

Didaskalos Ministries

Systematic Theology

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A Systematic Theology is a work that takes the very simplest, basic Doctrines of the Bible, teaches these Doctrines, then using these teachings as a springboard progresses toward the more difficult Doctrines. The next study will always build on the one just taught.

With the wealth of information already at this site I'm sure you're wondering "Why do we need a Systematic Theology? After all, many of these studies are presented as stand alone material elsewhere on the site". Yes, that's true, some of the Doctrines found in this Systematic Theology are indeed found as "stand alone" studies elsewhere on this site. The Systematic Theology will show how these Doctrines interrelate with the other truths of the Scripture. Systematic Theology is also a good place for new Christians to start. Some of the works at this site are definitely not geared toward the new Believer, but assume that you understand certain basic Doctrines necessary for that study. This is often not the case, as I have found when answering my e-mail. If you follow the Systematic Theology in the order it is presented, you shouldn't have any problems understanding the deeper studies presented later in this work.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of studying and applying the Word of God to your lives. Failure to understand the Word has caused carnality and division in our modern day Church. The following article is quoted, in it's entirety, from a recent Baptist Press release (underlined emphasis is mine):

Emptiness of carnal Christianity noted to seminarians

by Jess Moