and the high priest, except for ceremonial events, dressed as other Jews. At ceremonial events, however, the high priest wore white linen shorts, a white linen coat that came to the hips, a ceremonial belt colored in correspondence to the curtains of the Tabernacle -- white, blue, scarlet, and purple; he also wore a turban-like cap with a golden crown, upon which was inscribed: 'holy to Jehovah.' Additionally, the high priest wore an ephod of blue, beautifully embroidered in the colors cited above; also a breast-plate of gold and cloth, with the urim and the thummim on the shoulders, and twelve stones, each stone representing one of the twelve tribes; each stone was engraved with their names and fastened with a golden clasp.

The sanctification of the high priest and the priests is found in Exodus chapter 29. And the principal duty of the high priest was to officiate on the Day of Atonement, according to Leviticus chapter 16.

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest, caparisoned in his ceremonial garments, 'drew near to God;' he entered the Tabernacle (or later the Temple), and sprinkled over the top of the mercy seat the blood of the bullock of the sin offering for himself, Leviticus 16:6,14. After he came forth from the Holy of Holies, he again entered and sprinkled the blood of the goat of the sin offering for the people. Both times he emerged from the Holy of Holies after sprinkling the blood had hamartiological (sin) ramifications: pardon for his personal sins, and pardon for the sins of the people; and in each instance the pardon was based solely upon the 'blood of the sin offering,' which represented Christ on the Cross, Leviticus 16:30.

According to I Chronicles chapter 15, 16:4-6, 37-43, David rearranged the Levitical priesthood into 24 courses (orders); he assigned 16 courses to Eleazar, and 8 courses to Ithamar. This rearrangement was chartered because of a population explosion in David's reign.

According to Numbers 20:28, the office of the high priest was transmitted upon death to the oldest living son of the high priest: "Moses removed Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar. And Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain." And according to Numbers 25:10-13, God made a covenant with Phinehas, the eldest son of Eleazar, which guaranteed a lasting priesthood with the Aaronic line.

The line switched during Saul ben-Kish's reign; Eli, a descendant of Ithamar, assumed the office of high-priest, however, he functioned only de facto and not de jure (legally). In fact, his descendants were removed from the priesthood because of Eli's failure to censure his sons, I Samuel 2:23-25; 3:13. Solomon restored the Aaronic line to the high-priesthood; he replaced Abiathar, Eli's descendant, with Zadok, from the line of Eleazar, I Kings 2:26,27,35. During the ministry of the prophet Jeremiah, Seraiah was the high-priest; he was taken prisoner and executed by Nebuzar-adan, II Kings 25:18-21. Seraiah's son, Josedech, was not allowed to function as high-priest. Instead, he lived and died as a prisoner in Babylon, Haggai 1:1,14. Josedech's son, Joshua, functioned as the high-priest during the ministry of Zechariah, Zech. 3:1.

The high-priests that followed Joshua were: Joiakim, Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan and Jaddua, who was the high-priest in the epoch of Alexander the Great. Tradition holds that Jaddua met the advancing armies of Alexander with the scroll of the book of Daniel, whereupon he read Alexander those passages in Daniel referring to Alexander. Alexander was impressed and, tradition maintains, favorably disposed toward the Jews from then on.

Jaddua's successors were: Onias I, Simon the Just; Onias II/Eleazar, and Alcimus. The latter two, Onias II and Alcimus, were notorious for their malfunction; indeed, Onias II was also known as Menelaus.

Then, according to I Chronicles 9:10; 24:7; Nehemiah 11:10, the high-priestly line passed over to the Hasmonaean family, the course of Joiarib. It stayed in the Hasmonaean family until Herod the Great decimated the Hasmonaean family, and his brother-in-law, Herod, executed the final Hasmonaean high-priest, Aristobulus, in 35 BC.

At length, the two high priests associated with the death of our Lord were Caiaphas and Annas.

Mental Attitude

Introduction

As a believer progresses in his Christian life, he experiences many profound changes in his thinking. His standards change gradually but radically; his frame of reference changes; his mental attitude soon becomes very different from what it once was. His previous way of thinking is replaced by the "mind of Christ" - God's viewpoint is becoming his own.

The greatest occupational hazard faced by a Christian is the failure to grow in Christ. Persistent personal sin carried on without repentance and confession keeps the Christian out of fellowship with the Lord and hinders the work of the Holy Spirit in the life.

The normal Christian life is a supernatural life. This life cannot be lived apart from the daily intake of spiritual food, the sustenance which comes with the study of the Bible accompanied by the continuous control and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Inattention to the teaching of the Word of God concerning the mechanics of daily Christian living results in failure to grow in Christ. The believer who will not overcome these problems will not be able to enjoy the benefits and blessings of the Christian life, and he will certainly not be productive as a child of God.

This article reviews several factors relating to the subject of the believer's mental attitude. First, we note several categories of mental attitude sin which are the result of "not thinking Grace". Then we see the methods by which God arranges for human viewpoint thinking to be replaced with divine viewpoint thinking. This study will also show some of the important results in the life of the Christian who develops a godly mental attitude.

The Sin of Not Thinking Grace

A Christian decides many times every day whether he will follow God's plan for his life. In decisions great or small he expresses either his dependence on the Lord or his desire to be independent of God's direction. A believer has access to the perfect plan of God for his life, a plan which has certain predetermined divine standards by which every situation can be measured, by which every decisive opportunity can be judged. Many promises and blessings are available for use by the person who orders his life according to the patterns laid out in the Bible.

The person who is not positive to the plan of God, and who would apply his own human standards to life situations, does not operate by divine standards. He becomes involved in a variety of mental attitude sin problems stemming from his original decision to be independent of God. His life takes on the characteristics of one who does not "think Grace".

Grace is that characteristic of God which is an extension of His love for the human race and which causes Him to provide for every human need for time and eternity. The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the Cross was the Work which made it possible for God to view every person as free from the guilt of sin and as an object of God's Grace provisions.

Failure to order one's thinking according to Grace involves several aspects of mental attitude sin, including the following :

A SPIRIT OF PRIDE -- this is an exalted feeling based on personal success or position, or based on good training or education, on personal appearance, or on some natural gift or ability. Sinful pride is an inner feeling of self-importance which does not take into account God's provision of every resource and quality which goes into one's human traits and capabilities.

LOVE OF, OR DESIRE FOR, HUMAN APPROBATION AND PRAISE -- this is a secret fondness for being noticed and recognized. It is a love of supremacy, or it is the drawing of attention to oneself by various types of exhibitionism or by spiritual one-upmanship.

SELF WILL -- this is the concept of the stubborn or unteachable nature, or implacability. Self will is a disposition to be argumentative, harsh, bitter, which causes one to be a "nit picker" or critical in the extreme, or to mind the business of others, or to fail to recognize the rights and privacy of others.

SINFUL REACTION TO SOCIAL PRESSURES -- these are the sins of anger, impatience, touchiness, or of having a sensitive nature. There is often resentment and retaliation when disapproved or

contradicted. This area of sin generates jealousy, sour grapes, envy, and the accompanying bitterness, hatred, carrying of grudges, revenge tactics, and so forth.

Magnifying the faults and failings of others while emphasizing one's own virtues.

NEGATIVE DISPOSITION -- this is peevishness, a fretful disposition, one that loves to be coaxed and honored. It is a dishonest, deceitful attitude. It is a disposition that tends toward discouragement and despondency under pressure along with the attempt to solve one's problems by hysteria and tantrums.

APATHY -- this sin is that of indifference to doctrine and to the Word of God in general. It is indifference to the lost condition of unbelievers or to the carnal condition of other believers.

Characteristics of a Believer's Mental Attitude

The true character of a believer in Jesus Christ is determined by his mental attitude. Prov. 23:7, "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he". See also 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:1; Heb. 12:3; Col. 3:1,2; 1 Cor. 2:16; 2 Cor. 10:4,5.

A Christian's mental attitude is not always apparent in his actions, but God always knows perfectly what a person is thinking. Heb. 4:12,13; Prov. 21:2. The following are examples of mental attitude thinking.

Worldliness is a mental attitude. Worldliness is not the doing of something wrong; it is the thinking which takes place independently of God's viewpoint. The remedy to the problem of worldliness is not in turning over a new leaf. It is a change in thinking (repentance) rather than a change in activity. Divine viewpoint must replace human viewpoint before a change in character can be expected. One can have an outward life which appears good, yet be filled with mental attitude sins. Col. 3:2; James 4:4.

Toughness, strength, and determination are mental attitudes. One is not beaten until he gives up mentally.

True Christian inner peace is a mental attitude. It is the relaxed mental state which enables one to enjoy the Christian life regardless of people or outward circumstances. With a good mental attitude, the believer can be joyful, relaxed, and can even enjoy the battle.

Mental stability is the result of thinking from a proper frame of reference, that is, Biblical thinking. The Christian who has mental fear, who is a chronic worrier, who cannot think clearly under pressure, who blames others for his problems, who cannot make correct decisions -- that believer is unstable. His emotions interfere with his thinking. Since emotion always follows thinking, emotional instability will always follow from incorrect (HVP) thinking. But God's Plan of Grace leads to rock-solid mental and emotional stability.

Man's Ideas vs Divine Viewpoint

Thinking requires words - vocabulary. Divine thinking requires divine vocabulary. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Under any kind of spiritual pressure, human vocabulary, or human thinking, is not adequate. Only God's words can give the ability to think correctly under pressure. The Christian's ability to think correctly is based on how much Bible teaching is resident (applied) in the soul of the believer.

The Christian is commanded to have a new mental attitude. Col. 3:1,2; 2 Cor. 10:4,5; 1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5.

The warfare between two viewpoints in the believer's soul must be fought from within, first by knowledge of doctrine, and then by the application of truth to the life. 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 John 1:9.

Every believer has a mind which is capable of looking at life from God's point of view. Rom. 1:18 ff. Mental attitude divine viewpoint is obtained only through Bible study accompanied by the controlling ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Christian who habitually studies the Word learns to concentrate and to think from God's point of view, and thus he becomes stabilized. The "mind of Christ" (the source of God's viewpoint) is made clear in the Bible.

The Christian can be "transformed by the renewing of the mind" through study, knowledge, and application of Bible truth. By this means his decisions and actions are most likely to be in agreement with Bible principle. And this is the only sure sign of Christian maturity and victorious Christian living.

The Human Conscience

The conscience is located in the mind and is the center for the operating standards of the human soul. Titus 1:15. The conscience convicts the Christian of evil or wrongdoing. John 8:9. The conscience establishes standards for both human and divine relationships. Acts 24:16.

The conscience functions on thinking; and the believer in fellowship has a conscience which functions from resident (applied) divine viewpoint. Rom. 2:15; 9:1, as related to applied Bible teaching. The conscience establishes standards for serving God. 2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 9:14. But false operating standards in the conscience produce legalism. 1 Cor. 8:7.

The more the believer uses applied Bible doctrine, the stronger his conscience becomes in using such things as the Law of Liberty and the superseding laws of love and sacrifice. 1 Cor. 10:24-29. Conscience is the basis for enduring mistreatment and misunderstanding without defending oneself. 1 Pet. 2:19; 3:16. The conscience can be damaged or destroyed with false doctrine and with a callused soul. 1 Tim. 4:1,2.

The Mechanics of Replacing Human Viewpoint with Divine Viewpoint

The Christian life is a supernatural life and cannot be lived without the filling of the Holy Spirit and the daily function of applied Bible teaching. Rom. 8:2; 7:6; Gal. 5:25; Eph. 5:18. All changes must come from within, and the Holy Spirit must originate divine good by applying doctrine to the life.

We begin a change of viewpoint at the moment of salvation. At that time we changed our mental attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 3:19. That was repentance and faith, and it resulted in our regeneration. John 3:16. At that moment many benefits were made available to us, blessings and promises from God which enable us to live in a manner which is both acceptable to the Lord and which also produces great happiness for us. We are given the ability to think those things which will bring honor to the Lord. Eph. 5:18; 4:23; Col. 3:2.

The choice of whether to make use of the divine operating assets is made by the believer every day. The power of our walk with the Lord depends on Bible teaching, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the believer's positive volition. Daily Bible teaching under the controlling ministry of the Holy Spirit builds up divine standards in the human soul and conscience. 1 Tim. 1:5,19; 3:9.

The Benefits of Having a Proper Mental Attitude

With the proper mental attitude, the Christian will have victory, peace, power, and mental stability. Phil. 2:5; 2 Tim. 1:7. The Christian can experience perfect inner peace, even during times of difficulty and suffering. Phil. 4:7. Inner peace comes from what we think. Isa. 26:3. Divine viewpoint brings mental stability and eliminates discouragement, anxiety, instability, fearfulness, and double-mindedness. Stability of mind and character is a mental attitude of strength.

The believer with divine viewpoint has a gracious attitude toward others. He is a mature believer characterized by mental attitude love who is a channel of the Grace of God. Deut. 6:5; 11:13. A mental attitude from DVP produces confidences based on absolute values and standards. 2 Cor. 5:1,6,8.

Mental Attitude and the Believer's Ministry

The mature believer "thinks Grace", which is the "mind of Christ". Therefore, the Christian's life and personality are characterized by many of the qualities of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 8:29; Gal. 5:22 ff. In every one of these characteristics the Christian has one basic ingredient - correct thinking according to divine viewpoint. 1 Pet. 3:8

Therefore, the mature believer is gentle, compassionate, caring, and has a gracious attitude toward others. These are essential life qualities in any believer who is a good witness for Christ. With these qualities, and with the knowledge of the Word of God being acquired on the way to maturity, the believer cannot help but be an outstanding witness for Christ and a skilful practitioner in the use of his spiritual gifts.

Music

The hymn *Break Thou the Bread of Life* was written by Mary Lathbury while she attended the Chautauqua Summer School and religious resort in New York. She had been asked to write two hymns for the school and this was one of them. The Scriptural basis for her hymn was Matt. 14:19; John 8:32; John 6:35, and Matt. 5:6.

Several Bible doctrines are prominent in this hymn. First, the doctrine of the Word of God and the spiritual bread of life is seen in the first verse. In verse 2, the Word of God is the Absolute Truth. In verse 3 is expressed the believer's love for the Word.

The hymn describes how a Christian experiences great peace when partaking of the Truth, and reveals a thirst for greater truths and deep desires and emotions within the soul.

The Bible and Music

The Bible deals extensively with the subject of music. In both the Old Testament and New Testament, music played an important part in spiritual worship and was widely used in teaching doctrinal truth to believers.

There are three types of songs in the Bible; Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs.

The word "psalm" comes from the Greek word ψαλμος (**psalmos**), and refers to a Psalm from the Old Testament. Its meaning is derived from the idea of twanging a string on a musical instrument so that it vibrates, hence, it means "to play on a stringed instrument." In the New Testament, the verb ψαλλω (**psallo**) it means to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God.

The word "hymn" is from ὕμνος (**humnos**) meaning "a song of praise to God." Spiritual songs, πνευματικὸς ᾠδὴ (**pneumatikos ode**) are songs that praise, exhort, challenge warn, in the context of the ministry of the Holy Spirit along with the spirit of the Christian believer. The Greek word **ode**, from which the English word "ode" comes, refers to any type of song, a battle song, a harvest song, a festival song, etc. So the term "spiritual" is added in the Bible to limit the type of song used in Christian worship.

1 Cor. 14:12-16, So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual {gifts,} seek to abound for the edification of the church.

Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

What is {the outcome} then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing (psalms) with the spirit and I shall sing (psalms) with the mind also.

Otherwise if you bless in the spirit {only,} how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?

Note in these verses that the singing is a key ingredient in the ministry of edification, and that it is just as unfruitful to sing without content as it is to speak in tongues to someone who does not understand, since "he does not know what you are saying (singing)."

Singing in the Local Church

There are two major passages in the New Testament dealing with singing: Eph. 5:14-21 and Col. 3:12-17.

The overall context of Ephesians establishes the following:

Chapter 1 - the truth about the union of a believer with the Lord Jesus Christ

Chapter 2 - Freedom from the Old Testament position of estrangement from Christ.

Chapter 3 - The believer in relation to his own advancement in the Christian life.

Chapter 4 - The believer in relation to the Body of Christ as a whole.

Chapter 5 - The believer's relationship to the body in the local church.

Chapter 6 – The believer's social relationships and the protection of the armor of God.

In Eph. 5:1-17, the walk of the believer is dealt with, and the spiritual condition of the believer is made paramount (5:18).

Verse 5:19 refers to the spiritual expression of the believer who is growing in Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. Singing is the soul expression of the Christian, who sings in association with other like-minded people. He sings psalms, which are the Old Testament songs. He sing hymns, songs of praise to God. He sings spiritual songs, songs directed to people that praise, exhort, challenge, warn.

In Colossians, the context of chapters 1 and 2 is that we are complete in Christ, and chapter 3 deals with the overt walk of the believer.

Col. 3:12-15 describes the relationship of believers with each other. Verse 3:16 describes the believer with doctrine (3:16a) expressing that doctrine by teaching, admonishing, and singing with grace (psalms, hymns, spiritual songs). Verse 3:17 shows the overall motive and purpose for all activity.

In both of these passages singing is the expression of Christians in a local church and has certain characteristics.

- The person singing is a mature believer, filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
- Singing is preceded by "the word of Christ dwelling in you richly" (Col. 3), Bible truth in the soul
- In Eph. 5 singing is an expression of the soul toward God, and the emphasis is on the proper attitude of the soul

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- In Col. 3, the singing is an expression of doctrine in the soul expressed toward other people who benefit from it.
 - In Col. 3:16, we see the two things that singing accomplishes with respect to other believers in the congregation. It is a teaching tool, and it is an admonishing tool.
 - Therefore, singing is used for praise to God, teaching of each other, and warning, encouraging, or exhorting each other.
 - In both passages, singing is done “unto the Lord”; although it will benefit the congregation, the Lord will be glorified.

It is very important, as well, to point out what Christian singing **is not**.

- Singing is not the measure of the spirituality or vigor of a local church. The filling of the Spirit is necessary for proper singing; but singing is no proof of the filling of the Spirit.
- Singing in a local congregation is not designed to be used to create a mood for the soul. It is rather an expression of the mental attitude of the soul created by applied Bible truth in a believer who is filled with the Spirit, occupied with Christ, living in the Word.
- Singing is not measured by the amount of zeal employed, but by the understanding that accompanies it. (See above 1 Cor. 14:15).
- Spiritual singing is not designed to give a Christian a good feeling. If it is praise, then it is directed to God. If it is teaching, it is designed for learning. If it is admonishment, it is designed for warning, comfort, challenge, motivation, etc.
- Singing is not the primary function in a worship service. Spirituality and doctrine are the primary issues.
- Singing is not an adequate motive for attending church. The teaching of the Word of God is the only thing that makes singing either valid or meaningful.

The History of Modern Hymns

Hymns, or odes, have been known from the beginning of written history. A tablet dating 800 BC contains a Sumerian hymn about the creation.

A large number of Christian hymns, some still used today, were written by such early Church Fathers as John of Damascus and Ambrose of Milan. Toward the end of the Middle Ages there again arose a demand for congregational singing, first expressed in spiritual songs and carols. During the Renaissance (1501), the first recognized modern hymn was published at Prague for the Moravian Brethren.

Martin Luther and his followers created a large body of chorales which rank among the finest of congregational hymns today. Under John Calvin at Geneva, the musical reformation developed hymns based on metrical paraphrases of the Psalms, prepared in French and later translated into German for the Reformed Church in Germany.

In England, the hymns of the congregations were limited almost entirely to Psalms prepared by Thomas Steinhold and John Hopkins from 1549 to 1562. These continued to be the most important body of English hymns until about 1696.

Evangelical hymnology began at the end of the 17th Century. In the Lutheran Church, the Pietist movement started a new wave of hymn writing. In England, John and Charles Wesley began to write what later became the most popular hymns in the English language.

John Wesley's first *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* was published in 1737 in Charlestown, South Carolina. His brother Charles wrote more than 6,500 hymns.

Isaac Watts, another English hymn writer of about the same period, wrote *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707 to 1709) and has been called the creator of the modern English hymn.

Reformation hymns were written with no particular tune in mind. A musician would write music that would fit the meter of the words being sung, and the tunes given to the lyrics were themselves given certain names and designations.

The common ingredient to all hymns of the Reformation churches and the Christian churches that followed was that all hymns were either actual Bible passages or paraphrases of Bible passages.

Descriptions of Some Familiar Hymns

Are You Weary, Heavy Laden

- **Background:** Written by Stephen the Sabaite, a nephew to John of Damascus. John had been tutored by a slave who had later been freed, and both retired to a monastery in the wilderness of Judea. Stephen was taken with them to the monastery, and after the death of his uncle and the slave, Stephen wrote this hymn. It was later recreated by Dr. Neale in 1862 combining the experience of Stephen and himself in the sons.

Doctrines portrayed:

- Eternal rest given by Christ
- Sufferings of Christ portrayed
- Kingship of Christ
- Acceptance of Christ
- Blessings of Christ
- **Applications:** Comfort and fellowship because of the undeserved suffering of Christ. It is a hymn of praise.

Scriptural Basis: Matt. 11:28; John 6:39; Mark 13:31.

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

- **Background:** Written by Elizabeth Clephane near the end of her life in 1869. She had a glimpse of her eternal future in a better land and could imagine her footprints leading to that better goal (Dying Grace concept).

Doctrine:

- Christ, the Rock of salvation in a weary land of sin
 - The sufferings of Christ for sins
 - Unworthiness of man (Grace)
 - Blessings received from the death of Christ
 - Eternal love of God
 - Scripture basis: Matt. 27:36
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Blest Be The Tie That Binds

- Background: This hymn was written by John Fawcett who was a pastor in a small Yorkshire village. He was planning to leave his small church and take a larger and wealthier church in London. But he and his wife could not bear to leave the people who were so close to them. So they stayed, and Fawcett wrote this hymn as an expression of the love of the brethren.

Doctrine:

- Christian Love, verse 1
- Prayer, verse 2
- Responsibilities within the Body, verse 3
- Doctrine of Goodbyes and Hellos, verse 4
- Scripture: 1 John 1:7; John 13:34,35

Breathe On Me, Breath of God

- Background: Written by Edwin Hatch in 1886. He wrote from his soul what he imagined that the disciples in the Upper Room had felt when Jesus was speaking to them; he thought that Christ at that time breathed the Holy Spirit on them.
- Doctrine: The following doctrinal errors are apparent in this song.
- We do not have to ask for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit indwells us permanently from the moment of salvation. The Spirit fills us upon condition of our confession of sin.
- The song refers to the filling of the Spirit, but the principle of confession is not mentioned.
- The concept of the cleansing of the Holy Spirit at confession is confused with the process of edification (Verse 2)
- The issue of outward production in Christianity is confused in verse 3 with the concept of fiery manifestations which showed up only on the Day of Pentecost.
- The song puts the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit as something in the future (verse 4), so it lacks emphasis on the assurance of the believer as having possession of eternal life (see Ephesians 1:13,14)

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

- Background: Written by Charles Wesley out of a desire to elevate man's thinking by the inspiration of poetry. The message is doctrinal application and reveals a sense of victory and assurance which we do not always see in Wesley's somewhat somber background.
 - Doctrines:
 - Christ's resurrection calls for men and angels to rejoice
 - Death of Christ on the Cross is evidence of His love and that He has won the battle. His resurrection overcame death and provides a release for Old Testament saints. This is correct if it is understood that this release occurs just preceding the Millennial reign of Christ.
 - Christ as the King, alive, died once for salvation.
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- Salvation is for all who believe (Although Wesley apparently did not believe in universal salvation.)
- Scripture: 1 Cor. 15:55-57

Come, Thou Almighty King

- Background: Authorship attributed to Charles Wesley, but real author is unknown. During Revolutionary War days, it was introduced in a Long Island, NY, church by a group of American patriots when a band of British soldiers demanded that the congregation sing "God Save the King." Instead, the church sang "Come, Thou Almighty King."
- Doctrines:
- Sovereignty of God the Father and the Kingship of Christ, verse 1
- Incarnation of Christ, verse 2
- Holy Spirit, verse 3
- Doctrine of the Trinity, verse 4
- Application: This is a true devotional hymn, well balanced to render worship, praise, and self exhortation. It is a prayer of the heart that the three persons of the Godhead may exercise control on the one who is singing, that he may be able to praise God in fullness.
- Scripture: Psalm 51:15

Crown Him With Many Crowns

- Background: Written by Matthew Bridges when he and a group of others left the Church of England and joined Roman Catholicism. The original title was *The Song of the Seraphs*, one of the poems found in a volume called *The Passions of Jesus*.
- Doctrines:
- Verse 1: kingship of Jesus Christ in eternity; the crowning of Christ, victorious and ruling; Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God
- Verse 2: Christ, the son of God in eternity past; Christ, the son of man in time; Christ the faithful high priest
- Verse 3: Christ, the resurrected one; Christ, the one who conquered death of us
- Verse 4: Christ, in a human body, yet glorified; Christ the eternal one worthy of praise for all eternity
- Scripture: Rev. 19:12

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

- Background: Written by John Greenleaf Whittier in 1872, the setting of this song is actually another poem, *The Brewing of Soma*, referring to the brewing of a terrible storm. Whittier wrote this hymn in contrast to the great tumult and destruction of such a storm. It reveals the deep calm and peace which stills the souls of those who hear the message of the Gospel and respond to it in faith.
- Doctrine: Bible doctrines are not clearly portrayed in this song...

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- The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God is not clear in verse 1.
 - The doctrine of forgiveness is not correctly described. It is portrayed as being asked for rather than as a result of confession of sin.
 - Doctrines of Faith and Obedience are weakly alluded to in verse 2.
 - Doctrines of Peace, Stability, Depression are expressed in a general way in verse 3.
 - Misuse of the concept of prayer in verse 4 asking God to manifest some overt expression to teach spiritual lessons through natural phenomena.
 - Scripture: Ostensibly 1 Kings 19:11,12; Isa. 30:15; Mark 1:17,18; Phil. 4:7

Fairest Lord Jesus

- Background: This is a German hymn written in the 17th Century. Also called the Crusaders Hymn, but there's no proof crusaders ever sang it. Published in America by Richard Willis in 1850. The "fairness" is associated with Jesus as a boy of age 12 and with His growth in wisdom and stature.
- Doctrine:
- Jesus as Ruler of universe and nature
- Jesus, the perfect Son of God and Perfect Son of Man
- Jesus, greater than the angels
- Doctrine of Salvation which brings joy and gladness to the sinner.
- Scripture: Song 5:16; Isa. 60:2,3

Faith of Our Fathers

- Background: Written by Frederick Faber in 1849, probably as a result of being acquainted with many who had died for their faith in Christ. This song has long been a hymn of Christian loyalty and was closely connected with the early faith of the Fathers who found America.
- Doctrine:
- Faith as a quality that never dies; faith lives on in the hearts of men regardless of the circumstances
- Undeserved Suffering
- Dying Grace
- Evangelization, "winning the nations"
- Liberty, only through the Word
- Scripture: Heb. 11:1,13,16; 1 Tim. 6:12

Glory Be to the Father

- Background: Part of this hymn dates back to the time of the apostles and post-apostolic fathers. It is called the Lesser Doxology. The second part was written in 529 AD and is
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called the Greater Doxology. Sung in many churches after sermons and prayers and at the dedication of churches.

- Doctrine:
- Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit
- Praise
- Immutability
- Eternity
- Scripture: Jude 25

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

- Background: Written by John Newton when he was a slave ship captain. He had been taught the Word of God as a child but he forsook those teachings and became a rough sailor. After a vicious storm at sea, he turned to study the Word again and eventually entered the ministry. This hymn was written in 1779 from this background.
- Doctrine:
- Verse 1: the Church pictured as a prepared city; the Word of God; the Rock; Salvation and Victory
- Verse 2: Family relationship; Grace
- Verse 3: Leadership; Eternal purpose of God
- Scripture: Psalm 87:3; 46:4; Rev. 21:2

God of Our Fathers

- Background: Written by Rev. Daniel Roberts as a U. S. Centennial hymn to be sung on the 4th of July in 1876. This was an expression of praise to God for victory received for our nation and as a memorial to it.
- Doctrine:
- God the omnipotent Creator
- Divine Institutions; God related to our forefathers
- Verse 2: God related to the leadership of the nation; the basis for law in a nation
- Verse 3: God as national preserver; God's grace and provision
- Verse 4: The Christian Way of Life in trouble, labor, toil
- Scripture: Psalm 44:1-3,8

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

- Background: Written by Charles Wesley in 1739. The hymn was revised, and some obsolete words were put into better style, by a Mr. Kelly, Wesley's book steward.
 - Doctrine:
 - Verse 1: Christ as King; Peace; Mercy; Reconciliation
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- Verse 2: Christ in eternity past; Fullness of time; virgin birth of Christ, Incarnation; Hypostatic Union
 - Verse 3: Christ as Prince of Peace; Christ our Righteousness; resurrection; the New Birth
 - Scripture: Isa. 9:6; Luke 2:13,14

He Leadeth Me

- Background: Written by Joseph Gilmore during the darkest hours of the Civil War (1862). He was attending Brown University and Newton Theological Institution and was asked to occupy the pulpit for a couple of weeks at the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia. He wrote this hymn from Psalm 23, which he had given as an exposition at a mid-week service.
- Doctrine:
- Verse 1: Divine guidance, from the standpoint of comfort
- Verse 2: doctrine of National Disaster and pressure with divine guidance
- Verse 3: One Day at a Time; Status Quo
- Verse 4: Dying Grace; Eternity
- Scripture: Psalm 23:1-3; Rev. 7:17

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

- Background: Written by Reginald Heber in 1827. He attended Oxford University and received honors for his Latin verse. He was the vicar at Hadnet for 16 years and wrote many hymns for special Sundays of the church year.
- Doctrine:
- Verse 1: Holiness of the Godhead; Worship; Mercy of God; Trinity
- Verse 2: Worship in Eternity; Angelic Worship of Christ; Immutability of God
- Verse 3: Sin and Darkness; sinfulness of Man; attributes of God
- Verse 4: Sovereignty of God; Omnipotence; Creation

How Firm a Foundation

- Background: Not much known about the origins of this song. Possibly written by Robert Keene in 1787
 - Doctrine:
 - Verse 1: Completed Canon; Christ as Refuge of the soul
 - Verse 2: Fear and its remedy; provision for the believer in time; Omnipotence of God
 - Verse 3: Undeserved Suffering and Sorrow; Testing
 - Verse 4: Testing; sufficiency of Grace; refinement of faith through testing
 - Verse 5: Eternal Security
 - Scripture: Isa. 43:1,2; Heb. 13:5
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Mystery

The Mystery Doctrines

The word "mystery" in the New Testament refers to the doctrine which is specific for the Church Age. It is called "the mystery" because these things were never revealed in Old Testament times.

Paul states in Rom 16:25-26, Col 1:25-26 and Eph 3:3-6 that this mystery is now revealed. Especially in the Ephesians 3 passage, he points out that there is no excuse for ignorance. Ignorance of what the Bible says is the greatest occupational hazard for a Christian believer.

Ignorance of the plan of God causes a believer to make wrong assessments in life, to establish wrong priorities, to make wrong decisions, and fail to solve problems correctly. The many New Testament commands to "grow in knowledge", to "grow in Christ", to "be edified", to "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus", are pleas by the holy apostles to us Christians to overcome our ignorance with knowledge of Bible doctrine.

The content of the mystery doctrine was first prophesied by our Lord Jesus Christ during His life on earth, in John 14:20 and Acts 1:5-8.

None of the following mystery doctrines were known to the Old Testament writers of Scripture:

- The baptism of the Holy Spirit with its results
- The Union of a Christian with Jesus Christ (Positional Truth)
- The new spiritual organization called the family of God
- The unique plan of God with its precisely correct procedures
- The equal privilege and equal opportunity of every Christian to execute God's plan
- Our portfolio of assets, "all blessings in heavenly places in Christ"
- The unique commissioning of Christians as priests and ambassadors
- The indwelling in each Christian of each member of the Trinity

The main job of pastors, teachers, elders is to communicate mystery doctrines. Communicating Bible truth is the primary focus of the command to elders in 1 Peter 5:2 to "Feed the flock of God which is among you..."

1 Cor 4:1, "Let a person regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."

1 Cor 2:7, "But we communicate God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden assets which God predestined before the ages to our glory."

1 Tim 3:9, "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."

So it is the pastor's job to uphold the mystery, to inculcate, to repeat and teach the mystery.

Etymology and Historical Context

The Greek word (**musterion**) means "mystery". This noun had originally been used in reference to the secrets of ancient mystery cults. Paul used it in technical, theological sense to indicate that the Church Age doctrine was totally unknown in Old Testament times. This noun is generally in the plural, referring to a number of doctrines not known in the Old Testament.

This noun was originally used of the ancient fraternities during the 7th through 4th centuries throughout ancient Greece which employed secret doctrines and secret ceremonies. Only those who were initiated into the fraternity knew the mystery doctrine or their secrets.

Some of the famous mystery cults included Elusis adopted by Athens. Isis, the cult of Egypt, spread to Corinth and included as one of its initiates the famous doctor Opulais. The mystery sorority of Dionysus for women only included dancing, drinking, drugs, ecstasies, madness, lesbianism, ritual shouting, and human sacrifice. The mystery cult of Mythis was for men only; the male worshippers of Sybille castrated themselves in the frenzy of the rites.

The Orphic mystery cults centered around the singer Orpheus; it was adopted as a mystery system called Orphic theology. It emphasized purification, and the means whereby the soul might escape the body and ascend into the realm of the blessed. A tremendous amount of human sacrifice was related to these cults.

The mystery cults of the ancient world were based on Greek, Egyptian, and Roman mythology. Most of these mystery fraternities were related to the gods or goddesses of the underworld like Dimetre, Dionysus, Sybille, Adonis, Isis. They are related to the growth of crops: they die in the winter, come back in the spring. Thus, human sacrifices were offered in the winter so that in the spring everything would come back.

Every Hellenistic fraternity had secret doctrines and cultic rites in which the destinies of the gods were portrayed, and those initiated were supposed to share the fate of these gods.

Therefore, a vocabulary was developed in the Attic Greek.

The Greek word (**muew**) means to be initiated into the mysteries of the fraternity. This initiation involved teaching someone the secrets and doctrines of the fraternity which were never to be revealed to outsiders. So to be initiated meant to learn so as to pass the test, so that you know what your fraternity stood for.

The Greek word (**muste**) referred to those who were initiated, to those who persevered until they actually learned all the fraternity doctrine.

The word (**mustikos**) was used for the secret rites of the doctrines that had to be learned. So all the doctrines were called (mustikos).

The word (**musterion**) came down into the Koine and is the word used in the New Testament. (**musterion**) refers to the content of the doctrine, the actual principles and points that had to be learned.

(**musterion**) was used to describe the false doctrines of these ancient Greek fraternities. But the apostle Paul took this noun away from the Greek fraternities and gnostic cosmology and gave it, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, a Biblical definition which stands in the Word of God forever. It now becomes a part of our vocabulary.

While most of the attic Greek words remained in the realm of demonism, false doctrine, cults, promiscuity, human sacrifice, yet our noun (**musterion**) is a Biblical word used twenty-three times in the New Testament. Paul uses it twenty-one times.

Jesus Christ used the noun for the first time when He first presented Church Age doctrine to the disciples in Mt 13:11 and Mk 4:10-11. A parable is a story about some common event designed to teach something. The disciples were trying to understand why our Lord taught in the form of parables. Our Lord answered in Mt 13:11, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [unbelievers] it has not been given."

Col. 1:26-27; Rom 16:25-26

Negative Volition

The Apostle Paul issued a stern warning to mature Christian believers living at Ephesus when he told them to beware of falling into a state of indifference to, or antagonism to, the Word of God. He stated that if they were to become negative to the Lord's teachings, their lives would very quickly become indistinguishable from those of unbelievers in terms of fruitfulness and Christian character.

Ephesians 4:17-19, "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity (emptiness) of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

The "darkness" referred to in these verses begins with a negative disposition toward the Word of God. This volitional decision not to follow the Scriptures leads immediately to a breakdown in the faith system of understanding divine viewpoint. There is a cessation in the spiritual growth process; and there is actually a total reversal in progress in the Christian life (backsliding, or reversion).

As a result of the lack of divine viewpoint in the soul, the negative person begins to entertain human standards, human criteria, human doctrine, human programs -- these things, plus the full gamut of Satanic doctrine, are substituted for the plan of God. The further result is subjectivity, unhappiness, and deep frustration in trying to live by techniques which do not work.

These conditions lead to a frantic search for happiness through details of life such as riches, friendships, possessions, human approbation, personal influence and power, and so forth. The believer on this treadmill is a slave to these details of life rather than being a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. While the believer thus engaged is still "in Christ" positionally, he is actually no better off than an unbeliever as far as this life is concerned. In fact, he is destined to be far unhappier than the unbeliever, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

The time, energy, and emotional commitments to this person's search for happiness lead to further isolation from the teachings of the Word of God. He is spending maximum effort trying to find happiness through other means. Thus, the very method for reversing the downward trend is ignored!

During this process, neuroses and psychoses are being developed, aggravated by the self-induced misery which accompanies chronic and unmitigated sins of the mind such as pride, jealousy, envy, vindictiveness, worry, fear, mental adultery, implacability, and the like, from which there is no relief outside of the plan of God.

Because of these sin patterns, divine discipline is compounded daily. This believer has a horrible life composed of (1) his own failures, (2) doubled and re-doubled chastisement, (3) his self-induced unhappiness, and (4) the fact that he has no defense against the attacks of Satan and his demons. His human "righteousness" (-r) has replaced the divine righteousness (+R) of God. But this whole miserable situation is avoidable, as you will see with further study.

Occupation with Christ

Introduction

The Lord has made available many provisions for living according to His plan and growing in Christ. These provisions are known variously as "divine operating assets", "techniques for Christian living", "problem solving devices", and so forth.

These provisions are part of the great store of blessings which God has already made available to us in Christ.

Eph. 1:3, "And has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

These provisions include:

- Confession of Sin
- The Filling of the Holy Spirit
- Faith-Rest - the ability to trust God and to enjoy His peace
- Orientation to Grace
- Personal Love for God
- Impersonal Love for Mankind
- Joy - the happiness of God which does not depend on people, circumstances, or things
- A personal destiny shared with all in God's royal family

This article deals with the subject of Occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ, under the following headings:

1. What is Occupation with Christ
2. Why a Christian Needs to be Occupied with Christ
3. The Bible Commands Regarding Occupation with Christ
4. Mechanics - How to be Occupied with Christ
5. The Results of Occupation with Christ

What is Occupation with Christ

Occupation with Christ is a mental attitude by which a Christian believer views all things in life with the Lord Jesus Christ in mind.

Occupation with Christ is love for the Son, the 2nd Person of the Trinity, therefore it is the expression of love for God. The Bible commands us to love God, with all our heart, soul and mind. Being occupied with Christ is a great part of our love for God. Therefore, this concept is one of the most important spiritual functions in the Christian life.

Love for God, and Occupation with Christ, results from learning, digesting, and applying Bible truth. The Bible describes the lifestyle of wisdom and the path to spiritual maturity through the filling of the Holy Spirit and growth in Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ is invisible to us because He is in heaven, seated at the right hand of God. He will not become visible to us until we see Him when He returns. So, loving Christ requires a system of communications which is based on thought. The system is the Word of God, God's thoughts and God's words, guarded in the Scripture. There is no other accurate record of the mind of Christ, divine viewpoint, apart from what is contained in the Bible.

Therefore, we can only come to love Jesus Christ, to be occupied with Christ, through learning the Word of God and making His thoughts our thoughts.

1 Cor. 2:16, For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

This love for Jesus Christ can only come about through applied Bible truth.

Eph. 3:19, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.

1 Pet. 1:8, and though you have not seen Him, you love Him [occupation with Christ], and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

Joy and occupation with Christ always go together, you can't have one without the other. The glory with which you are filled is Bible truth, and this emphasizes the fact that you have come to know Christ through perception and application of the Word of God.

Difference Between Indwelling of Christ and Occupation with Christ

The Indwelling of Christ is not an experience. Every Christian, whether a novice or advanced believer, is indwelt by Christ, has been since the point of salvation, and always will be. You find this teaching in John 14:20; Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27; and 1 John 2:24.

Christ indwells believers for a number of reasons: (1) as a sign that a Christian is a member of God's royal family, (2) as a guarantee of the blessings which we have for time and eternity, (3) as a guarantee of eternal life and a life after death in the presence of God, (4) as a motivation for us to stay in the plan of God, especially when we experience suffering.

Occupation with Christ, though, is one of the processes leading to Christian maturity, and not all believers experience this. Occupation with Christ is the focus of all worship. When you worship God "in spirit and in truth" you are occupied with Christ.

Occupation with Christ is the main motivation in a Christian's life. And it is the prime solution to all the problems of life. Only positive believers who choose to follow the plan of God are occupied with Christ.

The following are expressions of the process of being occupied with Christ. Notice in each case how the Christian is involved in a thought and decision process leading to occupation with Christ.

"Christ being formed in you..." (Gal. 4:19)

"Christ at home in your hearts..." (Eph. 3:17)

"Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death" (Phil. 1:20).

Occupation with Christ makes an issue out of knowledge of the Word of God, setting right priorities, being involved and active in the plan of God, and glorifying God during a Christian's lifetime.

Characteristics of Occupation with Christ

1. Jesus Christ is God; so, occupation with Christ is the greatest expression of love toward God, the objective of all Christians.
Deut. 6:5, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart..."
 2. Occupation with Christ becomes the means for making great decisions with an impact on history.
Heb. 11:27, "Moses gave up the crown of Egypt. He became strong under pressure, for he saw the invisible One."
 3. Occupation with Christ begins as the believer moves toward spiritual maturity, Col. 3:15-17.
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4. Occupation with Christ glories Him, Eph. 3:17-21
5. Occupation with Christ means that human beings are not raised on pedestals, Phil. 3:7,8.
6. The means of continuing to be occupied with Christ is the daily learning and application of Bible teaching while under the control of the Holy Spirit, Jer. 9:23,24.
7. Occupation with Christ is a pastor's prime motivation to teach the Bible so that believers grow in Christ, Heb. 6:10.
8. Occupation with Christ is related to victory in spiritual warfare with Satan and his angels. With your mind in the right place, you are confident of victory, Col. 3:1,2.

The Need for Occupation with Christ

Psalm 118:9 tells us, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes." If you take refuge in the Lord, you stop expecting things from people. Your fellowship with God solves the problems that you have with people, and makes your relationships with people far better.

A person is seldom treated the way he wants to be treated, or loved the way he wants to be loved. Outside of God's plan, this can cause frustration and instability.

This frustration becomes a major motivation in life and leads people on a frantic search for fellowship with people, instead of fellowship with God. Until a person becomes stabilized in his thinking, by occupying himself with Christ, he will be very unstable. People select their companions, their spouses, even their churches, based on the desire to be loved and treated properly.

Most of the time, people don't find what they are looking for, so they become bitter, and indulge themselves in jealousy, envy, vindictiveness, hatred, and revenge, and are very disappointed in all categories of life.

Occupation with Christ brings about a change in priorities in a Christian's life. Proper focus on Christ takes care of the problems of friendships, romance, marriage, business, or social life, and the problems that are caused by constant friction with people in all situations. Love for God and for Christ takes the place of frustration and bitterness with people.

Impersonal love, which is the professional attitude of a mature believer toward all people, provides a capacity for wonderful relationships with people in Christian fellowship, friendship, and marriage.

The Problems of Focusing on Self, People, Things

Jer. 17:5,6 Thus says the Lord, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord. For he will be like a bush in the desert, and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant."

Three great problems develop through failure to be occupied with Christ. The first problem is to have a focus on self. This is arrogance, or an overestimation of one's self. When you are indignant, or offended, or angered by the way you are treated, your eyes are on yourself. You are frustrated and bitter, and you become vengeful. You make bad decisions from a position of weakness.

The second problem of wrong focus is to have one's eyes on people. We tend to put our trust in people in many different relationships. We think people are causing our problems, and we look to other people to solve our problems. We try to find people who are compatible, but are always be disappointed in them.

There is nothing wrong with having relationships with people. In fact, they are unavoidable. But we will always be disappointed by people until we have a personal love for God, occupation with Christ, and an impersonal love for all people. This spiritual outlook is the source of pure joy and the enjoyment of a personal sense of eternal accomplishment.

You can't change other people, even your spouse. When you try, it only intensifies the problem. What you are doing is making an issue out of yourself instead of Christ's teaching. The only person you can change is yourself; and you cannot do that by executing some sort of psychological program for your life. Personal change comes only through growth in Christ and using the assets that God has provided for solving the problems of life.

The third problem caused by failure to be occupied with Christ is a focus on things. Sometimes when you're not being treated properly, you decide to sublimate in some way by buying something, going somewhere, seeking out recreation. If you can't get away, or you can't afford your dream package, you spend your life filled with fantasy or wanderlust.

Occupation with Christ provides a new focus on life, away from self, people, and things. When you have spiritual self-esteem, it doesn't matter how you are treated, whether you are loved or not loved, or whether you get what you want. It is your fellowship with Christ that counts!

God is perfect and can only treat you within the scope of His perfection. Within God's plan, you will be treated in a manner that is most beneficial to you, with the proper combination of pleasure and suffering, joy and sorrow, social life and solitude, a combination of blessing and testing to bring you to maturity.

So, how you are treated by people, or by life itself, is no longer an issue. You are living a life of love for Christ as your motivational solution. You have impersonal love for people as part of your functional integrity. The Lord gives you victory over hurt, anger, hatred, frustration, or antagonism toward people, even in the midst of some of the greatest expressions of frustration.

You have yourself been changed through the Word of God. You can pass all forms of testing without being destroyed. You are well positioned to conduct a powerful personal ministry for Christ, being free from the self-generated problems to which most people are subject.

The Bible Commands Us to be Occupied with Christ

Occupation with Christ is commanded by God; it is not an option. If you are going to live the Christian life according to God's plan, you must come to the place where you are occupied with Christ.

Deut. 6:5 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

This verse shows that it is God's will that we be absorbed with Him in our whole being: heart, soul, and might. This means the Word of God must be our top priority. To love God - to love the Lord Jesus Christ - we must know Him. We learn about Christ, the Living Word, through the Bible, the written Word. The written Word and the Living Word eventually become our main focus in life. A Christian cannot enter spiritual adulthood (maturity) without this dual priority in life.

Christians who are not occupied with Christ will always be novices, spiritual immature, and dabblers in the faith.

Heb. 12:2, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus Christ is the author and perfecter of our faith (our doctrine). Furthermore, the Bible is the “mind of Christ”, the actual thinking of Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16)

The word “joy” in Heb. 12:2 refers to the happiness of the Lord Jesus as he endured the suffering of the Cross, when He was being judged for our sins. We don’t usually think of happiness associated with Christ’s suffering, but this was the pure joy, in Christ’s case, of his being 100% occupied with the Father and with His plan.

1 Pet. 3:15, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

This verse is a command to be occupied with Christ. The “heart” is the place in the soul where wisdom and applied Bible knowledge reside. We “sanctify” Christ in our hearts by having maximum understanding and application of Bible truth. By consistent learning of the Word, under conditions of spiritual fellowship (control of the Holy Spirit), a believer sanctifies Christ as Lord in the heart.

Mechanics - How To Be Occupied with Christ

You have probably already seen that occupation with Christ is accomplished through having regular interaction with the Word of God. The #1 priority is concentration on Bible truth, and organizing one’s life around that #1 priority. When you do that, you are concentrating on Christ, you are occupied with Christ.

To concentrate on the Word, you must receive consistent accurate teaching from a pastor-teacher. In Eph. 4:11-16, we see that the method God the Father has chosen to bring us to maturity as individuals, and to have a mature, productive church, is Bible teaching from men who are prepared to minister (preach) the Word of God.

You must listen and learn many things from the Bible. Some of them will seem to have no immediate application, but all Bible knowledge is important in God’s plan for your life. If you stay with it, the pieces will begin to fit together and it will all make sense.

If your top priority is Bible truth, your life will begin to change almost without your knowing it. You will learn doctrine every day, and you will begin to use the problem solving techniques that the Bible offers. Your mental attitude will be determined by the divine thinking that is coming into your soul.

When the Word of God is the main focus of your life, you come to the point of personal love for God the Father. You will have spiritual self-esteem. Once you begin to have love for God, and to be occupied with Christ, you will no longer feel threatened by things in life that once disturbed you. You have a relaxed mental attitude and spiritual joy, which is happiness supplied by God that you have regardless of circumstances, things, or the people in your life. This process is demonstrated in 1 Peter 1:6-8.

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

that the proof (genuineness) of your faith (doctrine), being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

and though you have not seen Him (Jesus Christ), you love Him (occupation with Christ), and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

In other words, you begin to function by using the Word of God during times of testing, at the same time as you are occupied with Christ. You are actually sharing the happiness of God as you go through life.

The Results of Occupation with Christ

Occupation with Christ is the principal solution to all problems that occur in life. God the Father has provided us with everything necessary for us to have a capacity for joy and a prosperity that is independent of people or circumstances. These provisions are known as “all blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). Note that the place of blessing is in Christ. All blessings, and all problem solutions begin with Occupation with Christ.

Occupation with Christ glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph. 3:19-21)

Occupation with Christ is required in order to have complete fellowship with God the Father. I John 1:6. Walking “in darkness” is the opposite of occupation with Christ.

In 2 Cor. 13:14, the “practice of truth” is fellowship with God the Father; and fellowship with God always leads to love for God.

I Cor. 1:9 indicates that fellowship with Christ is concurrent with, and necessary for, fellowship with God. Since you were “called into fellowship with His Son,” this should be your main priority in life. But this means that you have to make the Word of God your main interest in life.

Fellowship with God the Holy Spirit is also closely tied in with occupation with Christ. Phil. 2:1,2 “Therefore, if there be any encouragement in Christ, if there is any comfort of love, if there is any fellowship with the Spirit, if there is any affection mercies, complete my happiness by thinking the same things.”

God’s happiness is completed as we have fellowship with Him, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Then we can have true fellowship with people, without putting people before God. 2 Cor. 13:14 “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love for God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.” But without occupation with Christ, interaction with other people is often bad.

Occupation with Christ, therefore, eliminates the superficiality of human hero worship. Phil. 3:7,8 “...I count all things but loss except for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...”

As you become occupied with Christ, you have a stronger motivation to have a relationship with the Lord, and you change gradually from dependence on people to dependence on the Lord. You cannot change people; it is God who causes people to change, to grow up. And no one is fully grown up who is not making use of occupation with Christ. The key to God’s plan is that we no longer live for ourselves but for Christ.

2 Cor. 5:14-17 For the love of Christ continues to motivate us, in that One died for all; therefore, all have died. And He died as a substitute for all, in order that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and was resurrected...

Occupation with Christ brings spiritual self-esteem and self-confidence. You have self-esteem when you stop competing with people and undermining them. You stop slandering, gossiping, maligning, and judging other people. You have impersonal (professional) love for other people, because you are occupied with Christ. You live in grace, and you are a conduit of grace to other people, because Christ has become formed in your thinking and you love Him above everything else. The result is 2 Cor. 5:14 “The Lord for Christ motivates...”

Occupation with Christ is the Basis for Production and Blessing

It is the means by which mature believers contribute to national blessing (blessing by association). Deut. 30:15-20.

It produces courage and victory in battle, Jer. 23:10,11.

It is the basis for strength during testing, Psalm 31:23,24.

It results in great blessings, Psalm 37:4,5.

It provides strength under pressure, Heb. 11:27.

It helps the Christian avoid fatigue in the soul, Heb. 12:3.

Summary Remarks

Occupation with Christ is the ultimate function and outlook of the Christian way of life. It is the only answer to unrealistic expectations in life, which include not being treated the way you think you should be treated, and not being loved the way you think you should be loved.

Occupation with Christ is the main problem solving feature of Christian living, and it is the key to all other solutions which God's plan provides.

Occupation with Christ proceeds through three phases as the Christian grows in Christ. First, "Christ is formed in you", Gal. 4:19. As a result, "the love for Christ motivates us." 2 Cor. 5:14

Second, occupation with Christ is characterized as "Christ at home in your hearts", Eph. 3:17, resulting in "setting apart the Lord Christ in your hearts", 1 Pet. 3:15.

Third, in spiritual maturity, "Christ is exalted in my body, whether by life or by death," Phil. 1:20. The result "for me, living is Christ and dying is profit," Phil. 1:21.

Phil. 3:7-10, "Whatever things were gain to me, I have concluded them loss for the sake of Christ, I conclude all things to be loss because of the surpassing greatness of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord, because I have suffered the loss of all things, and I now consider then dung in order that I may gain Christ. And that I may be demonstrated in Him, not having my own righteousness from the law, but that righteousness which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God by faith in Christ. That I may know Him, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to Christ in the fellowship of His death."

Paul the Apostle

The apostle Paul was one of the most famous citizens of the Roman Empire and without question one of the most influential individuals in history. He was used by the Lord in his missionary and evangelistic activities to set in motion a great deal of the organization known as the Christian Church, the Body of Christ on earth, to the extent that billions of human beings have been directly or indirectly affected by his ministry. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the foundation documents for the Christian way of life, the Word of God which has changed the lives of millions.

Paul's Education

Paul was educated by his mother until the age of five. From age five to ten he studied with his father in the Hebrew scriptures and traditional writings. At the same time, being a Roman citizen and living in a Greek and Roman environment, he received a thorough education in the Greek language, history, and culture.

He was sent to Jerusalem at about the age of ten to attend the rabbinical school of Gamaliel, who was the son of Simeon the son of Hillel. Gamaliel was a most eminent rabbi who was mentioned both in the Talmud and in the New Testament (ACTS 5:24-40; 22:3). Gamaliel was called Rabban - one of only seven teachers so called. He was a Pharisee, but he rose above party prejudice. He composed a prayer against the Christian "heretics". He lived and died a Jew.

At this time, Herod was dead, and the Romans had complete control of Judea, hence, there was Roman money, language, and culture. The Jews, therefore, were inclined to cling more closely to their religion as the center of unity. [Refer to the topic: JUDEAN HISTORY]

There were two great rabbinical schools, those of Hillel and Schammai. Hillel, the grandfather of Gamaliel, held that tradition was superior to the Law. The school of Schammai despised traditionalists, especially when their teachings clashed with the writings of Moses.

The religious school of Gamaliel (Hillel) was chiefly oral and usually had a prejudice against any book but Scripture. They used a system of Scriptural exegesis, and Josephus in his writings expressed the wish to have such a power of exegesis. When school was in session, learned men met and discussed scriptures, gave various interpretations, suggested illustrations, and quoted precedents. The students were encouraged to question, doubt, even contradict.

When Paul became a Christian, his very thorough education was enormously helpful. He was able to assimilate Christian doctrines rapidly and relate them accurately to the Scripture teaching he had received. From his education, both from Gamaliel and in the desert from the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul developed a divine viewpoint attitude toward human history.

Paul knew that the existence of God can easily be perceived by anyone, that man can become aware of God, but that many men's deliberate halted this good beginning by immoral activities which accompanied their idolatry. Therefore, Paul had an intense hatred of idolatry of any kind.

Paul's teaching shows that the only reality is God. Idolatry distorts man's conception of the world and external nature. Idolatry is the enemy of mankind.

Paul knew the law of growth of human nature. As a Roman, Tarsian, Hebrew, and culturally Greek, he knew of the many distortions of the life of his society. As a nation becomes unhealthy, development is halted. Societies errors as to the nature of God and the true relation of God to man prevented nations from getting rid of their besetting evil.

The books of Acts is the chief authoritative record for the ministries of Paul and the other apostles. For a brief outline of Paul's ministry, see the CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF PAUL'S MINISTRY. The most thorough, accurate, and interesting secular work on Paul is *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, by Conybeare and Howson.

Paul, The Prisoner for the Gentiles

The Lord made Paul a missionary to the Gentiles, even revealing to him during the period of his arrest in Palestine, and during his subsequent trials before Jewish and Roman authorities, that he should "be of good cheer, for you must bear witness of Jesus at Rome."

After a considerable stay at Antioch after his second missionary journey, Paul departed and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order to strengthen the disciples (ACTS 18:23). During this time, he also gave directions for the collection for the poor in Jerusalem.

He came to Ephesus, probably in about 53 A.D. He found there twelve disciples of Apollos who had only received John's baptism and were not aware of the Holy Spirit and Church Age mysteries.

He taught three months in the synagogue in Ephesus. In the face of opposition, he took his classes to the school of one, Tyrannus, where he taught daily for two years. Exorcists were converted and books of magic were burned by the new converts. He paid a visit to Corinth, then returned to Ephesus where he wrote 1 Corinthians.

Paul left for Troas and Macedonia because of the danger in Ephesus from the silversmiths and craftsmen who made articles for the worship of Diana. (See Topic: EPHESUS) He sailed to Macedonia to meet Titus, landed at Neapolis and went to Philippi where he was “comforted by Titus.” He sent Titus to Corinth with the second Corinthian letter and instructions for completing the collection there for needy Christians.

Paul traveled through Macedonia and finally arrived at Corinth himself, staying there about three months and writing Romans. He took ship for Miletus where he met for a few days with Ephesian elders. He then sailed (island hopping to Coos, Rhodes, and Patara) to Tyre. From Tyre he sailed to Ptolemais and reached Caesarea.

Paul was warned not to visit Jerusalem. He went anyway and was warmly received by the brethren. He had an interview with James and the elders. A charge was brought against him by the Sanhedrin that “he taught all the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their sons, neither to walk after their customs.” [For a discussion of the Sanhedrin, see topic: JEWISH RELIGIOUS SYSTEM]

The Sanhedrin asked Paul to do a public act of the Law in order to prove his faith. There were four men who were to undergo the ritual associated with the Nazarite vow, and Paul was requested to put himself under that vow and to pay the costs of the other four men. He did so.

After this some Jews from Asia stirred up the people against him, charging him with bringing Greeks into the Temple. A Gentile man from Ephesus named Trophimus was with Paul, and the Jews supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple, which would have been a sacrilege. The mob took Paul to kill him, but soldiers of the Roman garrison appeared. Paul spoke to the mob in his own defense, telling of his mission to the Gentiles. They shouted “Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live.” (ACTS 22:1-23).

The Roman soldiers took Paul to the governor’s castle for interrogation by scourging, at which time Paul claimed his Roman citizenship. The next morning he was taken before the Sanhedrin, but there was no conclusion because of the dissension between the Sadducees and Pharisees. Paul was taken back to the castle for protection, and it was that night that the Lord appeared to Paul telling him to “be of good cheer.” (ACTS 23:6-10)

There arose a conspiracy among forty Jews to assassinate Paul, but Paul’s nephew brought him a warning of the plot. The Romans decided to send him to Caesarea to Felix, the procurator (governor) of Judea (ACTS 22:21ff). Before Felix, Paul was merely asked from province he had come. Five days later, the high priest Ananias and some of the Sanhedrin appeared, with Tertullus as their advocate (ACTS 24:1-9). They made charges, which Paul denied. Felix delayed the proceeding further until Claudias Lysias, the captain of the Roman troops in Jerusalem, could come to give evidence.

After a few days, Felix’ wife, Drusilla, a Jewess, wanted to see and hear Paul. Paul appeared and gave the gospel to Felix and Drusilla. Felix trembled but was unrepentant. He wanted a bribe from Paul so did not acquit him. (Drusilla died in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, AD 79.)

Felix kept Paul a prisoner in Caesarea (under loose house arrest) for two years until the arrival of Festus, the new governor. Festus wanted Paul taken back to Jerusalem, but Paul was aware of the

danger there and uttered the Latin word *Caesarem apello!* -- "I appeal to Caesar!" Festus was thus obliged to make arrangements for Paul to travel to Rome under escort.

About this time, King Agrippa II, with his sister, Berenice, came to visit Festus, the new governor. Festus pleaded ignorance of Jewish law, so Paul made his testimony before Agrippa, with the greatest of pomp and ceremony. This episode was one of the greatest defenses of the gospel ever recorded. Agrippa said, "Almost you persuade me ..."

Festus decided then that Paul was innocent or wrongdoing, and he would have let him go free if he had not appealed to Caesar.

Paul's Voyage to Rome

Paul's escort on the trip to Rome was a platoon of Roman soldiers under Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Cohort. They sailed in a coasting vessel to Adramyttium and Sidon. Paul was given liberty. The next port was Myra, from which they took ship to Italy.

They sailed to Crete, stayed at the port of Fair Havens for one month, sailed for Phoenix, and were driven on the rocks at Malta where they stayed for three months. From Malta they sailed in the vessel "Castor and Pollux" to Syracuse (Sicily) and Rhegium, the port city of the Italian province of Puteoli. From there they went to Rome on the Appian Way.

In Rome Paul dwelled in his own hired house under the supervision of a Prefect of the Praetorian Guard. He was permitted to hold meetings, and he met with Jewish elders, winning some of them to Christ. This period lasted two years, during which he wrote Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.

He was acquitted by Nero, so he was free to travel and did so. His visits were to Crete and to Asia Minor; and it is widely thought that he traveled in Spain on a missionary journey. He is thought to have been arrested again in Ephesus and taken again to Rome from there, but this time treated as a malefactor, with his friends deserting him (except for Luke and Onesiphorus). There was persecution in Rome at this time, and a campaign of terror by Nero against the Christians. Paul was condemned and executed in Rome.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Peace

The word "peace" in the Bible, from the Greek word (**eireinei**), refers to a mental attitude of tranquillity based on a relationship with God in the Christian Way of Life. It is a word which describes the result of a person's correct response to God's Grace.

The Bible uses "peace" in two ways. There is personal peace with God which comes when a person accepts Jesus Christ as Savior. Then, there is the peace of God which is available on a daily basis as the believer participates in the Christian way of life according to the Plan of God.

So, where you find peace mentioned in the Bible it refers either to the reconciliation of a Christian in salvation, as in Eph. 2:14,17, or to the mental attitude found in the believers.

2 Tim. 1:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Peace With God - Peace in Salvation

Peace with God is never available apart from Grace. The Cross of Christ is the focal point of Grace and is the source of Peace. Jesus Christ is our eternal Peace.

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Grace removed the Barrier and made peace between man and God. So, when the unbeliever responds to Grace by faith, the result is Peace.

Ephesians 2:14-18 provides a good illustration of how God made it possible for anyone to have peace with God, with special emphasis on the fact that such different types as Jews and Gentiles have been provided for.

Verse 14 deals with peace as a product of reconciliation. Verse 15 explains that the "enmity" between God and man, that which we call the Barrier, was "abolished" once and for all. Verses 16 to 18 explain that the enmity has been slain for both Jews and Gentiles so that now those who were near to God, the Jews, and those who were far off, non-Jews, have been brought into union with Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Peace in the Christian Way of Life

In our lifetime we can experience Peace on a daily basis. When the believer responds by faith to Grace, God provides many blessings which can result in great inner happiness.

Isaiah 26:3,4 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."

In the Christian Way of life, peace comes through fellowship with God and daily growth, advancement in spiritual things which brings stability, a relaxed mental attitude, orientation to the plan of God, occupation with Christ, and the ability to employ faith-rest principles in all areas of life.

READ Philippians 4:6-9

Peace, or tranquillity, precedes the enjoyment of prosperity. It is part of the preparation for prosperity. One must have Peace to have the capacity for prosperity. God may hold prosperity back until there is the capacity to enjoy it.

Acts 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied."

READ Jeremiah 29:1-7

Any loss of peace is followed by adjustment to the plan of God (confession and restoration to fellowship), faith-rest, and relaxed mental attitude, and Peace in the new situation.

The man or woman who receive grace and peace from the Lord is in perfect position for spiritual production, and reproduction.

READ James 3:13-18.

Predestination

The word "predestination" means "to appoint, to determine, or to design beforehand".

The Father, through perfect expression of His thinking, predestined His perfect plan in Christ, Eph. 1:9; 1 Pet. 1:2,20; 2 Tim. 1:9. Through Predestination, believers are guaranteed sonship (Eph. 1:5) and heirship (Eph. 1:11).

The doctrine of Predestination deals only with Christians. There is no such thing as an unbeliever being predestined to go to hell. The Christians makes a conscious decision to follow the plan of God. The unbeliever makes a conscious decision to reject the plan of God. John 3:18; 3:36. If any person accepts Christ as Savior, he will be saved.

The Biblical concept of Predestination does not conflict with human volition, but emphasizes it.

The purpose of Predestination is to relate the believer to the Plan of God through Positional Truth. Eph. 1:4,5. It is based on the foreknowledge of God, Rom. 8:29. It is an expression of God's love for those who are in union with Christ. Predestination was a sovereign decision on the part of God the Father, Eph. 1:5,11. Jesus Christ has a destiny. When we enter into union with Christ at the time of salvation, we share in that destiny.

There are five Greek words used to communicate the Biblical doctrine of Predestination. Without a knowledge of these words and the categories of truth they represent, no one can draw inferences or theological conclusions about what is being taught in the Bible on the subject.

προοριδζο (**prooridzw**) - verb, "to predestine; to predetermine". Rom. 8:28,29; Eph. 1:5,11

προτιθημι (**protithemi**)- verb, "to predetermine", Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:9. Synonym of prooridzo.

προτηεσις (**prothesis**)- noun, "a predetermined plan". The subject of Ephesians is the Prothesis of God. Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9.

God is never caught napping. He has already met every contingency with a predetermined plan of action. When we yell "Help!" to God, He doesn't have to try to think up some way to help us. He has already provided everything we need. All we have to do is learn about what God has provided and how to take advantage of it.

προγινωσκω (**proginoskw**) - verb, "to foreordain", I Pet. 1:20; Rom. 8:29; 11:2

προγνωσις (**prognosis**)- noun, "foreknowledge; a predetermined purpose", Acts 2:23; 1 Pet. 1:2. [English: prognosis]

The crucifixion of Christ is related to the Divine Decrees and the predetermined purpose of God. Acts 2:23**, 4:28, cf. I Pet. 2:4,6

All believers' suffering is related to the predetermined plan of God. In eternity past, God thought about us and predestined provisions for us for both time and eternity. Rom. 8:28,29.

God the Father predetermined the Grace concept of Propitiation, Rom. 3:25.

Predestination defines God's ultimate purpose for the believer - that we should be like the Lord Jesus Christ in His humanity, Rom. 8:29. This is called glorification, Rom. 8:30.

The born-again Jew is part of the preordained plan of God under the unconditional covenant to Israel. Therefore, the Jew of the Old Testament is not a castaway, Rom. 11:2. There is a definite relationship between Predestination and Eternal Security. Predestination provides the basis for Eternal Security.

Reconciliation

The word *reconciliation* refers to the process of changing something thoroughly and adjusting it to something else that is a standard. For example, when you adjust your watch to a time signal, you are reconciling the watch to a time standard. Or when you reconcile your checkbook, the standard to which you match it is the bank's record of your account. On rare occasions the bank must reconcile its accounts to yours.

In the Bible, reconciliation is the word used to refer to the process by which God changes human beings and adjusts them to the standard of His perfect character. Rom. 11:15 refers to the "reconciling of the world". The Greek word used here is the noun καταλλαγή (**katallagei**). This word is also used in Rom. 5:11, "...but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *reconciliation*." Note that man is not active in reconciliation and provides nothing toward reconciliation. Read also 2 Cor. 5:17-21.

Reconciliation also appears in the verb form καταλλάσσω (**katallasso**), meaning "to reconcile". It is used in the active voice in 2 Cor. 5:18 with the meaning of "reconciling someone to someone else." In this case, God reconciles us to Himself, through the Lord Jesus Christ. This verb in the passive voice means "to be reconciled" or "to become reconciled", and it is used in the case of man's relationship to God in Rom. 5:10 and 2 Cor. 5:20. The passive voice is also used in cases of reconciliation between people, as in 1 Cor. 7:11 and Matt. 5:24.

Another Greek word translated "to reconcile" is ἰλασκομαι (**hilaskomai**), meaning "to reconcile" in the sense of providing propitiation, as in Luke 18:13. It is used of the activity of the Lord Jesus Christ as High Priest in making reconciliation for His people, Heb. 2:17.

Rom. 5:6-11 points out that the whole world needs to be reconciled to God. Note the adjectives in this passage which stress this need: "ungodly", "without strength", "sinners", "enemies".

Reconciliation is an important consideration in the study of the doctrine of The Barrier. By the death of Christ on the Cross, the world is thoroughly changed in its relationship to God, Eph. 2:14-18 and Col. 1:20-22. That is, through the Cross of Christ the world is so altered in its position respecting the character and judgment of God that God does not now impute sin to human beings. The world is therefore rendered savable!

Because the position of the world before God is completely changed through the substitutionary atonement of Christ, God's attitude toward man can no longer be the same. God can now deal with souls in the light of Christ's work.

Notice that God is never said to be reconciled to man. God is immutable, so He does not change. Reconciliation is only possible in one direction. What sometimes seems to be a change in God is actually an unchanged attitude of God viewing a reconciled man. God, having now accepted Christ's work, is able to continue to be just toward man. He can now offer salvation.

A person profits from reconciliation by faith in the Gospel. Once he becomes a believer, a person can partake in all of the blessings which accompany his position in Christ, including the privileges accruing from reconciliation.

The believer, in turn, has the responsibility of becoming a minister of reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5:18-19. The truth of reconciliation is one of the key salvation doctrines to be used in witnessing to those without Christ.

Redeeming the Time

Have the Time of Your Life!

Every day that we live is a grace gift from God. We do not earn or deserve the time that God gives us in life. The only time that we have to honor God in this life on earth is the number of days He provides for us in the Christian life. The fact that we are alive each morning is a sign of God's grace and faithfulness.

James 4:13-15, Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit."

Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."

Lam. 3:20-25, Surely my soul remembers And is bowed down within me.

This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.

The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail.

They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness.

"The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him.

Every day is given us by God; therefore, every day is very important. A growing Christian thinks of every day as alike and lives one day at a time.

Rom. 14:5,6. One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.

He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

Ps. 90:12, So teach us to number our days, That we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom.

God has provided spiritual assets in the form of Bible truth to make each day count for His glory. Therefore it is important to learn God's Word every day.

Jer. 15:16. Thy words were found and I ate them, And Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts.

Matt. 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Since there is no suffering in eternity, God can only demonstrate His grace provision for suffering while we are alive on earth. The testing that we undergo gives God the Father maximum opportunity to show His grace provision while we continue to live one day at a time.

2 Cor. 12:7-10, And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself!

Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Ps. 1:1-3, How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season, And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.

Our time must be used wisely.

Eph. 5:15-17, Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of [redeeming] your time, because the days are evil.

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

1 Cor. 7:29-31, But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none;

and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess;

and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

John 11:9,10. Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.

Don't Waste Time!

A Christian wastes time when he is out of fellowship and under God's chastisement (divine discipline). Every day that you are under God's discipline is a day that you have lost.

Ps. 102:2-4, Do not hide Thy face from me in the day of my distress; Incline Thine ear to me; In the day when I call answer me quickly.

For my days have been consumed in smoke, And my bones have been scorched like a hearth.

My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, Indeed, I forget to eat my bread.

Ps. 102:23-28, He has weakened my strength in the way; He has shortened my days.

I say, "O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days, Thy years are throughout all generations.

"Of old Thou didst found the earth; And the heavens are the work of Thy hands.

"Even they will perish, but Thou dost endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing Thou wilt change them, and they will be changed.

"But Thou art the same, And Thy years will not come to an end.

"The children of Thy servants will continue, And their descendants will be established before Thee."

Ps. 90:7-9, For we have been consumed by Thine anger, And by Thy wrath we have been dismayed.

Thou hast placed our iniquities before Thee, Our secret sins in the light of Thy presence.

For all our days have declined in Thy fury; We have finished our years like a sigh.

Consummate human pride (arrogance) destroys a Christian's ability to profit from the divine provision of each day.

Prov. 27:1, Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.

Redeem the Time!

It is important to purchase time each day. Eph. 5:15-18 (above)

Days are meaningful and prosperous when there is spiritual growth through learning and applying the Word of God.

Ps. 90:14, O satisfy us in the morning with Thy lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

Jer. 15:16, Thy words were found and I ate them, And Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts.

Matt. 4:4, But He answered and said, "It is written, ' Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Each day that God provides by His grace only has meaning as it is devoted to fulfilling the plan of God.

Ps. 34:11-14, Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Who is the man who desires life, And loves {length of} days that he may see good?

Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit.

Depart from evil, and do good; Seek peace, and pursue it.

1 John 1:6-9, If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Prov. 3:1-2, My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments;

For length of days and years of life, And peace they will add to you.

A Christian's day by day life only has meaning as it is related to the principles and doctrines of God's Word.

Prov. 3:13-17, How blessed is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding.

For its profit is better than the profit of silver, And its gain than fine gold.
 She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her.
 Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor.
 Her ways are pleasant ways, And all her paths are peace.

All of the dynamics of daily living are related to Bible truth.

Ps. 25:4-6, Make me know Thy ways, O Lord; Teach me Thy paths.

Lead me in Thy truth and teach me, For Thou art the God of my salvation; For Thee I wait all the day.

Remember, O Lord, Thy compassion and Thy lovingkindnesses, For they have been from of old.

Ps. 119:96-102, I have seen a limit to all perfection; Thy commandment is exceedingly broad.

O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.
 Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, For they are ever mine.
 I have more insight than all my teachers, For Thy testimonies are my meditation.
 I understand more than the aged, Because I have observed Thy precepts.
 I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Thy word.
 I have not turned aside from Thine ordinances, For Thou Thyself hast taught me.

Prov. 23:17-19, Do not let your heart envy sinners, But live in the fear of the \Lord\ always.

Surely there is a future, And your hope will not be cut off.

Listen, my son, and be wise, And direct your heart in the way.

2 Cor. 4:16-18, Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Redemption

Redemption is a term used in the Bible to refer to the special intervention of God for the salvation of mankind. This use of the word deals with the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross in which He paid the price to “purchase” human beings and set them free from their slavery to sin. On account of Christ's substitutionary atonement, He is called the Redeemer.

There are other ideas closely related to the primary concept of redemption which relate to the necessity for redemption and its various aspects and to the effects of the ministry of God's grace in the life of the Christian believer.

Old Testament Background and Typology

Redemption of Firstborn Sons, Firstlings of the Flock, Firstfruits

The word "redemption" in the Old Testament is the translation of the Hebrew word *pädäh*, meaning "to deliver" or "to sever". It was continuously stressed to the Israelites that they belonged to Jehovah because He had redeemed them (severed them from bondage) and had provided them with the land of Canaan for them to use as a gift from God and for His glory. For this reason, all Israel owed their lives and their service to God, in effect making the whole nation a kingdom of priests, at least in spirit.

However, only Levi and the descendants of his tribe, who became known as the priestly tribe, were actually set apart for the service of the tabernacle. Everyone else from the eleven other tribes was to be redeemed, or purchased, from service by redeeming the firstborn of both men and animals.

A son was considered "firstborn" if he was the first son born to his mother. If a man had more than one wife, each wife could have a firstborn son. Each firstborn son was presented to the Lord on the 40th day after his birth and redeemed by a payment of five shekels to the priests (Num. 18:16; Ex. 13:15; Luke 2:27).

The firstlings of oxen, sheep, and goats were to be brought to the sanctuary within a year and eight days after their birth, and sacrificed (Num. 18:17). The firstborn of an ass, which was an unclean animal, was redeemed by sacrificing a sheep in its place; or, if not redeemed in this manner, was put to death itself (Ex. 13:12 ff; 34:20). Later, the law provided that the ass could be redeemed with money, the amount to be determined by the market value of the ass plus 20%, according to the priest's valuation (Lev. 27:27; Num. 18:15).

The firstfruits of the harvest were sacred to Jehovah because He is the Lord of the soil (Ex. 23:19). These were given to the priest to be presented in offering. The whole congregation was required to offer an annual thanksgiving offering at harvest time by presenting a firstfruits sheaf at the Passover. These were not to be burned but were to be given to the priests for their use, with the provision that only those priests who were ceremonially clean could eat the firstfruits. The amount of offering of firstfruits was not specified by the Law but was left to each person's discretion.

Later in Jewish history, the children of Israel began to be called the Redeemed of the Lord, after they had been set free from the Babylonian captivity (Isa. 35:9; 51:11; 62:12).

The Kinsman-Redeemer

According to the laws regarding punishment and retribution for crime, when a person was assaulted, robbed or murdered, it fell to the nearest kinsman to bring the criminal to justice and to protect the lives and property of relatives. This obligation was called "redeeming", and the man who was responsible for fulfilling this duty was known as a "redeemer" (Heb. *go-el*). The job of redeemer would fall to full brothers first, then to uncles who were the father's brothers, then to full cousins, and finally to the other blood relatives of the family (Lev. 25:48). The kinsman-redeemer of the Old Testament was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ as Redeemer. There were four requirements for the redeemer, both in the type and in Christ:

1. The redeemer must be a near kinsman. To fulfill this Christ took on human form.
 2. The redeemer must be able to redeem. The price of man's redemption was the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).
 3. The redeemer must be willing to redeem (Heb. 10:4-10). Christ was willing to be our Redeemer.
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4. The redeemer must be free from that which caused the need for redemption; that is, the redeemer cannot redeem himself. This was true of Christ, because He needed no redemption.

READ Ruth 3:9-13; 4:1-11.

The nation of Israel as a whole required a Redeemer to redeem the lands which had been taken over by foreign powers, so they looked to Jehovah to become their *go-el*. The period of exile gave an even greater force and meaning to the term "redeemer" than it had before; and the book of Isaiah contains nineteen of the thirty-three Old Testament references to God as Israel's covenant redeemer.

Redemption in the New Testament

Slavery to Sin

In the New Testament we see that all people are slaves because all are sold under sin and in spiritual bondage.

Rom. 7:14, "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin."

Acts 8:23 uses the phrase "the bond of iniquity".

READ John 8:31-36

READ Romans 6:12-18

See also Rom. 7:23; 2 Tim. 2:26; 2 Pet. 2:19.

Furthermore, all people are helplessly condemned to die.

Ezek. 18:4, "Behold, all souls are mine, saith the Lord. As the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sins, it shall die."

1 Cor. 15:22, "As in Adam all die..."

See also John 3:18, 36; Rom. 3:19; Gal. 3:10.

The Principle of Redemption

The principle of redemption, then, is the concept of bondage to the slavery of sin and freedom from its domination (John 8:31-36). To be redeemed means to be "purchased from slavery".

The Greek word λυτροω (**lutroo**), means "to release for ransom; to liberate; to redeem". It comes from the word λυω (**luo**) meaning "to loosen; to unbind; to set at liberty". It is used in -

1 Pet. 1:18,19, "Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed (lutroo) with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem (lutroo) us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The noun λυτρον (**lutron**) means "the price paid; the ransom", as in -

Matt. 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom (lutron) for many."

Jesus Christ purchased our freedom; and His blood is the payment for the redemption. Psalm 34:22; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; 1 John 1:7.

Therefore, Jesus Christ is man's Redeemer, and as such He is divinely appointed. The redemption that He brought represents both His own love and that of the Father for the whole world.

The word ἀγοράζω (**agoradzo**) means "to buy; to redeem; to acquire by paying ransom". Derived from **agora**, "marketplace".

1 Cor. 6:20, "For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." This is analogous to the OT idea in which the Israelites owed their very existence to God.

Rev. 5:9, "And they sang a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

See also 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 14:3.

The word ἐξαγοράζω (**exagoradzo**) means "to buy out of the hands of a person; to redeem; to set free".

Gal. 3:13, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree."

The word ἀπολυτροσις (**apolutrosis**) means "to dismiss for ransom paid; redemption".

1 Cor. 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Rom. 3:23,24, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Eph. 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace."

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."

Rom. 8:22,23, "For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."

Eph. 1:13,14, "In whom you also trusted, after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom after you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Some Implications of the Doctrine of Redemption

Redemption is the basis of our eternal inheritance. See Eph. 1:13,14 and Heb. 9:15 above.

Redemption is the basis of justification. Rom. 3:23, 24 (above).

Redemption includes the total forgiveness of sins; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14.

Redemption results in adoption.

Gal. 4:4–6, "But when the fullness of 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. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

The doctrine of redemption is used to orient believers in time of stress.

Job 19:25, "I know that my Redeemer liveth..."

At the point of redemption we can have peace of mind, stability, a relaxed mental attitude by knowing the doctrine and that God has paid for and provided for everything.

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 you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This is one of the Bible's most controversial verses; many systems of false religion have been built on it. The most prominent is the concept of baptismal regeneration, the idea that water baptism is required for salvation. Baptismal regeneration is the most widely taught form of salvation legalism, the idea that a person can actually do something (be baptized) to help save himself.

Any ritual involves human activity, human merit, human *works*. And water baptism is a ritual in which someone is *doing* something.

"Works," whatever they are, are not accepted by God as contributing to a person's salvation.

"For by grace are you saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8,9)

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit," (Titus 3:5)

"repent"

The English word "repent" is from the Latin, *re + poenitere*, meaning "to regret; to be sorry". The Oxford English Dictionary has the following meanings:

1. To affect oneself with contrition as regret for something done or for something inherently wrong, some fault, misconduct, sin, or other offence.
2. To feel contrition, compunction, sorrow, or regret.
3. To change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct through dissatisfaction with it or its results.

You can see that peoples' opinions of what is required for salvation is colored by which of the above definitions they chose. That is, if you choose #1 or #2 you could assume that, in order to properly repent, you must feel great sorrow or regret for your sins.

Now, regret can range from a mild regret to a life-threatening sorrow. A mild regret says, "Oh, I see I've been wrong; I'll do it the other way." A severe regret is a raging sorrow which can destroy one emotionally and physically, as from some unintentional action that harms a loved one.

So, a person may feel a tremendous regret about sin: the offense to God, the effect on others, etc. Or, a person may not know enough about sin, or its consequences, to have much regret at all. For many people, the first they hear about sin is in an evangelistic message or Bible class.

For example, someone who grows up in a permissive family in a permissive society may not know that sex outside of marriage is a sin and has very bad consequences. It takes Bible doctrine to know Sin for what it is!

Regret over past sins actually grows as one is edified, as a person gains divine viewpoint and sees real issues in life. If a believer doesn't learn about forgiveness, confession, and restoration to fellowship, he might build up a tremendous guilt complex about his past. This is why it's such a blessing to know that past sins have been forgiven. "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

Now if "repentance" is "feeling sorry for sin," then how sorry do you have to feel? Mild sorrow or raging sorrow? And how do you demonstrate this sorrow to God? These thoughts lead people into such extremes as asceticism and self-punishment of one kind or another great attempts to impress God, and other people, with the extent of one's contrition.

Another question arises from this, "Will I have to wait until the end of my life, or until I face God, to know whether my sorrow has been enough?"

And, "What about my lack of knowledge of sins? How many sins are there that I don't even know about? How much sorrow must I have about each type and variety? Must I feel as sorry for gossip as I would for murder?"

The question here, of course, is "works." Can repentance be misconstrued to support a "works" doctrine? Yes it can, *if feeling sorry is made a necessary constituent of salvation*. Just as in all forms of legalism, there is great potential here for bullying by clergy and "informed" laymen.

Definition #3, on the other hand, taken alone, indicates that repentance can be just a mental change that does not necessarily involve emotional sorrow.

To resolve these vocabulary problems, the Greek word must be studied.

The Greek for "repent" is METANOEW, which means "to change the mind; to rethink something." The cognate noun METANOIA, Rom 2:4, means "a change of mind; a conversion; a turning away." Divine viewpoint changes every bit of human viewpoint you've learned.

There is no emotion or feeling involved in this activity. Therefore, if we are going to use the English word "repent" to translate METANOEW, we must be certain that the English Definition #3 (above) is meant!

METANOEW, as an active verb, needs to have an object in context. One must change one's mind about something. You might change your mind because of an honest mistake. You bought a Ferrari and now you can't pay for it. Or, you may receive some education, and that changes your thinking about many things.

Repentance is a theological concept we study to explain the mechanics which occur at salvation.

If you have accepted Christ as Savior, at some point you changed your thinking about your sin, your relationship to God, and about the work of Christ for salvation.

Likewise, if you have studied the Bible as a Christian, the Word of God has led you to change your mind about many things.

That you put off concerning the former manner of life the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

And that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. 4:22-24)

When you decide to commit a sin, you are certainly not thinking divine viewpoint. When you are convicted by the Word of God, and by the Holy Spirit, you have an opportunity to adjust your thinking to God's point of view. This leads to your confession, "expressing the same viewpoint" as God. Before you confess your sin, you first undergo a change of thinking about the sin. METANOEW precedes HOMOLOGEW.

Repentance is *not* a turning away from sin in order to accomplish salvation. A person *is* guilty of sin; he *does* need forgiveness; and he *should* stop sinning. But, victory over sin is a process of the Christian life.

An unbeliever cannot have victory over sin. A person can turn over a new leaf, clean up in a few surface areas, spruce up the facade a little. But who would a person be satisfying. One might fool himself and others that he'd done enough if he didn't have a very good idea of what God's demands actually are.

Sin is too pervasive; there are too many sins. Mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, open and public sins. You can't turn away from all your sins, even temporarily.

You can see what a vicious circle the legalist is in, the one who thinks he can lose his salvation. If it were possible to lose salvation, assuming someone were successful in earning it in the first place, salvation could never be maintained.

Let's compare Acts 2:38 and Acts 16:31, in which the Philippian jailer is told simply to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

We can see that "believe" (PISTEUW) and "repent" (METANOEW) are virtually synonymous in their application.

Both require focusing one's attention on Christ.

Both require positive volition to the Gospel.

Both require acceptance of divine viewpoint regarding Christ and His work on the Cross.

Both mean that you have information that you did not have before and that you accept a point of view.

Both mental attitudes are non-meritorious, that is, neither involves any sort of works.

The Jew, however, is going to have a more wrenching experience as he turns from his religion to Christ. "Repentance" means that, however much he loves his religion and follows his religious practices, he no longer trusts in the works of his religion to save him. He trusts Christ.

The Philippian jailer has no such hold over his mind. He accepts Christ readily, with no religious reservations. He is simply a man in trouble grasping at a straw which turns out to be a lifeboat.

When witnessing, you only give information, you do not try to get the unbeliever to "repent." That is the function of God the Holy Spirit using the Gospel information you have provided. God the Holy Spirit will encourage people to change their mind about Christ. Whether a person actually does repent depends on that person's volition when hearing the Gospel message.

Regret in the New Testament

There is a Greek word for “regret,” METAMELOMAI, which should always be translated “regret,” never “repent,” because it has an emotional connotation. It means to feel sorry for something you have done.

It is used to express regret for a previous action (Matt. 21:29).

It describes the attitude of Judas Iscariot (Matt. 27:3) He regretted what he had done to our Lord, but he never repented, he never believed in our Lord for salvation.

It is used for God having no regrets about saving people and giving spiritual gifts in the Church Age, (Rom. 11:29).

Likewise, the Father has no regrets regarding the appointment of Jesus Christ as our High Priest, (Heb. 7:21).

Illustrations of Repentance

Exo. 13:17. The Jews were not mentally prepared to fight for their freedom. God knew they would change their minds, say that slavery is better, and attempt to go back to Egypt, if they saw war coming. So here repentance means to come up to a new set of facts, be influenced by these facts rationally, and then to retreat.

Jer. 8:3-6, speaking of Judah. When you fail, you don't quit or give up. You get up and move on. When a person doesn't repent with regard to salvation (unbeliever), or Bible doctrine (believer), then your lifestyle is out of control due to evil in your life.

Believing in Christ: Repentance for Salvation

Salvation repentance is that change of mind which occurs when a person understands and believes the Gospel.

This is the principle of common grace, in which the Holy Spirit takes the message of the witness and makes it a reality in the mind of the unbeliever.

An unbeliever cannot understand spiritual phenomena, 1 Cor. 2:14.

Therefore the Holy Spirit acts to bring about perception of the Gospel, John 16:8-11; 2 Tim. 2:25.

After understanding the issues of the Gospel, a positive volition expresses itself in a change of mental attitude: faith in Christ. Faith in Christ and repentance are two sides of the same coin. A change in mental attitude about the person and work of Christ equals repentance.

Repentance results in faith in Jesus Christ, salvation adjustment to the justice of God. And it is at the moment of repentance that God the Father provides the whole Salvation package to the new believer.

Matt. 1:14-15 teaches that first you change your mind about Christ and then you believe. Matt. 12:41; Luke 13:2-3, 5; 15:7,10; Acts 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; Heb. 12:17.

2 Pet. 3:9, God is "not willing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

Growth in the Christian life demands repentance toward human good, Heb 6:1.

Human good is good works produced by any person, Christian or non-Christian, apart from the filling and control of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

An unbeliever, of course, does not have the indwelling Holy Spirit, and cannot be filled with the Spirit. All good produced by an unbeliever is categorized as human good.

A Christian is, at any moment, either filled with the Holy Spirit (spiritual) or not filled with the Spirit (carnal).

The good produced by a spiritual believer is divine good (gold, silver, precious stones). The good produced by a carnal believer is human good (wood, hay, stubble).

Human good is dead to the plan and policy of God, Gen. 2:17.

Human good is linked with arrogance and produces boasting, Eph. 2:9; Rom. 4:2.

Human good is never acceptable to God, Isaiah 64:6.

Human good will not save man, Eph 2:8-9.

An unbeliever's human good will be judged, Rev. 20:12-15.

The believer's human good will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ, 1 Cor. 3:11-16; Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:10.

A change of attitude about sin is taught in Rev. 2:5, 16, 22.

A change of attitude toward Bible truth is the basis for recovery from backsliding, Rom 2:5; Rev 3:19.

When God Repents

In the Bible, God is said to “repent” of things. Gen. 6:6; Exo. 32:11-14; 1 Sam. 15:35; Psalm 90:11-13; Jer. 25:3,13.

But God is immutable and does not change. He does not change His mind. Therefore, these passages ascribe to God a human characteristic, in order to explain or describe God's judgment in a human frame of references. This is an anthropathism.

An anthropathism ascribes to God a human characteristic He does not possess, but explains divine policy in terms of human frame of reference.

Resurrection of Christ

Introduction

The death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ are the most important events in human history. That Jesus Christ rose from the dead is an established historical fact verified by many eyewitnesses and by a great deal of corroborating evidence.

This paper provides a concise outline for studying this important topic, including the circumstances surrounding the resurrection of Christ, the various proofs of the resurrection as a historical event, the resurrection of Christian saints of different dispensations, and the importance of the Doctrine of Resurrection to the church age believer.

In studying this topic, look up all of the scripture verses and read the complete context of each passage. These notes are just a guide for studying the Bible; so the really important information is found in the Bible itself.

Resurrection Order of Events

- After Christ is taken down from the Cross, Pontius Pilate orders His body turned over to Joseph of Arimathea for burial. Matt. 27:57–60.
 - Pilate then orders a military guard to be placed at the tomb. Matt. 27:62–66.
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- Jesus Christ has voluntarily laid aside the powers of His own deity, with respect to His human body. Therefore, in accordance with the Divine Decrees, God the Father gave the orders for Christ's resurrection from the dead. 1 Cor. 15:15.
 - God the Holy Spirit was the agent of the resurrection in that He used his power to bring Christ to life. 1 Pet. 3:18
 - Jesus Christ leaves the grave under His own power. John 10:18.
 - After Christ leaves the tomb, God sends an angel to roll away the stone to demonstrate to the world that Christ had risen. This is accompanied by a great earthquake. Matt. 28:1,2
 - It is at this point that Satan is once again made aware of the victory of Jesus Christ over death and the grave and His triumph in the angelic warfare. 1 Cor. 15:54–57.
 - Mary (the mother of James), Mary Magdalene, and Salomé come to the tomb. Mark 16:1
 - Mary Magdalene, upon seeing the stone rolled away, runs to tell the disciples. John 20:1,2
 - Mary and Salomé then see the angel who tells them that Jesus had risen. Mark 16:5,6.
 - Peter and John come to the tomb after hearing Mary Magdalene's report.
 - Peter is told that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, he enters the tomb, and he wonders at what he had seen. Luke 24:10-12.
 - Mary Magdalene, who had not heard the angel's report, returns to the tomb, and does not recognize Christ when she sees Him. John 20:11–18.
 - It is to Mary Magdalene that Christ first reveals Himself in resurrected power. He starts by establishing that He is now operating on a higher level than she is, even though He has not yet been glorified at the Ascension. John 20:17

A Description of the Resurrection

Christ was physically dead before being taken down from the Cross; He was not merely unconscious, as some critics have claimed (the "swoon" theory).

- The soldiers declared Him dead! They would have suffered severe punishment for not making sure that any prisoner was dead before being removed from the cross. Mark 15:45; John 19:33.
- The blood and water flowing from His side is a medical indication of physical death.
- After being taken from the Cross he was prepared for burial and locked in a tomb, eliminating all possibility of His receiving medical attention.
- The women came to the tomb prepared to anoint a dead body. Mark 16:1
- If He had not died physically, He would not have been worthy to be a sin offering to God. Matt. 26:12 with Lev. 2:1-16

Christ's body could not have been removed by His followers, as some have claimed. There are too many contradictory facts against that conclusion.

- The disciples of Christ were afraid and had already deserted Him. Matt. 26:69–75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:55-62; John 18:15-27.
 - Their boldest leader, Peter, had denied Him three times.
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- The tomb was sealed with the Imperial Seal of Rome; to break it and enter the tomb would itself be punishable by death.
- The tomb was guarded by Roman soldiers. To attack them would have been suicidal; such an attack was considered an act of insurrection, to be punished by crucifixion. Matt. 27:62-66
- The followers who buried Christ, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, would not have arranged to bury Him in such a prominent place if they had intended to hide His body.
- His followers believed that he was still in the tomb on resurrection morning, indicating that there was no plot to steal His body.

Christ's resurrection was a bodily resurrection. He came out of the tomb, not as a wounded, crippled man, but as a mighty conqueror. He showed no after-effects from the terrible ordeal He had gone through.

- Christ had personally declared before His death that He would be resurrected bodily. John 2:19-21; Matt. 12:40 with Rev. 1:18
- The angels at the tomb declared that He had been resurrected. Luke 24:6-8 The tomb was empty, and the grave clothes were folded and in order only minutes after the tomb was opened. Mark 16:6; John 20:5-7
- Christ declared that He was flesh and bone, eliminating the "spirit" theory and the "vision" theory. Luke 24:39-40
- The five women to whom he appeared touched his feet and held him. Matt. 28:9
- Christ ate food after His resurrection. This would have been impossible if it was just a vision or a psychological mass delusion. Luke 24:41-45
- His body was described in detail after the resurrection by various witnesses. John 20:25,27,28; 21:7; Luke 24:34,37-40
- It would be impossible to understand several other Bible passages except from the standpoint of a literal, bodily resurrection. John 5:28,29; 1 Cor. 15:20; Eph. 1:19,20

Several other individuals had been raised from the dead; but in each case the person died again. Christ's resurrection was thus unique in that He "ever lives to make intercession for us."

- • The son of the widow of Zarephath, 1 Kings 17:17-24
- • The Shunammite's son, 2 Kings 4:17-27
- • Jairus's daughter, Mark 5:22-43
- • The young man of Nain, Luke 7:11-17
- • Lazarus, John 11
- • Tabitha, Acts 9:36-43
- • Eutychus, Acts 20:7-12

The Resurrection Body of Christ

- The risen Christ had a real human body that was recognizable as such. Luke 24; John 20:26-29

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- His body was composed of flesh and bones but had no blood. Luke 24:39,40
 - His body could be handled and touched, therefore it had to have substance. Matt. 28:9; John 20:27
 - However, His body was able to pass through solids (the tomb and closed doors, etc.). John 20:19/26; Luke 24:36
 - His body was such that He was able to make Himself appear and disappear. Luke 24:17
 - His skin showed scars and nail prints; His body retains the scar of the wound in his side and hands. (The believer's resurrection body will not have any imperfections!) This was prophesied in Zech. 12:10 and Psa. 22:16; the fulfillment of the prophesies is recorded in John 20:25-27.
 - He breathed; but He did not necessarily need to breathe. John 20:22
 - He carried on conversations, so He had to have vocal cords and the use of air. His voice was immediately recognizable. Luke 24; John 20:16, 26
 - He ate, so His body had a digestive system; but He did not have to eat to live eternally. Luke 24:30
 - Christ is able, in His resurrection body, to travel through space. Acts 1:9 with Heb. 1:3.
 - His resurrection body is indestructible and eternal. Rev. 19:11-21; John 14:6

The Appearances of Jesus Christ After His Resurrection

- To Mary Magdalene - John 20:15-17; Mark 16:9-11
 - To five other women - Matt. 28:9-10
 - To Peter (the afternoon of the resurrection) - 1 Cor. 15:5
 - To two Christians on the road to Emmaus (Cleophas and Mary) - Luke 24:13-33; Mark 16:12
 - To ten disciples - John 20:19-25
 - To eleven disciples (including Thomas) - John 20:26-29; Mark 16:14
 - To seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee - John 21:1,2
 - To five hundred Christians - 1 Cor. 15:6
 - To Jesus' half-brother James, who had been an unbeliever until the resurrection - 1 Cor. 15:7; John 7:3; Acts 1:14
 - To eleven disciples on a mountain near Galilee - Matt. 28:16-20
 - To the believers at the Ascension - Acts 1:3-11
 - To Stephen (after the Ascension) - Acts 7:55,56
 - To the Apostle Paul on several occasions after the Ascension - Acts 9:1-8; 18:9; 22:17; 23:11; 27:23; 1 Cor. 15:8; Gal. 1:12-17.
 - To John on the Island of Patmos - Rev. 1:12-20; 22:20.
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Proofs of Facts Surrounding the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The proof that the resurrection of Jesus Christ actually occurred as a historical event is established by numerous supporting facts or evidences. Two of the best study sources for extensive historical information about the resurrection are two books by Josh MacDowall entitled *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* and *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. These books are available at Christian bookstores and are highly recommended.

The most important proof is that of the testimony of the people who were actual eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Christ. It is important to note that the following people would be qualified eyewitnesses in any court of law, either in Roman or Hebrew courts of the time or in modern American courts. To qualify formally to give eyewitness testimony, the witness must be shown to be mentally competent as well as having been competent at the time the events occurred. The witness must also be able to withstand an examination of his own character as a basis for accepting his testimony.

- The Roman soldiers assigned to guard the tomb were objective witnesses to the resurrection, even though they did not believe in the deity of Christ. Matt. 28:12-15
- The unbelieving chief priest and the elders of the Sanhedrin were eyewitnesses to the empty tomb. Matt. 28:11-12
- Mary Magdalene, Matt. 28:1,6; John 20:15-17; Mark 16:9-11
- Five other women, including Mary (the wife of Cleopas), and Salomé, Matt. 28:9-10; Mark 16:1-6
- Peter, Luke 14:12
- Matthew, by written testimony, Matt. 28:6.
- John, by written testimony, John 20:1-8
- The written testimony of facts as given by witnesses, Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:3. All people, in fact, mentioned in the previous section, to whom Christ appeared after His resurrection, were eyewitnesses.
- The fact of the resurrection of Christ may also be inferred from a number of other sources. For example, Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, chapter 3:3, states that Jesus Christ was resurrected and had made appearances on the earth.
- The Word of God is the written testimony that Christ was resurrected from the dead. 1 Cor. 15:3,4.
- God Himself is a witness to the resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:15; John 10:18; 1 Peter 3:18.
- Christ's resurrection is testified to by angels. Matt. 28:5,6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:5,6; Acts 1:10,11
- The resurrection was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Job 19:25-27; Psalm 16:10 (David); Isaiah 52:13-15; Zech. 12:10

Importance of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ

- The facts of Christ's resurrection are part of a full presentation of the gospel to unbelievers, 1 Cor. 15:1-4. Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again.
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- An understanding of the resurrection is necessary as a believer begins to learn basic doctrines, especially those related to salvation. Rom. 10:9,10
- The doctrine of the resurrection supports all of Christian faith, so much so that every aspect of Christianity depends on the fact of the resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:12–19. Apostolic preaching is worthless without it. Without the resurrection the believer's faith is without substance and his hope is in vain. Without the resurrection, no man can be reconciled to God (Rom. 5:8–10).

In application, the doctrine of the resurrection supports many of the features of the Christian life. The resurrected Christ is the head of the Church (Eph. 1:19–23). His resurrection must predate the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church Age (John 1:33; Acts 2:32,33 with John 15:26 and 16:7). Without Christ's resurrection there would be no spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:8-13). Without resurrection, He cannot be the Prince and the Savior offered to the nation of Israel. Acts 5:31 with Daniel 12:1-3.

Salvation Doctrines

The Christian life begins the moment a person believes the Gospel, putting his complete confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. At that moment, God provides the new believer with a great number of unique and permanent blessings. "...and hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3) These blessings are a part of the inheritance of the believer, those useful doctrines and promises upon which the Christian may draw during the remainder of his lifetime on earth.

The following is a listing of Salvation Doctrines, a catalogue of the things God does for the believer at the moment of salvation. These basic ideas are the underlying principles for the mechanics of Christian living, the techniques such as Faith-Rest and Occupation with Christ. These doctrines are also foundation principles for all other Bible doctrine.

This listing can provide you with hours of quality study and meditation. You may well find other topics that could be added to the list. It is valuable and important that a Christian understand thoroughly his relationship with the Lord; and a good knowledge of these doctrines can be of great help in Christian living.

Use the items on this list with people who don't believe in eternal security. You see, in order for God to take salvation away from anyone, He would have to reverse every one of these processes. Item #18, for example, shows that a Christian is a gift from God the Father to His Son. Loss of salvation would mean that God would take back His gift to His own Son. Or, in #35, we see that the believer receives a Human Spirit as part of the salvation package. Losing salvation would mean that the Human Spirit would have to be killed, or removed in some way. In a similar way you can argue in favor of eternal security from every one of these items.

You can also use these topics in your personal witness to novice Christians. Remember, these are "Day One" doctrines. So the new believer (or the "old baby" believer) cannot begin to mature until he begins to grasp the importance of these topics. Advanced believers are responsible to spoon feed basic teaching to untaught believers.

1. A believer is in the Eternal Plan of God, sharing the destiny of the Lord Jesus Christ. As such the believer is:

Foreknown: Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:2

Elect: Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:2

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- Predestined: Rom. 8:29,30; Eph. 1:5,11
Chosen in Christ: Matt. 22:14; 1 Pet. 2:4
Called: 1 Thess. 5:24
2. The believer is Reconciled:
By God, 2 Cor. 5:18; Col. 1:20
To God, Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 2:14f.
 3. The believer is Redeemed (purchased from the slave market of sin): Rom. 3:24; Col. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:18; Eph. 1:7.
 4. The believer is Removed from Condemnation: John 3:18; 5:24; Rom. 8:1.
 5. The believer is under Grace and not under Judgment (doctrine of Propitiation): Rom. 3:24–28; 1 John 2:2.
 6. The believer's sins are judged by the spiritual death of Christ on the Cross: Rom. 4:25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24.
 7. The believer is made dead to the old life and alive unto God. He is:
Crucified with Christ: Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20
Dead with Christ: Rom. 6:8; Col. 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:24
Buried with Christ: Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12
Risen with Christ: Rom. 6:4; Col. 3:1
 8. The believer is free from the law: Rom. 6:14; 7:4,6; 2 Cor. 3:11; Gal. 3:25.
 9. The believer is adopted (placed as an adult heir in the family of God): Rom. 8:15; 8:23; Eph. 1:5.
 10. The believer is justified (declared righteous): Rom. 3:24; 5:1,9; 8:30; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:7.
 11. The believer is regenerated (born spiritually into the family of God): John 13:10; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5. In regeneration the believers are:
Born Again: John 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:23
Children of God: Gal. 3:26
Sons of God: John 1:12; 2 Cor. 6:18; 1 John 3:2
New Creations: 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:10
 12. The believer is made acceptable to God: Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5. To make a believer acceptable to Himself, God sees to it that the believer is:
Made righteous: Rom. 3:22; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9
Sanctified positionally: 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11
Perfected forever: Heb. 10:14
Made qualified: Col. 1:12
 13. The believer is forgiven all trespasses: Eph. 1:7; 4:32; Col. 1:14; 2:13; 3:13
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14. The believer is made nigh (heavenly citizenship based on Reconciliation): Luke 10:20; Eph. 2:13,19; Phil. 3:20
 15. The believer is delivered from the kingdom of Satan: Col. 1:13; 2:15
 16. The believer is transferred into God's Kingdom: Col. 1:13
 17. The believer is placed on a secure foundation: 1 Cor. 3:11; 10:4; Eph. 2:20
 18. The believer is a gift from God the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ: John 10:20; 17:2,6,9,11,12,24
 19. The believer is delivered from the power of the Sin Nature; Rom. 2:29; Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11
 20. The believer is appointed as a priest unto God: 1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6
 21. The believer is under the care of God as a chosen generation and a protected people: Tit. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9
 22. The believer is given access to God: Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 4:14,16; 10:19,20
 23. The believer is within the much more care of God; as such we are:
 - Objects of His love: Eph. 2:4; 5:2
 - Objects of His Grace: for salvation, Eph. 2:8,9; for keeping, Rom. 5:2; 1 Pet. 1:5; for service, John 17:18; Eph. 4:7; for instruction, Titus 2:12
 - Objects of His power: Eph. 1:19; Phil. 2:13
 - Objects of His faithfulness: Phil. 1:6; Heb. 13:5
 - Objects of His peace: John 14:27
 - Objects of His consolation: 2 Th. 2:16
 - Objects of His intercession: Rom. 8:34; 7:25; 9:24
 24. The believer is part of Christ's inheritance: Eph. 1:18
 25. The believer is a beneficiary of the inheritance from God (an heir of God and a joint-heir with the Lord Jesus Christ): Rom. 8:17; Eph. 1:14; Col. 3:24; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:4
 26. The believer has a new position in Christ: Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 1:9; 3:9; 2 Cor. 3:3,6; 5:20; 6:1,4 (See the section on Positional Truth following this listing.)
 27. The believer is the recipient of eternal life: John 3:15; 10:28; 20:31; 1 John 5:11,12
 28. The believer is a member of the family of God: Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:19
 29. The believer is Light in the Lord: Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:4
 30. The believer is united with the Father: 1 Thess. 1:1, cf. Eph. 4:6
 - He is united with Christ: John 14:20, cf. Col. 1:27
 - A member of His Body: 1 Cor. 12:13
 - A Branch in the Vine: John 15:5
 - A Stone in the Building: Eph. 2:21,22
 - A Sheep in the Flock: Eph. 2:21,22
 - A part of His Bride: Eph. 5:25-27
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- A Priest in His Kingdom: 1 Pet. 2:9
- A Saint of the new species: 2 Cor. 5:17
- He is united with the Holy Spirit Rom. 8:9; 8:29
31. The believer is the recipient of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- Born of the Spirit: John 3:6
- Baptized by the Spirit: 1 Cor. 12:13
- Indwelt by the Spirit: John 7:39; Rom. 5:5; 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 3:24
- Sealed by the Spirit: 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 4:30
- Recipient of Spiritual Gifts: 1 Cor. 12:11; 12:27-31; 13:1,2
32. The believer is glorified in Christ: Rom. 3:20
33. The believer is made complete in Christ: Col. 2:10
34. The believer is the possessor of every spiritual blessing: Eph. 1:3
35. The believer is the recipient of a human spirit: Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 7:13; 1 Thess. 5:23; Eph. 2:5
36. The believer has access to all Bible truth through the Grace system for Bible understanding and Christian growth: Col. 2 and Eph. 4

Salvation in the Old Testament

Salvation is the adjustment a person makes to the Justice of God when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The justice of God was satisfied when Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross. This makes it possible for God to reconcile the believer to Himself and to impute righteousness to the believer. Gen. 15:6

The Gospel is the information provided in the Bible to give us the facts about God's provision for us.

The death of Christ on the cross was predetermined by the decisions of the Divine Decrees so that, from the standpoint of the OT times, Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement was certain to take place, even though the actual efficacious sacrifice had not yet occurred. The justice of God was satisfied.

OT believers received Jesus Christ as Savior as He was revealed in OT times. Sometimes He was called Elohim, Jehovah-Elohim, or Jehovah plus a noun (God our Righteousness, etc.). Whenever there was positive volition at the point of God consciousness, God provided Gospel information to the individual.

The first statement of the Gospel is recorded in Genesis 3, at the time of original sin, Man's fall. When Adam and Eve fell, they only had one count against them - negative volition to the command regarding good and evil. Good and Evil is the plan of Satan; so knowledge of good and evil is knowledge of Satan's plan. Adam and Eve, in their innocence in the garden of Eden did not need to be introduced to Satan's plan or to be inculcated with it. Therefore, this one tree was forbidden.

Eve partook of the tree in innocence, Adam partook in cognizance. He had seen the first sinner, Eve, disobey God, but he took part anyway. Remember, there was no immorality involved here, because at the time they were neither moral or immoral. Their sin was merely rejection of what God had commanded. This brought instant spiritual death.

At this instant, man no longer ruled the world; Satan became the ruler of this kosmos. The coup d'etat was complete; and man was now subject to Satan as far as this world is concerned. Mankind immediately became marked with the "mark of Adam", the Sin Nature.

To the question "Which came first, personal sin or the Sin Nature?" the answer is that personal sin came first and caused the existence of the Sin Nature. The human spirit was cancelled out in the sense of spiritual death.

For the rest of the human race, the Sin Nature is inherited at birth, so the Sin Nature is present before there is any opportunity for personal sin. Also, Adam's sin is imputed to us, so that we are born with two strikes against us. "For as in Adam all die ..." Note : we are not called sinners because we sin; we are sinners because we are born, with a Sin Nature, and having Adam's sin imputed to us.

This is the reason that God, with His character of absolute Justice and Righteousness, is not free to enter into a relationship with us unless it can be done without compromising his integrity. And that is only possible if all the sins of the world are judged.

But the Lord has found a way to save mankind. Gen. 3:15, "I will put enmity (hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise (crush) thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The "seed of the woman" is the title for the Lord Jesus Christ in virgin birth. The Sin Nature and Adam's imputed sin is passed down through the male; and Christ was not born of a male-female relationship. He was able to avoid that result of the curse. The Lamb of God had to be without spot or blemish.

At the Second Advent of Christ, the head of Satan will be crushed, and he will no longer rule the world -- Christ will rule the world and Satan will be imprisoned for 1,000 years.

The pattern of salvation in the Old Testament is exactly the same as the pattern of New Testament salvation. Gen. 15:6, "Abraham believed God, and God imputed it to him for righteousness." Imputed righteousness means that God's Justice has been satisfied. This verse is found in the context of Rom. 4:1-4 (READ).

Comments:

1. There never was a time, and there never will be a time when God is not saving mankind. Rom. 10:13; 2 Pet. 3:9
 2. The Gospel was clearly declared in Old Testament times. Rom. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 3:18. The passage in Isa. 53:5,6 has exactly the same boundaries as are found in I Cor. 15:3. Dan. 12:2,3 has the boundary of the resurrection.
 3. Regardless of age or dispensation, man is always saved in the same manner - positive volition to the Gospel expressed in a non-meritorious way, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12; Gal. 3:6-8
 4. Positive volition existed in Old Testament times, both at the point of God consciousness and the point of Gospel hearing. Ex. 33:7; Gen. 15:6
 5. While revelation from God is progressive, reaching its peak with the New Testament scriptures, it has always been, nevertheless, sufficient for salvation of souls at all periods of time.
 6. The object of faith in salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 3:26. However, the revelation concerning Christ varies in different ages.
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7. Jesus Christ was first revealed as Savior at the time of man's fall, Gen. 3:15. He is represented as the "seed of the woman".
8. Jesus Christ is usually revealed in the Old Testament by "shadows". For example, in the Tabernacle, in the feasts, in the modus operandi of the Levitical priests.

Another means of revealing Christ was through "inanimate revelation", that is, through things in nature like the burning bush, the Rock, the Shekinah Glory, or through the typology of the furniture in the Tabernacle (Num. 17:7). The Mercy Seat, the **hilasterion**, was the place of propitiation in the Holy of Holies.

The Levitical offerings were "witnessing by ritual". The burnt offerings taught propitiation, with emphasis on the word of Christ, the Lamb of God. The meal and fruit offerings revealed the Person of Christ on the cross. The peace offering taught about the barrier between God and man being removed.

The gospel was presented in the Old Testament directly in theological teaching. Isa. 53 was straight doctrinal teaching which showed that Christ carried our guilt as well as our sins.

9. Once the reality is come, we have the New Testament, which is historical Christology.
10. According to Isa. 55:6, salvation in the person of Jesus Christ, is always available. Acts. 4:12.
11. Many conversions are recorded in the Old Testament, including:

Noah was declared "just" in Gen. 6:8,9, and was said to have righteousness in Heb. 11:7. Heb. 11 shows the spiritual life of OT believers. The OT imputation of righteousness is seen in Psalm 24:5 and Isa. 61:10.

- For Abraham, compare Gen. 15:6 with Rom. 4:1-4

Job gave perfect testimony to salvation in Gospel form -- death, burial, and resurrection. Job. 19:23-27.

Many Gentiles were saved in the Old Testament. The citizens of Nineveh responded to the Gospel when Jonah preached to them. Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32. See also Rom. 9:24,25; 9:30-33. See Daniel regarding the salvation of Nebuchadnezzar.

Satan

Satan is an angelic personality (would you believe...). He is one of the most beautiful of creatures. He has no red skin or horns, no trident (pitchfork), and he does not breathe fire and brimstone. In fact, fire and brimstone make him shudder, because he is condemned to the Lake of Fire mentioned in Matt. 25:41. Satan is more intelligent than any human. His name, Lucifer, means "great shining light", or "Son of the Morning".

A portrait of Satan and his personality are given by Eze. 28:11-19 and Isa. 14:12-17.

The Five "I Will's" of Satan - from Isa. 14:12-17

- "I will ascend into heaven", a reference to the throne room of God. Satan wanted to take over God's place.
- "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." Satan wanted to rule angels.

Job 38:7

Jude 13**Rev. 12:3,4**

- "I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north." Satan wanted to rule over the Earth.

Psa. 48:2

- "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds." Or, "I will be supreme." He desired to displace God as the Sovereign of the Universe.
- "I will be like the most High." Satan's power lust; "I will be God."

Satan is called the "father of lies", John 8:44. He is called a murderer, 1 John 3:8. He is the highest authority in the cosmos, Eph. 2:2. Even Michael the archangel is no match for Satan.

Satan's Three Falls

Satan fell first at the point of negative volition toward the sovereignty of God, during the five "I Will's"; Isa. 14; Eze. 28:15.

Satan's second fall will occur at the middle of the Tribulation when he is denied access to Heaven. Rev. 12:9; Eze. 28:15.

At the end of the millennial reign of Christ, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire. This will be his final fall. Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10; Eze. 28:18.

Satan - the ruler of this world**Luke 4:5-7****John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11****2 Cor. 4:4****Eph. 2:2**

As the ruler of this world, Satan has a strategy regarding the nations. In basic terms, Satan's desire is to neutralize the Divine Institutions by means of the destruction of nations. Therefore, Satan is anti-nationalistic and pro-United Nations, pro-World Council of Churches, pro-Communist.

REV. 12:9; 20:3,8

Bible truth is Satan's greatest enemy and is the source of the most powerful attack on his kosmos. Therefore, Satan has designed revolution to neutralize nationalism which is protective of the Word of God.

Satan's Strategy with Unbelievers

Every human being is born spiritually dead, hence is born as a member of the kingdom of Satan. Satan has a strategy regarding every person to keep that person from accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour. He tries to blind unbelievers to the Gospel.

2 Cor. 4:3,4**Luke 8:12****2 Thess. 2:9,10**

The unbeliever is made blind to gospel information by being distracted by Satan and by exercising negative volition toward the Word of God. While Satan does not force anyone to be lost, he uses every means to steer the unbeliever away from the truth. His ultimate weapons in this are religion and humanism. He tries to promote the glorification and deification of mankind while downgrading God Himself. Gen. 3:5; Col. 2:8

Satan's Strategy with Believers

Satan doesn't give up when a person accepts Christ as Saviour. He has a strategy regarding believers which is very subtle and far-reaching.

Satan accuses believers before God. The sins of the Christian are observed by the fallen angels and reported. In effect, a dossier is being kept on each believer. He does this to try to hinder the work of God on earth. However, 1 John 2:1ff points out that Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father; and the Lord reminds the Father of what happened at the Cross and makes note of the believer's faith and position in Christ.

Rev. 12:9,10

Zech. 3:1,2

Job 1:6-11

2 Cor. 2:11

Satan tries to keep the believer from the Word of God. He encourages Christians to ignore the Word and accept false teaching so that they will revert to their former manner of life.

1 Tim. 4:1

1 Cor. 10:19-21

2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15

2 Chron. 21:1

Satan distracts by trying to keep believers from public assembly worship, Heb. 10:25. He tempts the believer with an improper emphasis on details of life such as money, success, social life, pleasure, loved ones, health, sex, materialistic things, or status symbols. The mature believer knows that his happiness is not derived from these things, so he is not a slave to them. The novice Christian, however, may try to gain happiness from such things, and this will distract him from the Word of God.

False teaching is a part of Satan's strategy. The following are some of the characteristics of false teachers:

- They have a false facade. Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:18.
- They court believers. Gal. 4:17,18; 2 Tim. 3:5,7.
- They appeal to human pride. 2 Cor. 10:12
- They promote idolatry because it is a quick way to demon influence. Hab. 2:18,1
- They promote legalism. 1 Tim. 1:7,8
- The false teachers will continue to operate throughout Satan's rule on earth. 1 John 4:1

Satan seeks to frustrate the will of God for the believer. There are three categories of the will of God which Satan tries to interdict.

- The operational will of God (what God wants us to do); James 4:7,8; Gal. 5:7.
- The mental, or intellectual, will of God (what God wants us to think): 1 Tim. 4:1.
- The geographical will of God (where God wants us to be);, 1 Thess. 2:18.

Satan encourages believers to worry. Worry neutralizes the soul of the believer. He tries to frighten Christians with regard to physical death

1 Peter 5:7-9

Heb. 2:14,15

Satan attempts to change the focus of the believer. Instead of Occupation with Christ, Satan wants the Christian to be occupied with

SELF, (Col. 3:1; 1 Cor. 1:10,11; Gen. 3:4,5; Mt. 26:31–35)

THINGS, (Heb. 13:5,6; 1 Cor. 1:10,11),

PEOPLE, (Jer. 17:5; 1 Kings 19:10; Jer. 17:4).

One of the functions of the Faith-Rest principle is to protect the Christian in the area of having a proper focus on life.

Emotionalism can lead to great distractions for Christians; so Satan puts on a big campaign to control people's emotions. While the emotion is a bona fide function of the soul, whenever emotion takes precedence over Bible truth, it leads to distraction. Those who dabble in ecstatic experiences, public or private, are allowing their feelings and emotions to outweigh doctrine. Under circumstances of edification and spiritual growth, emotion is a tremendous generator of happiness. But emotion has no spiritual meaning or connotation; and emotion cannot be used as a criterion of spiritual condition.

Satan also promotes heavily in the area of mental attitude sins such as fear, worry, bitterness, desires for revenge, pride, guilt feelings, lack of love, failure to forgive, hatred, mental adultery, and so forth. A believer is neutralized by sin; and mental attitude sins are behind all sin. And they are the worst category because they are so devastating. As long as mental attitude sin is taking place, the Word of God is being ignored.

One of Satan's main weapons is religion. The basic aim of religion is to counterfeit what God is doing. There are several religious counterfeits mentioned in the Bible.

- A counterfeit gospel. 2 Cor. 11:3,4
- Counterfeit ministers (unsaved, humanists, misled, etc.) 2 Cor. 11:13-15
- Counterfeit doctrine 2 Tim. 4:1
- Counterfeit communion table 1 Cor. 10:19-21
- Counterfeit righteousness Matt. 19:16-18
- Counterfeit manner of life ("living the beautiful life") Matt. 23
- Counterfeit power 2 Thess. 2:8-10
- Counterfeit gods 2 Thess. 2:3,4

The Bible talks about the Armor of God as enabling the believer to "stand against the wiles of the devil". This armor is protection for us while we live in *kosmos diabolikos*, and the weapons of our warfare are stronger than Satan as we take our stand in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Separation

The ability to stand alone for that which is right is one of the truest signs of maturity in the Christian life. It is the sign that one has openly identified himself with a superior way of life - with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When a person takes a stand, he is saying to others that he has something worth standing for. This type of commitment attracts followers and is one of the primary characteristics of a good leader.

One of the strongest pressures against being true to the Word of God comes from friends who have compromised their own standards or who have rejected Christ's standards in some way. The most serious consequence of not taking a stand is that the Word of God is not upheld by the believer's testimony. The Bible has a great deal to say about the believer's obligation to separate from people who knowingly and willfully disobey the Lord.

Separate yourself from those who are doctrinally disorderly.

I Tim. 6:3-5. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness: He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself."

II Tim 3:1-5. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

Avoid those who cause divisions and offense.

Romans 16:17,18. "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Separate from the world.

John 15:19 "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Separate from the works of darkness.

Eph. 5:11,12 "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."

Separate from Christians walking disorderly.

II Thess. 3:6 "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

Those who would not repent were excommunicated.

Matt. 18:15-17 "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

Titus 3:9-11 "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. 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."

Separate from false teachers.

II John v. 10 "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:"

Col. 2:8 "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Prov. 19:27 "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."

Prov. 14:6-8 "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth. Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge. The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit."

Psalms 1:1. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

Separate from the sinful activities of the unbeliever.

1 Cor. 5:9-11

I Kings 11:12

II Cor. 6:14

II Chron. 19:2

Heb. 13:13

Ex. 34:12

I Pet. 4:1-5

Prov. 1:10-19; 4:14; 24:1

Num. 33:55

The Christian's main goals in life should be occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ, conformity to His image, and fulfilling the Plan of God for his life. The believer must make careful decisions about his purpose in life. Then, he must compare every activity in his life with his goals to see whether the activity helps or hinders him in reaching the goals.

The following notes provide examples of the uses of the word ἀφορίζω (separation) in the Bible:

Matt. 13:49-51, the wicked are separated from the righteous at the final judgment.

Matt. 25:31-46, the sheep are separated from the goats.

Are you one of the righteous? How do you know? Can you explain to a friend how he can be one of the sheep instead of one of the goats?

Luke. 6:22, the righteous man is ostracized by the worldly.

Acts 13:2, Barnabas and Saul (Paul) were separated to the work of the ministry.

2 Cor. 6:17, "touch not the unclean thing."

Gal. 1:15, Paul separated from his mother's womb.

Gal. 2:12, Peter wrongfully separated himself from Gentiles for fear of the opinion of the Jews.

Servants and Slaves in Palestine

Some people, called "hiredlings", were employed for wages in ancient Palestine (Job 7:1; 14:6; Mark 1:20). But most of the servants of the Israelites, as well as those of other eastern peoples of Old Testament times, were slaves or indentured servants - men and women who were held as property for various reasons and for various lengths of time. Some slaves were bought from neighboring nations or from foreign residents of Canaan. Some were captives taken in war. Some were children of slaves who were born in the house of the master. A slave might himself be a Hebrew who, through poverty, sold himself into servitude until he got back on his feet.

Slavery among the Hebrews was usually a mild and merciful system. The Bible, while it recognizes that slavery exists, does not approve or disapprove of the practice. Numerous standards were set up in the Law for the regulation of slavery and servitude, with laws which regulated both the conditions and the duration of the bondage.

One source of slavery was absolutely forbidden. It was punishable by death to steal or kidnap a human being for the purpose of making him a slave or to sell him to someone else as a slave. This regulation applied to Israelite and foreigner alike.

Deut. 24:7, "If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and makes merchandise of him, or sells him; then that thief shall die; and you shall put evil away from among you." Exo. 21:16, "And he that steals a man, and sells him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall be surely put to death."

The Treatment of Servants

Each Israelite was considered to be a servant of God. Therefore, he was not to be treated as a bondservant but as a hired worker; and his master was to rule over him with kindness .

Lev. 25:39-41, "And if thy brother that dwells by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant; But as a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return."

There were several ways that a Hebrew could become the servant of his brethren:

- The Israelite, through poverty, might become unable to manage his own affairs or to maintain himself as an independent citizen. In this case he might pass by sale under the power of

another. The passage in Lev. 25:39 ff, which lays down the law in these matters, does not imply that such a sale was compulsory. It is understood to mean that the individual sold himself (or rather, he sold the rights to his labor) to another Jew, so that he might be able to earn subsistence for himself and his family.

- A Hebrew who had been convicted of theft was required to make restitution to the extent of at least double the value of the amount stolen if the stolen property itself was recovered). In other cases he was to pay four or five times as much as he stole (Note the case of Zacchaeus). If the thief could not make the required restitution, he was sold for his theft and he made restitution by his labor.
- Exod. 22:1-3, "If a man shall steal ...If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft."
- Children of a Hebrew servant became, by condition of their birth, the servants of the master (Exod. 21:4).
- When a man was claimed personally by a creditor, his children were usually sold into bondage with him. While the impoverished man might sell himself into servitude, it was only to work off his debt until the jubilee year. 2 Kings 4:1; Neh. 5:5; Isa. 50:1; Job 24:9.

Every Israelite, male or female, who had become a slave, might be redeemed at any time by relatives or friends by the payment of what was owed. In any case, even if he were not redeemed, he was to be released after six years of service; and he was to be given a present of food and cattle (Exod. 21:2; Deut. 15:12-15). If he brought a wife into service with him, she was to be freed with him. However, if his master had provided him with a wife, the master could require the wife to stay when the man left. And the children of such a marriage stayed with the master (Exod. 21:3; Jer. 34:8 ff).

If the Hebrew servant, for love of his wife and children or other reason, preferred not to accept freedom in the seventh year (or when his obligation was completed), he was brought before the elders of the community and had his ear pierced as a token of his willingness to give lifelong servitude to his master (Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17).

If a Jew were to become the slave of a Gentile, the servitude could be terminated in two ways. First, it could be terminated by the arrival of the year of jubilee. Second, the servant could be released by payment to the master of the purchase price LESS the value of the services rendered, based upon the pay scale of a hired laborer (Lev. 25:47-55).

During the time that the slave was "possessed" by his master, the master had certain power of disposing of him as he would other articles of personal property. He could, for example, leave the servant to his heirs. The servant was said to have a certain monetary value, that is, his labor had a money value; but he was not supposed to be thought of as chattel.

A slave could be freed in one of four ways:

- By testamentary disposition; the master could specify that the slave was to be freed upon the master's death, for example.
- By any act that implied that the slave was a free citizen, such as making an heir of one's slave.

The Law had several means for the protection of slaves or servants. A servant was entitled to full religious privilege and access to all religious functions and practices, such as sacrifices, Passover and other feasts, circumcision, etc. He was to be given a day of rest on the Sabbath. He was to receive

his liberty if the case of some grievous injury such as loss of eye or limb. See other passages: Gen. 17:12; Exod. 12:44; 20:11; 21:20,26,27; Lev. 24:17,22; Deut. 5:14 ff; 12:12,18.

Servants of God

GOD COMMANDS CHRISTIANS TO BE FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT SERVANTS.

Deut. 10:12 "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord with all thy heart and with all thy soul."

Micah 6:8 "He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord required of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Psalms 100:2 "Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing."

JOSH. 24:14,15

SERVICE IS TO BE RENDERED AS UNTO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, JOHN 12:23-26

Col. 3:24 "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

THE BELIEVER'S SERVICE IS TO BE RENDERED TO PEOPLE.

Christian service makes life noble.

Mark 10:43,44 "But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Christian service exemplifies neighborliness.

LUKE 10:36,37

Christian service is Christ-like, JOHN 13:1-17

Christian service demonstrates love, JOHN 21:15-17

Christian service lightens life's burdens, Gal. 5:13-15; Gal. 6:1-10; Acts 20:17-20; Heb. 10:23-25

The place of worship and the place of service. We also "assemble" for service. The Body functions as a congregation.

AS GOD'S SERVANTS, BELIEVERS HAVE SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES.

Christians are to leave all to follow Christ.

Phil. 3:7,8 "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ."

Believers are to render undivided service.

1 CHRON. 15:10-15

1 Sam. 7:3 "And Samuel spoke unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only."

Believers are to serve with humility, ACTS 20:18,19

Believers are to serve with courage.

Deut. 1:17 "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's; and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me [Moses], and I will hear it."

Prov. 29:25 "The fear of man bringeth a snare; but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."

EXAMPLES OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

The Lord Jesus Christ served men.

Phil. 2:7 "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

Godly men served the Lord by serving other men.

- Peter and Andrew, Mark 1:17,18
- Zaccheus, Luke 19:6 ff
- Paul, Acts 9:20

THE REWARDS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

The faithful servant gains spiritual knowledge.

Hos. 6:3 "Then shall we know, Lord; his gone unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."

The faithful servant gains divine viewpoint.

John 8:12 "Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk darkness, but shall have the light of life."

The faithful servant has spiritual guidance.

John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me."

The faithful servant receives honor from God.

John 12:26 "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

The faithful servant has a life of joy.

Psalm 40:8 "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

John 4:36 "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

Shepherds of the Flock

Introduction

1 Peter 5:1,2 "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: FEED THE FLOCK of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind:"

Deuteronomy 8:3, “And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”

We live by God’s Word, that which proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus”.

And it is our shepherds who have the duty to provide us with this nourishment, lest we waste away in spiritual malnutrition!

My aim in this article is to provide a thorough introduction to the Bible concept of shepherding, from Jehovah and the Lord Jesus Christ as Shepherd, to the Christian believer who feeds and cares for the "sheep of His pasture."

Pastors and elders are shepherds. The Greek word (**poimeinos**), used a single time in the New Testament in Ephesians 4:11, is translated “pastor”. On other occasions, such as in 1 Peter 5:2, the verb form (**poimeinw**) is translated “to feed”. So pastors and elders are “feeders”, and Christians are the “flock” which are to be fed.

I intend in this article to develop a full description of what a Christian spiritual shepherd is, including a shepherd's qualifications and duties. This description will be derived from a study of what the whole Bible says about shepherds, by examining the following:

- Jehovah as Shepherd
- The Lord Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd
- King David as shepherd of his people. He was both a shepherd-boy and the shepherd of the kingdom of Israel
- Pastors and elders, including all those who "feed the flock of God"

I think that the Bible passages I cite in this study will demonstrate that there are well laid out Bible standards for the function of shepherd, and that when one is known a true shepherd of the sheep, certain objective criteria have been met.

Titus was given the task of choosing shepherds (elders) for the local congregations on the island of Crete. When choosing a shepherd, it’s important to have a good idea of what God intends a shepherd to be.

To illustrate:

- A good shepherd puts the needs of the sheep first, and has an abiding sense of obligation toward them. One who does not know how to care for sheep, or who neglects sheep, is not a good shepherd.
- A good shepherd leads sheep to good pasture and water. A person who does not provide food and water for sheep is not a good shepherd.
- A good shepherd protects the sheep and sets up defenses against those who would harm the sheep. An individual who deliberately harms or frightens sheep is not a good shepherd.

Jehovah as Shepherd

There is a chain of command in Christian affairs. In a chain of command, such as in a military organization, when one level of command fails to function properly, the responsibility is taken over by the next higher level of command.

God the Father, Jehovah, is always watching His sheep; and He is always ready to take over when the sheep are not being well handled by their appointed shepherds..

READ Jeremiah 10:19-22

[I will show scripture passages to illustrate these ideas, but it's up to you to examine the whole context of the discussion in any passage I cite. Be aware that the verses I indicate are only pointers to a broader portion of the Bible that needs to be reviewed in context.]

Suggestion: read the whole book of Jeremiah from the standpoint of shepherds, good and bad, and their duties toward their "sheep." But especially read:

- Jeremiah 23:1-6
- Jeremiah 50:4-19
- Psalm 23
- Isaiah 44:24-28

Even a heathen king, Cyrus, was named shepherd, to fulfill a specific function, to contribute to the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

READ Ezekiel 34.

From C. F. Keil, Commentary on Ezekiel

The shepherds of Israel, namely, the political and religious leaders, have been feeding themselves and neglecting the flock. The flock has been scattered and has become a prey to wild beasts. The Lord will remove the bad shepherds from their office.

The Lord will take charge of His own flock, gather it together from where it is scattered, and feed and tend it on good pasture in the land of Israel. He will sift the flock by getting rid of the "fat" and "violent" ones.

He will appoint His servant David shepherd over His flock, make a covenant of peace with His people, and bless the land with fruitfulness, so that Israel may dwell there in security, and no more suffer by internal strife and famine or be carried off by their enemies.

This chapter (Eze. 34) is a repetition and expansion of the prophecy of Jeremiah 23:1-8. Both prophecies deal with the salvation of Israel and the fact that the sheep will be gathered and tended by the Lord and His servant David.

Rev. 7:17, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Rev. 12:6, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred, and threescore days."

The Lord Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd

Jesus Christ is presented as the "Good Shepherd" in that He lays down His life for His sheep. This refers to Christ's saving work on the cross, the atonement.

In Hebrews 13:20,21, He is called the "great shepherd," a title that refers to divine blessing to advanced believers.

In 1 Peter 5:4, the title "Chief Shepherd" is the title for Christ as we face Him after death.

The Lord Jesus provides for His sheep in many ways.

- The believer, like a sheep, is helpless and has no sense of direction; a sheep must be guided by a shepherd. We need Bible truth as our guide in life.
- A sheep cannot clean itself; this a reminder of our Lord's provision of cleansing, as shown in 1 John 1:9.
- A sheep is helpless when injured. So, when we are injured by the various problems in life, only the Lord can provide the necessary therapy.
- A sheep is defenseless; he depends on the shepherd for protection. The Lord provide the armor of God for protection.
- A sheep can't find food or water for itself. A sheep must depend on the shepherd to lead it to water.
- A sheep is easily frightened or panicked. The shepherd calms the sheep with songs in the night; i.e. Bible truth in the soul.
- When the sheep produces wool, it belong to the owner of the flock. It does not belong to the sheep.

Every Christian is supposed to be "like Christ." Pastors and elders, in particular, must have the qualities of good shepherd that the Lord Jesus embodies.

An elder must have the "mind of Christ." This means that, as he grows into his job as elder, he will become more like Christ in his thinking and shepherding. If he does not, he will be a bad shepherd.

Matthew 9:35-38

Matthew 25:31-34

Luke 15:4-7

John 10:1-18

John 21:15-17

Keep in mind as we study - the sheep belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. All through the scriptures that we are studying, the flocks belong to God. They do not belong to the human shepherd. By illustration, David was the shepherd for sheep that belonged to his father, Jesse.

In Heb. 13:20, Christ is called "the great Shepherd of the sheep."

1 Peter 2:21-25, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

Matthew 18:10-24

Psalm 78:51-54, "He smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham: But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased."

Psalm 79:13, “So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks forever: we will show forth thy praise to all generations.”

Isaiah 40:10,11, “Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

If an elder has the mind of Christ, he will have the attitude of Christ toward his flock and toward his job as shepherd. This is the attitude and motivation to look for in anyone who aspires to the office of pastor or elder.

David as the Shepherd of Israel

1 Chronicles 17:3-9

1 Chronicles 21:16,17

In this passage, David takes the responsibility for the poor handling of his human flock when he numbered the people.

Spiritual Qualifications for an Elder (Shepherd)

The most important function in a church - and the most important activity that a Christian can engage in - is the study and teaching of the Word of God. Bible truth is the theoretical and practical support for every other feature of Christian life, including worship, prayer, evangelism, missionary service, discipling, and fellowship. Without a solid foundation in Bible principle and doctrine, a Christian can spend his life flailing around trying to serve the Lord while never understanding the basic plan of God for his life and ministry.

In a local church, someone has to teach, to organize things, to arrange for the activities of the organization, no matter how small. If no hierarchy is imposed on a community of people, leaders will emerge anyway, either chosen by the group to take charge, or, by default, to move into a leadership void.

In the Bible, Christian leaders are not chosen politically, or by seniority, or by submitting a résumé. An “eldership” is a battlefield commission; a person tested and proved in battle is seen to be the natural choice for a position as a bishop or elder.

The most highly decorated American soldier of World War II, Audie Murphy, received a battlefield commission to 2nd Lieutenant, after he had proved himself in battle. His leaders had seen in him the qualities of leadership and proven ability that made him eligible for that honor. (He was prevented by his physical disability from wounds from attending the U. S. Military Academy after the war.)

In the Epistle to Titus, the task given to Titus was to observe which individuals were qualified to be appointed, according to the criteria Paul outlined.

Chief among these qualifications was that the elder was to “hold to the faithful word as he had been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine to refute and to convince the gainsayers.” An elder is primarily a teacher of the Word of God. If he does not teach his flock what the Bible says, his sheep will perish of malnourishment!

The qualifications of elders (pastors, bishops, overseers, presbyters, deacons) are given in such passages as 1 Peter 5, Titus 1 and 2, 1 Timothy, and Acts 7.

Think about Titus’s job of selecting elders on Crete.

He had to observe men in the communities on Crete and decide which to appoint as elders. Maybe he interviewed likely candidates. Maybe he asked other believers to describe the qualities they say in various people.

It's possible to fake many things in the Christian life. A person can smile, talk the language of the church he attends, refrain from certain taboos, and generally fool most of the people most of the time. After all, we don't go around questioning people to their face about the genuineness of their profession or claims. If a person claims to love the Lord and be devoted to Christian service, how can you tell if the claim is genuine?

Well, there are two things in which it is extremely difficult to fool an experienced person like Titus. First, it is hard to give the appearance of having a great love for the Word of God. And second, it is hard to fool a discerning Christian into believing that one has the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Love for the Word of God

When a person genuinely loves the Lord, a love for the Word of God naturally accompanies that love. That person will give evidence every day of immersion in the Bible. After all, the Bible is the communication of the Lord Jesus, the One loved. A desire to know the Word, to meditate in it, and to talk about it, will be just as natural as a young person's total captivation with romance.

In fact, this characteristic can be used to discern the true merits of any candidate for Christian office. A person can attend church, engage in worship and Christian service, and use Christian vocabulary. But there may be some ulterior motive in this.

A young man who is interested in a young woman can readily adapt himself to her surroundings and seem to be something that he is not. People are chameleons when trying to impress others. But it is very difficult over a period of time for a person to establish a reputation as one who is absorbed by the Word of God, unless the Bible is the center of attention and devotion.

A Christian who is motivated by a desire for recognition, a lust for power, or an ambition to have a religious career, can adopt almost any appearance or conform to any program or set of standards. One of the most difficult things to fake, however, is an occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word.

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

The other thing that is hard to cover up is a lack of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. But how can you tell when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit?

The people in Acts 7 were expected to do just that when they selected the first seven deacons. They were expected to select men to handle this job, based on just this one qualification. If you had been in that church, how would you have known whom to vote for?

Would you believe that a man is Spirit-filled because he tells you he is, or because he says he has had a spiritual experience? Would you be impressed by a person who is sweet, smiles, and uses spiritual vocabulary? The outward appearance is easy to counterfeit. When one person exhibits some genuine spiritual power or ability, it's quite natural that others will envy that and want to fake it, or buy it (Simon the Sorcerer)!

But Titus was looking for some very objective evidence of genuine Christian character in the men he was considering for positions of responsibility on Crete.

LOVE - The first fruit of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5 is Love.

Titus 1:8 states that an elder is to be "a lover of hospitality": (**philozenos**); he is to have a love for strangers. This word carries the connotation of hospitality, of doing something for someone who does not earn or deserve the good treatment, because there has been no previous acquaintance. This word reflects a Grace attitude toward people who have not yet earned one's consideration.

This is a word of impersonal love - the type of attitude that is free of arrogance, envy, hatred, or even disdain for other people, even if there is sharp disagreement about doctrine or practice. This is the type of love that permits a Christian to love even his enemies or people that he doesn't like.

There is no envy, self-righteousness, or sinful judging accompanying this love. There will be no hatred, maligning, or malicious gossip involved in this love.

This is the type of love that is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It does not come from emotion, although it may cause emotion. This is the "professional" love of the mature Christian believer, analogous to the Love of God, the quality of which does not depend on the behavior or character of the one being loved, but on the character of the one who loves.

JOY - Joy is the happiness which God provides, a happiness that does not depend on people, circumstances, or things to maintain it. Joy is the relaxed mental attitude that comes from casting one's cares on Christ, knowing that He cares for us. A person who does not possess spiritual joy will chase after the world's attractions and provisions because there is no satisfaction in the things of the Lord.

PEACE - Peace is the result of exercising Faith-Rest. Faith-Rest is the process of trusting God the Father to keep his promises, to make provision for every contingency and trial, and then enjoying the tranquillity that abiding in Christ provides. A person without godly peace will fret and stew, try to solve problems in flesh, and will generally exhibit the same anxieties as the unbeliever in the same position.

PATIENCE - the long view; the quality that results from having eternity's value in view, of being occupied with Christ, of living in the Word of God, and of knowing what God's plan is and how it is working out in the life. The impatient person wants things now and will avidly pursue "things", not being willing to wait for the Lord to provide or promote.

The Elder's Professional Qualifications

An elder must be an accomplished instructor of the Word of God. There are many other duties of elders, especially of those who are overseers, such as priests, pastors, bishops; but the underlying basic responsibility is that of teaching - feeding the flock.

To the spiritual character and personal integrity described above must be added the training and growth in "knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" that allows the elder, as the chief among edified believers, to serve as an effective shepherd.

A local church needs at least one person who teaches the Bible with sufficient quality, and in sufficient quantity, to provide nourishing spiritual food for the congregation. The teacher needs to have a thorough knowledge of the Word and the ability to correlate the facts and doctrines of scripture and make application of those principles to Christian living.

A Christian needs to know what the Bible says and what it means. A Christian is supposed to live "by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." There is no substitute in any believers' life for a thorough overall knowledge of the facts, the doctrines, and the spiritual principles of the Word. A pastor must be willing and able to spend the hours studying and teaching that are required.

If there is no shepherd to teach these things, the people will be hungry.

Sin

DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES

The Bible uses the word "sin" to refer to any activity or pattern of thinking that is independent of God's standards or of His provisions for human life. God loves you, and He has your best interests in mind all the time. Because He has always known what is best for any individual, and for our communities and nation, He has laid out standards by which people can have lives of great happiness and productivity. These standards are known as the Plan of God, or the Christian Way of Life.

Because it is so important that people adjust themselves to the Plan of God, the subject of sin is found in most Bible passages in some form. These authoritative declarations of the Word of God are in stark contrast to the relativism and permissiveness of modern society.

This study deals categorically with many of the specific sin areas which are dealt with in the Bible. The problem of personal sin is discussed in detail with the objective of providing the Christian believer with information about how to have personal victory over sin in the life.

You may want to read this paper through fairly quickly, at first, in order to get an overview of the subject matter. But to get the most out of a study like this, you should read and meditate upon each Bible passage cited in this paper, using the comments as study aids. By studying as much as possible about God's standards, and His plan for living the Christian life, you can learn how to profit as much as possible from a close walk with the Lord, while being hindered as little as possible by the consequences of acts of personal sin.

You can gain victory over the dominating influence of sin by becoming skilled in the mechanics of Christian living. Victorious Christian living requires the regular intake of Bible truth and the constant filling and control of the Holy Spirit. As you grow in grace, you become an "edified" believer, and your life begins to "conform to the image of Christ". This spiritual growth is the basis for victory over sin.

THE SEQUENCE OF SIN

In the Bible, sin is discussed under three types. The first type of sin is called Imputed Sin. This is the concept that, when Adam sinned, the whole human race sinned. Thus, when Adam was counted guilty, every human being shares his guilt. These things are mentioned in 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12; and Rom. 3:23.

The second part of the sin "package" is known as Inherited Sin. Adam acquired a Sin Nature when he sinned. Since then, every human being has inherited a Sin Nature at the time of birth -- we are born sinners. Rom. 5:12; Psalm 51:5. The Sin Nature is described in detail in Section 2.0.

Third, the result of having a Sin Nature is that each person leads a life in which he commits Personal Sins, both before and after being born again. These personal sins are the result and manifestation of the Sin Nature and occur whenever a person decides to think or act independently of the will of the Father.

CHRIST'S WORK REGARDING SIN

The Lord Jesus Christ bore the penalty for all the sin of the human race, including each aspect of sin mentioned in the previous section.

As far as Imputed Sin is concerned, although in Adam we are counted "guilty" and spiritually dead, in Jesus Christ we are counted "not guilty" and spiritually alive. 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph 2:1,5,6.

The problem of Inherited Sin was also dealt with at the Cross, as Jesus died to provide for the Sin Nature. 1 John 1:7. Human good, which is a product of the Sin Nature, was rejected at the Cross, making salvation and all other spiritual benefits to be total products of the Grace of God, "not of works lest any man should boast". Eph. 2:8,9; Rom. 4:4; 6:10.

And, Christ bore everyone's personal sins (1 John 2:2) because He was judged for the sins of the whole world. His spiritual death on the Cross was substituted for our spiritual death, making it possible for anyone to become spiritually alive. The sin issue is resolved for all of us by the work of Christ. So the issue for anyone is simply faith in Christ and in His finished work of salvation. John 3:18,36.

THE SLAVE MARKET OF SIN

A person is born into the world spiritually dead because of the sin passed on through human procreation. Rom. 5:12. The sin of Adam is imputed to all mankind. 1 Cor. 15:22. There are three categories of people in the world, all of whom are born in sin and all of whom have sinful natures. They are: (1) the immoral person, Rom. 1:18-32; (2) the moral person, Rom. 2:1-6 and Isa. 64:6; and (3) the religious person, Rom. 2:17-29 and 4:4.

Every human being is born into the slave market of sin, according to John 8:34,35 and Gal. 3:31. The Law cannot free a person from the slave market of sin. Only a free man can free a slave. Jesus Christ was born free from sin, without a sin nature, and He never committed personal sin. 2 Cor. 5:21. He was therefore a free man and not in the slave market with us.

The Lord Jesus Christ purchased us from the slave market of sin and set us free. 1 Pet. 1:18,19; 1 Cor. 6:20; Eph. 1:7. The gate to the slave market has been removed for all people; but actual freedom depends on whether the individual exercises his free will in accepting the offer of freedom. The only way out of the slave market of sin is through Jesus Christ. John 14:6; 8:36

THE SIN NATURE

The Sin Nature is that part of the essence of the soul acquired at Adam's fall and subsequently passed on to every person at birth. The Sin Nature is the center of the soul's rebellion against God. The essence of the soul contains:

- Self-consciousness
- Mentality
- Volition
- Emotion
- The Sin Nature

The Essence of the Sin Nature

The Sin Nature has an "area" of strengths in which human good is produced, that is, those good deeds and thoughts which are acceptable to man but which are unacceptable to God for purposes of salvation or spiritual growth. Isa. 64:6; Rom. 8:8. In the Bible, human good is contrasted with divine good which is the work produced by the Spirit of God in the life of a believer who is walking in daily fellowship with the Lord under the control of the Holy Spirit.

The Sin Nature also has an "area" of weakness which directs the production of all personal sin. Heb. 12:1. Three types of personal sin are produced here: mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, and open sinful activity.

The Sin Nature has patterns of lusts, or desires, the basic motivators of all the activities of human life. The basic drives include the desire for power, approbation, ego satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, material satisfaction, and so forth.

The Sin Nature has a system of trends, or inclinations, which vary among individuals. Some people have an inclination toward immorality or lasciviousness. Rom. 1. Others have trends toward morality or asceticism. Either trend is a product of Sin Nature activity.

Bible Synonyms for the Sin Nature

There are several terms used in scripture to refer to what is known as the Sin Nature.

Sin (in the singular) -- Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12; 7:14; 1 John 1:8.

Flesh -- the emphasis here is on the location of the Sin Nature in the "flesh" or life of the individual. Rom. 8:8; 7:18; 13:14; Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 2.3.

Old Man -- referring to the believer's former manner of life as an unbeliever. Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:5-9.

Heart -- in some usages the word "heart" refers to a facet of the soul which is the source of sin. Jer. 17:9; Mt. 12:34; 15:19; Mark 7:21-23; Ps. 58:2-5.

Carnality -- derived from the Latin for "flesh". Rom. 7:14; 8:6-8; 1 Cor. 3:1-3.

Principles Related to the Sin Nature

The Sin Nature is the source of spiritual death. Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1,5.

The Sin Nature is perpetuated in human beings through physical birth. Ps. 51:5; 1 Tim. 2:13,14. The believer continues to have his Sin Nature after salvation. 1 Cor. 3:1; 1 John 1:8. The believer under the control of the Sin Nature is called "carnal". Rom. 7:14; 1 Cor. 3:1ff

The Sin Nature frustrates the production of divine good. Rom. 7:15.

The Sin Nature is not found in the believer's resurrection body. 1 Cor. 15:56; Phil. 3:21; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 5:23.

Solutions to the Problem of the Sin Nature

God has arranged to provide all that is needed to deal with the problems caused by the Sin Nature in a believer's life. The personal sins of the individual were borne by Jesus Christ on the Cross. 1 Pet. 2:24. These sins will never be mentioned again because they have already been judged in Christ. Rev. 20:12.

Furthermore, Jesus Christ rejected the human good produced by the Sin Nature in terms of its use as "currency" to purchase salvation, Eph. 2:8,9. This made the way clear for God to provide salvation by grace. The unbeliever will be at the Great White Throne judgment because of his rejection of this grace provision. Rev. 20:11-15.

The believer's sins were borne on the Cross by the Lord, as were those of all people. 2 Cor. 5:21. When a believer sins, Satan accuses him in heaven. Jesus Christ is our Advocate; He pleads our case, and the case is thrown out of court.

God has provided confession of sin as a means of restoring the broken fellowship with God caused by the believer's personal sin. The believer can repent and confess and be filled with the Spirit. 1 John 1:9; Prov. 1:23.

Human good, rejected by Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8,9), is never acceptable to God, and it does not produce blessing in the life of the believer. It is contrary to the principle of Grace, in which God does

the work. In Christian growth, the Holy Spirit provides for the production of divine good in the believer's life, through His filling, control, and teaching functions. God does the giving; man does the receiving.

Legalism is human good production for the purpose of earning and receiving merit or blessing from God. In Legalism, man does the work and receives the credit. Therefore, Legalism is a product of the Sin Nature lust patterns. Under Grace, God does the work and receives the "credit" (glory). Human good production of the Sin Nature will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is called "wood, hay, and stubble" and will be burned. The "gold, silver, and precious stones", of divine good production of the Holy Spirit, will remain. 1 Cor. 3:10-15

The Hazards of Negative Volition

The Apostle Paul issued a stern warning to mature Christian believers living at Ephesus when he told them to beware of falling into a state of indifference to, or antagonism to, the Word of God. He stated that if they were to become negative to the Lord's teachings, their lives would very quickly become indistinguishable from those of unbelievers in terms of fruitfulness and Christian character.

Ephesians 4:17-19, "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity (emptiness) of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

The "darkness" referred to in these verses begins with a negative disposition toward the Word of God. This volitional decision not to follow the Scriptures leads immediately to a breakdown in the faith system of understanding divine viewpoint. There is a cessation in the spiritual growth process; and there is actually a total reversal in progress in the Christian life (backsliding, or reversion).

As a result of the lack of divine viewpoint in the soul, the negative person begins to entertain human standards, human criteria, human doctrine, human programs -- these things, plus the full gamut of Satanic doctrine, are substituted for the plan of God. The further result is subjectivity, unhappiness, and deep frustration in trying to live by techniques which do not work.

These conditions lead to a frantic search for happiness through details of life such as riches, friendships, possessions, human approbation, personal influence and power, and so forth. The believer on this treadmill is a slave to these details of life rather than being a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. While the believer thus engaged is still "in Christ" positionally, he is actually no better off than an unbeliever as far as this life is concerned. In fact, he is destined to be far unhappier than the unbeliever, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

The time, energy, and emotional commitments to this person's search for happiness lead to further isolation from the teachings of the Word of God. He is spending maximum effort to find happiness through other means. Thus, the very method for reversing the downward trend is ignored.

During this process, neuroses and psychoses are being developed, aggravated by the self-induced misery which accompanies chronic and unmitigated sins of the mind such as pride, jealousy, envy, vindictiveness, worry, fear, mental adultery, implacability, and the like, from which there is no relief outside of the plan of God.

Because of these sin patterns, divine discipline is compounded daily. The believer has a horrible life composed of his own failures, doubled and re-doubled chastisement, his self-induced unhappiness, and the fact that he has no defense against the attacks of Satan and his demons. His "righteousness"

(-r) has replaced the righteousness (+R) of God. This whole miserable situation is avoidable, as you will see with further study.

MENTAL ATTITUDE SINS (See topics of Mental Attitude, above)

THE SINS THAT GOD HATES

In the Bible passage Proverbs 6:16-19 are listed seven things that God the Father despises. The paragraph cited uses the phrase "an abomination unto Him" to indicate God's attitude of repugnance toward the sins listed there. Four of the sins are sins of the tongue; two are mental attitude sins; and one sin, murder, is an open sin.

"A proud look" is a sin manifested in the features of the face. This sin reveals the mental attitude sin of pride, and it refers to arrogance which is revealed in expression, attitude, and bearing.

"A lying tongue" refers to inveterate, habitual lying.

"Hands that shed innocent blood" refers to murder. It does not refer to killing in battle, which is bona fide, but to the unlawful taking of a life.

"A heart that devises wicked imaginations" is a sin in which the mind is controlled by the emotions with the result that there is the mental attitude sin of jealousy or suspicion, which cause a person to think the worst.

"Feet that are swift in running to mischief" refers to sins of the tongue plus overt sins. It relates to the person who goes out of his way to make trouble through gossip, maligning, judging, vindictiveness, tactics of revenge, and any overt tactic which will make trouble for others.

"A false witness that spreads lies" refers to perjury, another form of lying. Or, it means to downgrade someone.

"He that soweth discord among the brethren" indicates maligning, carrying tales, backbiting, destructive criticism, and so forth.

SINS OF THE TONGUE

READ Psalm 64:1-10.

Sins of the tongue have their origin in the Sin Nature. These sins are among the most devastating of all of the categories of sin. Of the seven sins mentioned in Proverbs 6:16-19 as being especially hated by God, three are sins of the tongue. As a Christian believer, you must learn as much as possible about this type of sin. And you must do everything possible to gain victory over this in order to be able to make progress in the Christian Way of Life.

PSALM 34:11-14.

Sins of the tongue are motivated by mental sins such as arrogance, jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, implacability, hatred, mental adultery, pettiness, envy, guilt feelings, etc. All of these sins are focused at other people at one time or another. When someone reaches out to attack another person, the tongue is used to voice the inner mental sins which are already present. Such talk may be direct and scathing, even vulgar. Or the talk may be subtle, refined, intellectual, even couched in Christian terms. "There is a matter that I need to share with you as a prayer request; this is just between us spiritual believers..."

NOTE : If you know something bad about a person, or you suspect something, do not share it with anyone unless that person has a direct hand in the solution of the problem. If in doubt, don't talk about it!

Sins of the tongue are a sign of the believer's reverting to the old way of life, the condition of the carnal man. James 4:11; 5:9; 5:12, Romans 3:13,14. In fact, the believer who indulges in sins of the tongue cannot be distinguished from an unbeliever. The believer is warned in Ephesians 4 not to fall into the life patterns of the unbeliever.

EPH. 4:17-22, 25, 29-32.

Verbal sins can destroy a family or a congregation. Things like gossip, slander, maligning, judging, backbiting, and boasting are malicious, venal, and destructive. James 3:5,6. Troublemakers are always characterized by sins of the tongue. Psalm 52:2.

It is the duty of the pastor to warn against these things. 2 Tim. 2:14-17. And believers are commanded to separate themselves from such troublemakers. Rom. 16:17,18. This separation may be just a turning away or refusal to comment or to reply in a conversation. Separation does not mean ostracism or excommunication except in the worst cases. It means, at first, refusal to participate. Teaching on this topic may involve exhortation and rebuke, as in Titus 2:15. But such teaching, plus the refusal of believers to participated in sins of the tongue, will help the one who is having trouble with this to have victory.

TITUS 1:10,11.

Sins of the tongue produce compounded divine discipline. Ps. 64:8; Matt. 7:1,2. First, there is discipline for the mental attitude sin which motivates the verbal sin. Second, there is discipline for the verbal sin itself. Third, there is discipline for the sins which one assigns to another person in wrongly judging him - "with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Types of Sins of the Tongue

Backbiting - slander, defamation of character, evil speech, detraction. Found in several places in the Bible, including Rom. 1:30 as one of the sins of the immoral person who has rejected God. READ Psalm 15:3; 50:20; 101:5; Proverbs 25:23; Jer. 9:4; Rom. 1:30; 2 Cor. 12:20.

False Witness - lying about people, especially while under oath. Prov. 25:28; Exo. 32:1; Prov. 19:9. Examples of false witness:

- Against Stephen, Acts. 6:11
- Against Paul, Acts 25:7
- Against Christ, Matthew and Mark

Perjury - lying under oath. READ Lev. 6:3; 19:12; Zech. 5:4; Mal. 3:5; 1 Tim. 1:10

Lying - READ Prov. 12:22; 21:6; Col. 3:9; Lev. 19:11; Luke 20:20.

Dissimulation - Faking it, covering up, hypocrisy. Example: calling in sick when not sick. READ 1 Sam. 21:13; Acts 23:12-15; 2 Sam. 14:2; 2 Kings 10:19; Luke 20:20.

Busybody - self-appointed monitor, or one who tries to straighten others out. This word appears as a translation of several Greek originals.

From περιεργος (periergos), verb. (periergomai) "to do something useless or unnecessary". Literally, "to work around". Also used in Greek to mean "undue anxiety" over something which is not really a proper concern.

2 THESS. 3:11.

Also from αλλοτροεπισκοπος (allotroepiskopos), a combining form from αλλοτριος, "belonging to another", and επισκοπις, "bishop". Hence, the busybody is "another man's bishop".

1 PET. 4:15.

Talebearing - slandering, whispering behind backs. Prov. 11:13; 17:9; 18:8

Evil Whispering - Prov. 16:28.

Slander - Psalm 101:5; 50:20; Prov. 10:18; 11:9; 2 Sam. 10:3; Job 1:11; Luke 7:33.

False Accusation - READ 1 Sam. 1:14; Neh. 6:7; Job 2:5; 22:6; Jer. 33:17; Matt. 5:11; 27:12; Luke 6:7; 1 Peter 3:16.

Evil Speaking - READ Ps. 5:9; 10:7; 36:3; 55:21; Prov. 12:18; 24:2; Matt. 12:34; Rom. 3:13; James 3:6; 4:11.

God provides protection for the believer who is, himself, a victim of sins of the tongue. Job. 5:19–21.

Control of the tongue, the absence of verbal sins, is a sign of Christian edification in the believer, and it is a sign of considerable growth in Grace. James 3:2; 4:11,12. By avoiding sins of the tongue, the Christian can lengthen his life and find great happiness. Ps. 34:12,13.

How to Have Victory Over Sins of the Tongue

1. Grow daily in conformity with the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Ask God the Father for provision and protection in this area.
3. Confess this sin each time you are convicted of it.
4. Learn to recognize all of the verbal sins -- some are obvious, some are subtle.
5. Keep silent during discussion of a bad situation.
6. Keep silent during discussion of another person.
7. Keep silent.

RULE: Do not pass on derogatory or uncomplimentary information about anyone, unless the Word of God has given you the specific authority and responsibility to do so, and the person you are information likewise has responsibility in the situation and a need-to-know the information.

THE SIN UNTO DEATH

The phrase "sin unto death" describes the final stage of divine discipline in which God removes from the earth the person who is totally alienated from God. The "sin unto death" is not a particular sin; but it is, rather, a mental attitude of total indifference to and rebellion against the will and purpose of God.

The spiritual condition of the person who comes under the "sin unto death" is characterized by continual and maximum carnality; and this punishment represents God's final step of chastisement to those who are in maximum alienation from God. Only God can discern the true nature of a person's mind, attitude, or volition; and only God knows whether a person is actually implacable and deserving of physical death.

The "sin unto death" is described as a principle in 1 John 5:16; Psalm 118:17,18; and Ezek. 18:21-32.

It is important for the Christian to understand the circumstances under which sins are not "unto death".

First, sin which is confessed is not "unto death". 1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 11:31; Ps. 32:5; Ps. 38.

Second, sin which is discontinued is not "unto death". Heb. 12:1; Eze. 18:21-32.

Finally, the person who responds positively to divine discipline is not involved in the "sin unto death". Heb. 12:6, cf. 12:11-15.

There are definite characteristics by which to recognize the conditions which lead to God's applying the "sin unto death". Persistent, unconfessed sin, sin which continues unchecked with no repentance, may bring a person under this category. Also, the person who persistently ignores Grace, warnings, and discipline may come under the "sin unto death". Lev. 26. Then, sin which has a maximum adverse effect on other people (causing stumbling) may lead a person into severe discipline.

Some case histories of the "sin unto death":

- The case of "lying to the Holy Spirit" (Ananias and Sapphira). Acts 5:1-10.
- The case of persistent carnality while sitting at the Lord's Table, 1 Cor. 11:30,31.
- The case of disobedience to the Word of God. 1 Chron. 10:13,14; 1 Sam. 13:9-14. King Saul did not kill Agag although directly ordered to do so by God; he insisted on personally offering sacrifices in the place of divinely appointed priests; and he consulted a witch, itself a capital offense.
- The case of self-righteousness and dependence on man which was perpetuated (case of Hezekiah). Isa. 38.
- The case of apostasy on the part of a believer. Num. 31:8; 1 Tim. 1:19,20.

SIN'S VICIOUS CIRCLE

One sin leads to another. Sins are chained together and tend to reinforce each other. The Christian must make a conscious effort to halt the progress of sin at the beginning.

Mental attitude sins are the worst sins. They touch off other mental sins, sins of the tongue, and the overt or open sins. And a Christian will experience great self-induced misery in his life unless he learns how to nip sin in the bud through confession and victory. Learning how to recognize certain sin patterns is very useful in helping the believer to be forearmed in the conflict.

The following are some examples of types of "chain sinning" which are to be avoided.

Bitterness is a sin that involves someone else and leads to a chain of sins. Any sin may lead to divine discipline. Even when a sin is confessed, suffering which was begun under discipline may continue (even though the cursing has been turned to blessing in the case of actual suffering). Bitterness may reappear as the hurt continues -- bitterness against God or against other people.

Bitterness has another person as an object. It leads to vindictiveness and implacability. These, in turn, lead to antagonism and revenge tactics. Revenge tactics can include sins of the tongue such as judging, maligning, gossip. Overt sin is possible, including social ostracism (snubbing, shunning, not speaking), harassment, even violence. Murder, for example, is the end result of a chain of sins stemming from bitterness. The Christian living in bitterness tries to sublimate in various ways, alcohol, drugs, emotional experiences, trying to maintain the rosy glow, but he is never satisfied.

Guilt Association is a guilt complex that involves various parts of the soul. The believer keeps bringing up sins of his past; his depression leads to guilt feelings. He begins to associate every trouble in the past with an 'unforgiven' sin of the past. He feels that God is permanently displeased with him. A guilt complex like this leads to blasphemy, that is, accusing God and maligning Him.

This sin leads to a lack of faith, hatred toward God and toward others who might be thought responsible. Remember, when a sin is confessed, God forgets it; and the believer is wrong to remember it. God does not discipline us ten years after the fact. David had 26 good years after the Bathsheba incident.

Public confession of sin is used by people to vent a guilt complex. But the one who confesses publicly is giving out gossip, about himself if no one else. He presents material for temptation to other believers, temptations to judge, to hate, to malign, to gossip. Public confession leads to chain sinning in one's own life and in the lives of others. This is a failure to preserve the privacy of the priesthood. A Christian may reveal sin problems privately to an intimate and confidential friend who is a believer and who is in a position to exhort or counsel from the Word of God. Otherwise, confession is made to God alone.

Intrusion upon divine prerogatives occurs when a believer tries to do the word of God in judging, condemning, disciplining other people. The Bible instructs each person to judge himself; and he may judge and discipline his own children. Otherwise, it's "live and let live".

Gossip, the discussion of problems with outside parties is similar to public confession. It makes problems for people and encourages mental attitude sins and sins of the tongue. It leads to cliques, divisions, mutual admiration societies. This activity is an attempt to build one's happiness on someone else's unhappiness.

Failure to maintain relaxed mental attitude toward others refers to the development of pseudo-love in the life. It does not allow for other peoples' areas of weakness, does not exhibit true love for others. It leads to a failure to forgive, which in turn makes it impossible for the Christian to be in a position to help through example or exhortation.

The solution to all sin problems of this type is edification, spiritual growth through a daily walking in fellowship and the intake of Bible teaching. Also required is a thorough knowledge of the doctrine of Grace, the application of God's gracious assets to the life, and the development thereby of a gracious mental attitude and outward disposition toward other people.

THE PLACE OF CONFESSION IN SOLVING THE SIN PROBLEM

The presence of the Sin Nature in the soul guarantees that the Christian believer will have a problem with active personal sin for the rest of his life on earth. This personal sin causes a deep disturbance in the believer's personal relationship with the Lord. The Holy Spirit is said to be personally "grieved" by a Christian's sin, and His work "quenched" by a Christian's human good. While the believer does not lose his salvation each time he sins, his personal growth and effectiveness are stifled as long as there is a rift in his fellowship with God. This rift is healed by means of the act of personal confession to God of the sin which caused the breach.

Confession of sins is not the basis of salvation. Jesus Christ was judged once for our sins, on the Cross; and He does not need to be judged repeatedly for our sins. The basis of salvation is the individual's personal trust in Christ and His work, rather than confession or any other act which a person might perform to try to win the favor of God. Acts 16:31; John 1:12; Eph. 1:13,14; 2:8,9; 1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21.

A Christian is always "in Christ". Eph. 1:3,5,7. So confession of personal sin is extremely important to the personal spiritual relationship that he has with God. God requires confession of sin as the means of maintaining a close personal walk with Himself. He requires, that is, a continual acknowledgement of His rulership; and confession of sin is the means by which the believer expresses his yieldedness and surrender to the sovereign will of God on a moment by moment basis.

The Lord wants the Christian to have a very useful and happy life, and part of His plan for providing this sort of life is confession of sin.

God Encourages the Believer to Confess Sin

A believer may not be aware, initially, that he can live out of fellowship and that he needs to confess sin. 1 John 1:6; 2:9,10; 2 Pet. 1:9. God both commands and pleads with us to judge ourselves, to confess, and then to forget sins. Isa. 43:26; 1 Cor. 11:28,31; 1 John 1:9; Phil. 3:13,14; Prov. 1:23. Any person who reads the Bible quickly becomes aware of God's intentions in this matter.

Some Christians willfully ignore the commands to confess, leading God to employ more persuasive measures to encourage compliance. These methods include (1) loss of inner peace, Phil. 4:6,7; (2) chastening (discipline), Heb. 12:6; (3) pricking of conscience, Heb. 13:18; and (4) sorrow for sin, Psalm 32. A few Christians manage to ignore even severe chastening for a long time, leading to God's administering the "sin unto death", described in a previous section. The alternative to confession is discipline. Heb. 12:1-5.

The Mechanics of Confession of Sin

Confession does not provide the believer with a license to sin. The attitude that says "I can sin and confess repeatedly because God will always forgive" is sinful in itself because it indicates that the believer does not actually think the same about his sin that God does. That is, there is no real repentance or confession. Nor does confession of sin remove the buildup of callousness or hardness in the soul of the person who has lived apart from God for a long time. This removal of scar tissue is accomplished through edification, the Biblical system for understanding and applying the Word of God.

Confession of sin does not provide an emotional experience, nor is it accompanied by an emotional reaction. God's forgiveness is based on His promise to cleanse, not on how a person feels. And, confession does not always remove the pain or suffering which is the result of the sin itself or which came as a result of divine discipline. Although the cursing is turned to blessing, the suffering may continue; but the suffering may be endured to the glory of God instead.

Some Christians try to get on God's good side through some means other than the confession which is prescribed by God. Sometimes a person thinks that a demonstration of sorrowfulness is called for, or that weeping will impress God with one's contrition. Others "compensate" for their sin by increasing their religious activities.

Some will pray more often and longer and read their Bibles more. Some will try to bribe God with additional tithes and offerings, or with acts of self-denial, sacrifice, or service. Some will present themselves in re-dedication services and attend church functions more often. But these things cannot be substituted for confession of sin. God is interested only in a person's mental attitude toward the sin.

The word "confession" in the New Testament is taken from the Greek word ὁμολογέω, meaning "to cite", "to name", "to classify in the same manner", "to agree with", "to say the same thing as". Confession acknowledges God's rulership in the matter and agrees with His judgment. This is a method of dealing with the disharmony caused by sins which causes no merit to accrue to the person who confesses.

Confession is strictly a Grace provision in which God makes a promise and carries out the function of cleansing. The Christian must (1) confess the sin, 1 John 1:9; (2) forget the sin, Phil. 3:13,14; and (3) isolate the sin, Heb. 12:15.

Since prayer is made only to God the Father (Mark. 2:7), confession is made only to God the Father. Upon the condition of confession, forgiveness is guaranteed and cleansing from all unrighteousness is administered (1 John 1:9). The word "cleanse" refers to the removal of the guilt of the sin. Therefore, the cleansed individual is removed from the condition of discipline, chastening is no longer being administered, and the hindrances to the ministry of the Holy Spirit are removed.

There are several synonyms in the Bible for the word "confess", as follows":

- To "yield" means to confess. Rom. 6:13.
- "Putting off the old man", is tantamount to confession. Eph. 5:14.
- Judging oneself is confession, or leads to it. 1 Cor. 11:31.
- Presenting one's body is analogous to confession. Rom. 12:1.

Principles Derived from the Doctrine of Confession

Walking closer to God is, in reality, an activity in which the believer is more consistent in his relationship with the Lord, more consistent in his confession of sin. While confession does not, in itself, cause one to grow in Christ, there can be no growth in the Spirit as long as one is out of fellowship because of unconfessed sin.

Therefore, confession sets the stage for progress in the Christian life. The ministry of the Holy Spirit depends on uninterrupted fellowship. So Christian growth depends on the unhindered work of the Holy Spirit.

Confession takes the believer out of the sphere where he is producing callous and scar tissue on his soul, and it puts him back in the sphere of the Holy Spirit's control. He can thus produce "gold, silver, and precious stones" rather than "wood, hay, and stubble".

Sin Nature

(See topic of Sin, above)

Sins of the Tongue

(See topics of Sin, above)

Suffering

Introduction

This paper is an outline study to give you a start in thinking about the subject of suffering and to provide a catalogue to the many scripture passages relating to suffering. You would think that such a subject would be dreadful to study, but in the wonderful plan of God, the worst things are always the best things. As you read this article, look up the Bible passages that are indicated and ask the Lord to give you insight into His viewpoint on the issues raised.

We don't have to look far to see that there is a lot of suffering going on in the world. The media provide us with endless information on the plight of unfortunate people all over the world. We are certainly aware that in America most people don't suffer as do people in third world countries.

But we are also aware that we are members of the human race, and that some disaster, small or great, can come at any time without warning, something that makes us one of the statistics. Auto accident, cancer, tornado, volcano, falling airplanes...in fact we can suffer a lot just worrying about all the

things that could happen to us. The Fickle Finger of Fate can zero in at any time with some kind of prime suffering - loss of job, loss of money, house burns down, etc.

The Whole Human Race Suffers

It is a startling fact that part of God's plan for every human being includes a certain amount of suffering. All people suffer: rich or poor, smart or dumb, American or African, Christian or non-Christian. Suffering of some kind is part of God's Plan of Grace, if you can imagine that.

Suffering can be defined as the removal or reduction (some curtailment or loss) of one or more of the things that make up the good things of life as we know it, things we call details of life. Details of life are any of dozens of features that make up a person's life, things related to his personal life, family life, social life, or community and national life. Things like loved ones, friends, money, cars, health, marriage, sex, job, house, possessions, social life, etc., are all details of life; and when you lose one of these things that you enjoy, the result is suffering.

We identify two types of happiness in life. The first type is human happiness which is happiness derived from any of the details of life. The other type is divine happiness which is the inner joy produced as part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of the advancing believer in the Christian Way of Life.

Human happiness is temporary and *dependent*. It lasts only as long as the thing that provides the happiness. It depends on a detail of life to sustain it.

God's happiness is *independent* of anything in this world; it is possible, the Bible says, "to be content in whatsoever state I am", that is, to have a deep inner happiness and contentment that does not depend on other people, material possessions, or circumstances.

One way of describing suffering is to say that suffering comes from the removal of the human happiness. You can see, then, that if a person possesses God's joy (+H), the loss of human happiness is much more tolerable.

Suffering occurs by several means in human life, both for Christians and unbelievers, including the following:

- Suffering by loss of health - physical pain, illness, accident, loss of function, etc.
- Suffering by privation - the lack of something necessary such as food, shelter, clothing, transportation.
- Suffering from the weather - freezing weather or hot, storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, blizzards, as well as earthquakes, volcanoes.
- Suffering from mental anguish - worry, sorrow, anguish, fears, phobias, bitterness, jealousy, not the least of which is "suffering by anticipation".
- Suffering from justice, the long arm of the law, deserved or undeserved.
- Suffering caused by other people. As long as there are two people in the same location...well, you know what I mean.

What About My Rights?

Many of our cares come from somebody's trampling on our rights, or what we think of as our rights. Don't you feel that you have a right to

Privacy

Possessions
Courteous treatment
Dignity
Consideration
Equal treatment
A fair share
Equal opportunity
etc, etc?

But where does it say that I have any rights at all? Do I have the right to be an American, to be in a good family, to be educated, to have enough food every day, to have a house, to be married to a fine person, to have good children, to have enough money?

It is clear from the Scriptures that we really have no rights whatsoever. The Lord has placed us in an environment with a certain supply of the gifts of His grace, and we didn't earn any of them. Everything we have, and everything we are able to obtain, comes as a result of the Grace of God; we have deserved nothing!

One of the most useful practices in the Christian way of life is to "cast all care" on God, as He invites us to do. You can think of this as the act of turning all your rights over to God, which amounts to a practical reliance on God for total provision, including giving to us those rights which He sees fit.

We suffer needlessly because we demand our rights. We have no rights. We have only our just deserts, "the wages of sin is death", which, by the grace of God, have been taken care of by the work of Christ. We are aware that one of the best things we can teach children is to be thankful for what they have, and to stop fretting about what they don't have. Children complain about things not being fair or not being divided equally, but when these traits show up in adults, it is a sign that more growth in grace is needed.

PHIL. 2:1-8

COL. 3:12-17

These passages indicate that the more relaxed a person is with regard to the details of life, the less he will experience the ill effects of some types of suffering. Often the amount of suffering can be limited through having a relaxed mental attitude toward a person or situation. Even severe privation or emotional trauma caused by the sin or hatred of another person can be reduced remarkably by the use of principles of Faith Rest, forgiveness, by relying on the Father for all provision, by allowing God to protect your reputation, etc.

General Suffering in the World

An individual will have his allotted portion of suffering as a member of the human race as described above. Many people have no concept of "all things working together for good." Their main goal in life is to reduce his own suffering to a minimum, even if it means making other people suffer to do it.

God intends, as part of His Plan, for suffering to awaken a person to the reality of the existence of God, to motivate positive volition at the point of God consciousness. Whatever the immediate cause of his suffering, the ultimate reason is that of directing his attention to the person of Jesus Christ. Suffering has a tendency to slow people down, to reduce their arrogance, to reduce their self-righteousness, their self-satisfaction, their self-reliance.

Think about it -- where would you be today if everything had always been rosy, and you were unfailingly prosperous in all areas of life? Would you be going to church, taking in the Word, trying to figure out God's answers to life's dilemmas?

What about people who are suffering great deprivation because of locale (Bangladesh or the Sahel), or because of war, or because of cruel ideologies? Are these things part of the grace of God? An important fact is that God knows the spiritual needs of every person in the world, and He knows every person's mental makeup. Only He can decide what combination of blessing and suffering is the best recipe for encouraging a person to become a Christian. He does not force man's volition; but He will allow circumstances to develop around a person which will direct his attention toward Himself.

Why Believers Suffer

Christians suffer for many reasons, sometimes through no fault of their own. A Christian will experience a normal amount of suffering as part of human existence. But if a believer stays in fellowship with God and grows in Christ consistently, this type of suffering can be a great blessing and an opportunity to witness to other believers and to the unsaved.

Suffering that the Christian Can Avoid

To the backslidden Christian who is out of fellowship and already quite miserable, however, suffering never brings blessing, and everything he touches turns to misery. Even the details of life don't make him happy; and he wastes his years in empty living.

ECCL. 2:1-12

A lot of a Christian's suffering can be avoided, however, and God has provided many remedies for reducing the distress a person causes himself.

You can avoid suffering caused by divine discipline.

Heb. 12:1-15

Psalm 38

Chastisement is avoided by staying in fellowship, confessing sin, forsaking sin, laying aside every weight...that is, choosing to obey God.

You can avoid suffering from failure to isolate sin, resulting in "chain sinning". An example is the failure to forgive an offense. This leads to mental attitude sins such as anger, bitterness, desire for revenge, judging. These, in turn, lead to sins of the tongue, maligning, gossip, false accusations. The offended party suffers worse than the original offender. But the whole chain can be broken by forgiving the other party and confessing the sins in the chain.

You can avoid suffering due to a guilt reaction to sin; the maintaining of a guilt complex. Remember that Christ died for all our sins; He bore the guilt for us. (1 Pet. 3:18; 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21). One may have confessed sin biblically and be in fellowship and still labor under a heavy load of guilt. But this is unbelief. A guilt complex itself is sinful, because one says by this that the Lord has not forgiven. But, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgression from us."

You can avoid suffering which comes from maintaining a lifestyle like the unsaved. This is a life of callousness in the soul, emptiness, blindness, as shown in Eph. 4:17-32. The cure - Bible teaching every day while maintaining fellowship with God.

You can avoid suffering due to the rejection of authority, such as parental authority, school authority, civil authority, military authority, etc.

READ Judges 19 and 10, Matt. 7:29 to 8:13, Jer. 7, and Prov. 30

You can avoid suffering caused by making decisions outside of the plan of God.

- Don't follow a career that takes you away from the Word.
- Don't reject divine principles of marriage (marrying an unbeliever, getting a divorce, etc.)
- Don't follow any "greener pastures" leading or make changes in your circumstances because you think you will be happier in the new situation.
- Don't raise children by human viewpoint instead of doing it God's way.
- In general, don't reject the Word of God, either through neglect or willful disobedience.

You can avoid suffering from failure to have your armor on.

EPH. 6.

The Believer's Undeserved Suffering is Intended for Blessing

The following is a list of reasons why believers in fellowship suffer undeservedly in order to bring blessing to themselves or others.

1. Suffering for the glory of God: Book of Job; Isa. 48:9–11
2. Suffering to comfort others: 2 Cor. 1:3–6
3. Suffering to demonstrate the power of God, the provisions of grace: 2 Cor. 12:8–10
4. Suffering from spiritual growing pains; the testing that strengthens faith: Deut. 8:1–10; James 1:1–6; 1 Pet. 1:7,8; Rom. 5:3
Faster growth means more frequent testing; there is a refining process: Job. 23:10; Isa. 1:18–27; 1 Pet. 1:7
5. Suffering to keep down pride: 2 Cor. 12:6,7; Matt. 26:31–75 (the scattering of the disciples)
6. Suffering to illustrate doctrine (for advanced believers: Book of Hosea)
7. Suffering by association occurs when we have some relationship with someone who is suffering: Rom. 14:7; 1 Cor. 12:26; 1 Chron. 21
8. Suffering to show the fruit of the Spirit and the results of edification: 2 Cor. 4:6–11
9. Suffering to learn the value of doctrine: Psalm 119:65–72
10. Suffering as a witness to Christ: 2 Tim. 2:8–12; John 15:18–21; Acts 5:40–42; 1 Cor. 4:9–16
11. Suffering as a result of exercising a spiritual gift; illustrated by the life of the Apostle Paul
12. Suffering from involvement in spiritual battles, the angelic conflict: Eph. 3:8–13

Promises to Believers Who Suffer

Psalm 34:19,20; Isa. 43:2; 2 Cor. 4:17 and 12:9; 1 Peter 5:10

Uncleanness in the Levitical System

In the Old Testament Times, the Law of Moses declared the following foods to be unclean and not to be eaten. If any of these were touched, the individual had to participate in some form of ceremonial cleansing.

- Animals strangled, or dead by natural causes
- Animals killed by other animals or birds of prey
- Any animal that did not both chew the cud and divide the hoof
- Animals classified as creeping things
- Twenty or so types of birds mentioned in Lev. 11 and Deut. 14
- Any water fish or animal that did not have both fins and scales
- Any insect that had wings that did not also have four legs, with the two back legs for leaping
- Anything offered in sacrifice to idols
- All blood. (Any container which had had blood in it had to be purified.)
- Any flesh cut from a live animal; and any discernible fat

The idea was that any animal was unclean if it bore the image of sin, or death, or of corruption, such as the larger land animals, carnivorous animals or birds, which lie in wait for living things and devour them ("the devil as a roaring lion..."). Also marsh birds and carrion birds which live on worms, carrion, and other impurities; all serpent like fishes and slimy shellfish, and small creeping things, except some kinds of locusts. "...because, partly, they recall the old serpent, partly they seek their food in all sorts of impurities, partly they crawl in the dust and represent corruption in the slimy character of their bodies" (Keil, *Biblical Archaeology*, II, 117 ff).

Anything dead was a source of ceremonial (religious) impurity.

- The dead body of a human being, no matter how he had died, was unclean, as well as the building in which he lay, his clothing, any person who lived in the building or entered it. It was defiling to touch a body or a dead man's bones or a grave. A person defiled in this manner also defiled everything he touched, or any other people he touched, until the evening of the day he was defiled.
- Any animal carcass, clean or unclean, defiled anyone who touched it, until the evening, so that he was required to bathe himself and wash his clothes before being clean again.
- Thus it was equally unclean to touch a dead animal of any kind as it was to touch an unclean animal which was alive.
- There were eight kinds of small animals which spread their defiling influence to inanimate objects. These were weasels, mice, and six species of lizard. If any part of their carcass fell onto a cooking vessel, it was rendered unclean. If water had been contaminated by a dead animal, food which had been prepared in it was contaminated and could not be eaten. If such water had got some seed wet, the food which grew from that seed was polluted.

There were several types of defilement from bodily conditions and diseases

- Leprosy rendered the person unclean until he was completely healed. The leper was required to tear his clothes, to bare his head, to put a covering on his upper lip, and to cry "Unclean" to
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everyone he met. He also had to isolate himself by living outside the camp or city. Houses infected with leprosy were examined by the priest, who, before entering, had all the contents of the house removed in order to prevent everything within from becoming unclean. If symptoms of leprosy were discovered, the house was closed for seven days, after which it was reexamined. If leprosy was still found, the affected stones were removed, along with scrapings of all walls, and the house was carefully replastered. Seven days after this, if there was still infection, the house was torn down and everything was taken outside the city to the place of unclean things.

- Infected clothing was examined after seven days, and if still infected, it was burned. The purification rites for healed lepers is described in Lev. 8 and Lev. 14.
- Any bodily discharge was unclean, and persons affected were considered unclean for a period lasting from seven to sixty-six days, depending upon the cause. Then they had to go through purification rites of cleansing. An unclean person was barred from touching anything holy or coming into the sanctuary.

Union (DAVAQ)

UNION (DAVAQ)

by Dr. Glenn Carnagey

A study of the Hebrew word DAVAQ, "union".

1. DAVAQ - To be glued together so thoroughly that separation is impossible.
 2. Concrete literal illustrations
 - a. Fish glued to the scales of a crocodile. Ezek 29:4
 - b. Scales of the Crocodile to one another. Job 41:9 & 15
 - c. Clods of Dirt to each other. Job 38:38
 - d. Forming an alloy of two metals. Isa 41:7
 - e. Soldering the two opposing wings of the Cherubs over the Mercy Seat. II Chron 3:12
 - f. Links of armor on chain mail. II Chron 18:33; I K 22:34
 3. DAVAQ is used of various parts of the body being attached to various things.
 - a. The bones are attached to the skin of the body. Job 19:20; Ps 102:6
 - b. The hand of a warrior becomes glued to his sword. II Sam 23:10
 - c. The tongue gets glued to the roof of the mouth (Lam 4:4; Ezek 3:26; Job 29:10; Ps 137:6), or to the Gums as in Christ's case on the cross. Ps 22:16
 - d. Belly of a person sticking to the ground in fear. Ps 44:25
 - e. Soul cleaving to the dust in depression. Ps 119:25
 - f. Loins attached to the girdle. Jer 13:11
 4. Carnality is represented by a stain (sin) glued to the hand of the Believer (a la Macbeth), Job 31:7. It also refers to a person being glued to particular sins. II Kings 3:3
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5. Being glued to the CHEREM (Devoted Thing) is an idiom for being in monetary reversionism (Dt 13:17), and of religious reversionism as Solomon was glued in love to the Apostate

Nations that surrounded Israel (I K 11:2) and as the people of Israel went back to the gods of those nations. Josh 23:12

6. In return God glues discipline on the backsliding believer in order to reclaim him.

a. Israel was to receive diseases (Dt 28:60), famine (Jer 42:16), and pestilence (Deut 28:21).

b. Gehazi had leprosy glued to him for his monetary reversionism. II K 5:27

c. Lot was afraid that Evil would attach itself to him even in the mountains. Gen 19:19

7. In the military realm DAVAQ means to give hot pursuit to or to overtake & destroy the enemy.

a. Used of pursuing an enemy.

(1) The Eleven Tribes pursued after the Tribe of Benjamin. Judges 20:42,45

(2) Israel pursuing after the Philistines. I Sam 14:22

(3) Philistines pursuing Saul. I Chron 10:2; I Sam 31:2

(4) David's soldiers pursuing after David. II Sam 1:6

b. Used of overtaking and destroying the enemy.

(1) Laban overtaking Jacob. Gen 31:23

(2) Micah's neighbors overtaking the Danites. Judges 18:22

8. DAVAQ is used of the attitude a believer should have towards bible truth; he should pursue it doggedly, overtake it and then glue himself to it so that it merges with his soul. Ps 119:31

9. Hence the mature believer develops all categories of love, and his attachment in all three is unbreakable.

a. Love towards God: Deut 11:22; 30:20; Josh 22:5; 23:8; Deut 10:20; 13:4; Ps 63:8; II K 18:6; Jer 13:11

b. Love towards spouse. Gen 2:24

- Note this is a soul love as in Shechem the Hivite prince to Dinah. Gen 34:3

- NT uses (proskollaomai). Mt 19:5; Mk 10:7

c. Love towards friends as in Ruth sticking with the workers of Boaz. Ruth 2:8, 21 & 23

d. Love towards family (#4) as in Ruth gluing herself to Naomi (Ruth 1:14) and the People gluing themselves to their King (II Sam 20:2).

10. Once the believe grows to maturity, he is to glue himself to God's blessings for him so as not to lose them. Num 36:7; Num 36:9

- Each member of the tribe was to hold onto his land and each tribe was to hold onto its territory.

11. Jesus Christ has glued himself in Grace to every Believer with an unbreakable bond. Prov 18:24

Union with Christ

At the time of his personal salvation, the Christian believer enters into a spiritual union with Jesus Christ and remains in that position forever. "Positional Truth" is the formal title for that wide class of Bible teaching on the subject of the Christian's position in (union with) Jesus Christ.

Union with Christ makes available to the believer a great number of spiritual benefits. These benefits can be used and enjoyed continuously during the believer's remaining lifetime and will continue into eternity.

The nature of the believer's position in Christ was foretold by the Lord Jesus Himself: (1) in the Bread of Life discourse, JOHN 6:56; (2) in the Good Shepherd discourse, JOHN 10:16; and (3) in the Upper Room discourse, JOHN 14:20.

The Christian is placed spiritually in Christ through a mechanism known as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. These mechanics are described in 1 COR. 12:13 and GAL. 3:27,28. (A study of the seven baptisms of the Bible is a prerequisite to an understanding of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.)

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit was foretold by Christ in ACTS 1:5,8. This occurred for the first time on the Day of Pentecost, ACTS 2:1-4 cf. 11:15,16. Therefore, Union with Christ was experienced by believers for the first time on the Day of Pentecost, making it an experience unique to Church Age believers.

Union with Christ is a fact for all believers, spiritual or carnal. 1 COR. 1:2; cf. 1:11; 3:1-4

The believer's position in Christ makes him a "new creature" in Christ, 2 COR. 5:17.

The Christian is "in Christ" and has become a "new creature" in that he has a new birth, a new human spirit, and has the ability now to have fellowship with God. "Old things have passed away", spiritual death is done away, and "all things are become new", spiritual life is begun.

Union with Christ has several immediate results for every believer:

- Regeneration: Titus 3:5; John 3:5,6; Eph. 2:1-5.
- The Indwelling Holy Spirit: 1Cor. 6:19
- The Sealing of the Holy Spirit: Eph. 1:13; 4:30.
- The Baptism of the Holy Spirit: 1 Cor. 12:13.
- Spiritual Gifts: 1 Cor. 12:11.

The following is a list of the characteristics of the believer's Union with Christ:

- Union with Christ is a fact, not an experience. One is united with Christ regardless of how he feels.
- Union with Christ is not progressive; it cannot be improved upon; we receive it in total at salvation.
- Union with Christ is not commanded by God; it is given by God at salvation.
- This Union is permanent; it will never be taken away; it does not depend upon our faithfulness; it depends on the faithfulness of God.

This doctrine can be understood only with a thorough study of the related Bible passages.

Union with the Lord Jesus Christ is a guarantee of eternal security, ROM. 8:35–39; 1 JOHN 5:11,12; ROM. 8:1.

Union with Christ is current in that the believer is identified with Christ in His life and shares with Christ in certain aspects of His life, Eph. 3:1-14.

- We share in His election, EPH. 1:4.
- We share in His destiny, EPH. 1:5,11.
- We share in His sonship, EPH. 1:5; HEB. 2:10; GAL. 3:26.
- We obtain the +Righteousness of Christ, 2 COR. 5:21.
- We share in Christ's inheritance, ROM. 8:16,17; GAL. 4:7.
- We share in His holiness, 1 COR. 1:30.
- We share His priesthood, 1 PET. 2:5,9.
- We share in His Kingdom, COL. 1:13; 2 PET. 1:11.
- We share in His resurrection, EPH. 2:6.
- We share in His life, EPH. 2:5; COL. 2:13; 1 JOHN 5:11,12.

In Him we have redemption and forgiveness of sins, EPH. 1:7; COL. 1:14.

Union with Christ makes every believer equal at the point of salvation, GAL. 3:27,28.

Union with Christ makes the believer perfect in the sight of God, COL. 2:9,10.

BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF UNION WITH CHRIST:

- Vine and Branches, JOHN 15
- Head and Body, EPH. 1:22,23
- Bridegroom and Bride, REV. 19:7-9; 21:9; EPH. 5:27
- Shepherd and Flock, JOHN 10:16
- Chief cornerstone and building, 1 PET. 2:4,5
- High Priest and Priesthood, HEB. 4:14; 5:5,6,10, cf. 1 PETER 2:5

Union with Christ is the doctrinal basis for spirituality, ROM. 6:1-13.

Union with Christ is the basis for the spiritual technique of occupation with Christ, COL. 3:1-4.

Union with Christ is illustrated by and testified to by water baptism. The believer is identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

Volitional Responsibility

by Mark Perkins

The Law of Volitional Responsibility: People who choose for God are blessed; those who choose against Him suffer.

The Law of Volitional responsibility is well documented by Scripture.

Job 4:8-9, "**As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it. At the breath of God they are destroyed; at the blast of his anger they perish.**

Prov 11:18, "**The wicked man earns deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward.**

1. The deceptive wages are the result of bad decisions.
2. The deceptive wages shortchange the work of sin, making sin never worth it.

Prov 22:8, "**He who sows wickedness reaps trouble, and the rod of his fury will be destroyed.**

Hosea 8:7, "**They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no head; it will produce no flour. Were it to yield grain, foreigners would swallow it up.**

Hosea 10:12, "**Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.**

2 Cor 9:6, "**Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.**

Gal 6:7-8, "**Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.**

James 3:18 "**Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.**

The law of volitional responsibility is a built in function of divine discipline (see below). It is a law as universal as gravity, and no less impressive in its effects.

The law of volitional responsibility can be summed up in the phrase, "You will reap what you sow." This means that the seeds that you plant in bad decisions will grow up to cause suffering in your life.

In the law of volitional responsibility, the suffering is always appropriate to the original bad decision.

1. If the decision is in the realm of finance, then you will suffer financially.
2. If the decision is in the realm of romance, then you will suffer romantically.
3. If the decision is in the realm of social life, then you will suffer socially.
4. If the decision is in the realm of your chosen profession, then you will suffer professionally.

In the law of volitional responsibility, bad decisions, like crime, never pay. You never 'get away' with a bad decision. You never slip a fast one by God, even on a small scale.

In the law of volitional responsibility, good decisions never go unnoticed by the omnipresence of God.

There will always be a difference between right and wrong. Always to eternity.

Choosing right over wrong will always be important.

Walking, Christian

Introduction

Besides the examples of physical walking in the Bible, there are many references to two types of spiritual walking:

- Walking which is advancing in the Christian life through the use of divine power, and

- Walking in Evil (controlled by the sin nature and using human energy), resulting in stagnation, retrogression, or backsliding.

So, in walking, a Christian is either advancing or retreating. To advance, a believer must walk according to God's plan, stay in fellowship, and grow in Christ. To retreat in the spiritual life is to reside in Satan's cosmic system (Evil).

Therefore, "walking" denotes many functions, both pro and con, in the spiritual life.

New Testament Words for Walking.

The Greek word (**peripatew**) means to walk or to walk around. It is used for literal walking in Matt. 4:18. But **peripatew** is used primarily for the function of the plan of God in the Church Age in such passages as:

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk (**peripatew**) in newness of life.

Gal. 5:16,17 But I say, walk (**peripatew**) by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Eph. 4:1,2 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk (**peripatew**) in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love,

Eph. 5:1,2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk (**peripatew**) in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

The spiritual walk of believers who are out of fellowship is described in the following:

1 Cor. 3:1-3 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking (**peripatew**) like mere men?

Phil. 3:17-19 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk (**peripatew**) according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk (**peripatew**), of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

The way of life of an unbeliever is also described by the word "walk":

Eph. 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked (**peripatew**) according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Col. 3:5-7 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked (**peripatew**), when you were living in them.

The Greek word (**stoichew**) means “to march in step; to march in rank; to walk in agreement with; to function in a system; to follow a leader from the ranks”. It is used in the New Testament primarily for functioning under God’s plan and advancing in that plan to spiritual maturity.

Gal. 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk (stoichew) by the Spirit.

stoichew is used for the pattern of salvation by faith in Christ (walking by faith).

Rom. 4:11,12 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps (stoichew) of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

stoichew is used for following the rules of the new spiritual life in

Gal. 6:16 And those who will walk (stoichew) by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Phil. 3:16 however, let us keep living by that same standard (stoichew) to which we have attained.

The word (**poreuomai**) means “to go; to proceed; to travel; to conduct oneself in a certain manner; to live; to walk”. It is used for national degeneration:

Acts 14:16 And in the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go (poreuomai) their own ways;

It is used for the carnal life pattern of the unbeliever:

1 Pet. 4:3 For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued (poreuomai) a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

Jude 16,18 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after (poreuomai) their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage. But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there shall be mockers, following after (poreuomai) their own ungodly lusts."

2 Pet. 2:10 and 3:18

It is used for occupation with the person of Jesus Christ on the part of believers:

Acts 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and, going on (poreuomai) in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

The Greek (**anastrephw**) originally meant in the Attic Greek “to upset; to overrun; to associate.” Its figurative meaning was “to behave” or “to function in terms of human conduct.” It was also used for the practice of principles.

In the Bible, **anastrephw** is used for the conduct and the lifestyle of the unbeliever in Eph 2:3.

It is used for motivation for Christian integrity.

Heb. 13:18 Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct (anastrephw) ourselves honorably in all things.

It is used for the operation of the sin nature.

Eph. 4:22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside (anastrephw) the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

It is used for life and conduct in Christian way of life.

2 Pet. 3:11,12 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct (anastrephw) and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

The Greek word (**orthopedew**) means "to walk straight." It is used for legalistic modus operandi and resultant hypocrisy in Gal 2:14; in other words, they were not walking straight.

Walking in the Light vs Walking in Darkness

"Walking in the light" is a term used specifically for the believer's execution of God's will, plan and purpose for the Church Age. The concept of walking in the light is found in Eph 5:8, "You were once in darkness [spiritual death], but now you are light in the Lord. Begin walking (**peripatew**) as children of light."

This command is a reference to experiential sanctification. Walking in the light is synonymous for the Christian way of life.

Just as walking in the darkness is incompatible with walking in light, so Christian degeneracy is incompatible with the plan of God.

Walking in the light is compatible with the status of being in the light. Walking in darkness is not compatible with the status of being in the light. A Christian walking in darkness is degenerate, whether moral, immoral, or both.

The command to walk in the light means that God intends for a Christian to be filled with the Spirit and to learn the Word of God under the filling of the Spirit.

The Lord Jesus is our precedent for walking in the light:

1 John 2:6 "The person who says he abides in Him, he himself ought to keep walking in the same manner as He walked."

Our example for the Christian walk is the Lord Jesus Christ during the His life on earth, not Old Testament believers.

Walking as children of light means we are to become spiritually mature believers.

The power for walking comes from using the power of the Holy Spirit on the inside, Gal 5:16, "walk by means of the Spirit." This is a command to remain in fellowship with God the Holy Spirit. Being in fellowship is the only way we can execute God's plan.

Walking describes the purpose of living in the operational will of God to glorify God in the Church Age.

We are commanded in 1 Thess. 2:12, "so that you may walk in a manner worthy of God who elected you into His kingdom and glory." This is a general reference to the fulfillment of the plan of God.

If we are going to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord after we believe in Christ, then we must be filled with the Spirit, and continually expose ourselves to the teaching of the Word of God.

If we do all of this, then we fulfill 1 John 1:7, "If we keep walking in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin."

The challenge of walking in the light is found in Rom. 6:4, "Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism, in order that as Christ has been raised from the dead, so that we too might walk in newness of life."

- Walking in newness of life means we walk in the light of the Word of God.
- We walk in newness of life because we are in union with Christ.

- Walking in newness of life means using all of the assets God has provided for us: the availability of divine power; the indwelling of the Trinity; our portfolio of spiritual blessings; our universal priesthood and ambassadorship, etc.

The faith-rest principle is also a mandate for walking. Faith-rest exercise provides the poise of the Christian life. With faith-rest you control your own life under God's plan for your life.

2 Cor. 5:7 For we walk by faith and not by sight.

Col. 2:6 As you have received Christ Jesus to yourselves, so keep walking by means of Him.

The concept of walking is used for the function of problem solving in the Christian way of life.

Eph. 5:1,2 Become imitators of your God as beloved posterity, and begin walking in the sphere of love...

Learning and using the problem solving devices moves you along in executing the plan of God, which is walking in the light.

Eph. 4:1,2 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, encourage you to walk in a manner worthy of your station in life [royal family of God] into which you have been called with all humility and true sensitivity with perseverance, tolerate one another by means of love.

as unwise, but as wise.

All of these commands to keep walking are commands to keep learning doctrine, to keep advancing spiritually in the Christian way of life.

Walking in Darkness is Related to Satan's Strategy of Evil

Walking is used as a warning against the cosmic system. John 8:12 is the prophecy of this.

Living in Satan's system is called walking.

Phil. 3:18,19 For many [believers] keep walking, concerning whom I have often told you, even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ. Whose termination is destruction, whose God is their emotions, whose fame comes by means of dishonor, who keep on thinking about earthly things.

1 John 1:6 If we contend that we have fellowship with Him and keep walking in darkness, we lie and do not live the truth.

1 Cor. 3:3 For you are still carnal, since there is jealousy and strife. And you keep walking in accordance with men.

Life in the cosmic system (Evil) is called walking in darkness.

John 11:9,10 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.

Eph. 4:17-19

Walking is Related to Executing God's Plan.

Eph. 2:10 For we are His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared in advance that we should be walking by means of them.

- At salvation we became His creation, a new spiritual species.
- We are to walk by means of the things prepared by God for us in eternity past, such as the problem solving devices. The result is divine good: gold, silver, precious stones

Col. 1:9,10

This is the point at which you fulfill all the commands for walking.

Walking is used for a mandate to advance to the objective of spiritual maturity.

1 Thess. 4:1**More References to Walking**

Walking by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit:

Rom. 8:1-4 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Basic Christian living: we received Christ by faith, so now we walk by faith.

2 Cor. 5:7 For we walk by faith and not by sight.

Col. 2:6 As you have received Christ Jesus to yourselves, so keep walking in Him.

Building up momentum in spiritual things:

3 John 4 I was very pleased because I discovered that some of your children keep walking by means of doctrine even as we have received a mandate from the Father.

Eph. 5:15-18; Col. 1:9,10.

Walking related to the application of doctrine:

Col. 4:5,6 Keep walking in wisdom toward outsiders; keep purchasing the time. Your doctrine must always be applied in grace, having been seasoned with salt, so that you should know how to respond to every person.

Eph 5:1-2

Testing as part of the Christian walk:

Rom. 13:13,14; Eph. 4:17; Phil. 3:18,19

Witnessing

Ephesians 6:15, "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

We are to be ready at any time to minister the gospel. Note that all believers are included in this command. Every Christian is in full time Christian service, always on the front line.

Even a Christian who doesn't want to fight is in the conflict. A soldier may be untrained or in poor condition and drop beside the road before the enemy is reached. Or he may be killed in the first skirmish.

The primary thrust of evangelism is through the individual. There is a place for those with the spiritual gift of evangelism; but these men can reach only a specialized segment of the population. Individual believers circulate throughout the community in various functions. They have jobs; they belong to clubs; they have certain friends. The principle of witnessing for Christ is that you do it in your own environment.

Preparation implies the ability to fight. Preparation means flexibility and the ability to use God's Word in witnessing. Knowledge of the basic doctrines of salvation is necessary for witnessing (not salesmanship techniques). You need to know about Reconciliation, Propitiation, Redemption, Imputation, Regeneration, and The Barrier, as a starter. You don't have your shoes on your feet without this preparation.

And your feet shod ..."to bind with sandals". The sandal was the GI boondocker for the Roman army. This is a reference to the foot soldier slogging it out. The infantryman fights with the least glamor and the highest casualties.

While the Greek soldier wore greaves to protect his ankles, the Roman soldier wore a heavy soled sandal which had metal studs on the bottom for good footing on uneven or slippery ground. This shoe was known in Latin as the caligula, so the foot soldier was called caligatus. Officers wore different footgear.

with the preparation of - etoimasia, refers to full preparedness, being able to march great distances in order, with others, and over a long period of time, to use weapons effectively.

the gospel of peace...

Notes on personal witnessing

- Witnessing for Christ is the responsibility of every believer. Acts 1:8; 1 Pet. 3:15; Mk. 5:18,19.
 - The effectiveness and clarity of the believer's witnessing depends, in large measure, on his understanding of the Last Judgment. Sins will not be the issue! The only reason that a person will stand at the Last Judgment is that he rejected Christ during his lifetime. John 3:18; 3:36. All sins have been judged at the Cross, and there is no double jeopardy.
 - The basis for the indictment of unbelievers is human good, not sins. The witnessing Christian must make the issue clear.
 - Witnessing is impossible apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit. John 16:8-11. And the Holy Spirit must minister to the unbeliever to apply the doctrine of salvation.
 - The context for witnessing is that part of the Word of God called the Gospel. 1 Cor. 1:18; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12.
 - The dynamics of witnessing depends on the believer's mental attitude. One cannot be an effective witness if he is ashamed of the Gospel, if he does not have the capacity to be occupied with Christ, or if he is not oriented to Grace.
 - In Rom. 1:14-16, the apostle Paul says "I am debtor", "I am ready", and "I am not ashamed". A fisherman has a desire to fish. One is not a "fisher of men" without a desire to win souls.
 - There are two sources for a Christian's witness: (1) the testimony of his life, 2 Cor. 3:3, and (2) the testimony of his lips, 2 Cor. 5:14-21.
 - There is a reward for witnessing. 1 Cor. 3:11-16; 2 Cor. 5:10. Rewards in heaven are an extension of edification; the only things that are rewarded in heaven is what is done on the basis of Grace. Thus, every reward in heaven is an eternal memorial to the grace of God. Grace means that rewards do not reflect any personal glory or merit. It is the Lord who enables us to labor for Him and who provides the divine production in the life (gold, silver, and precious stones).
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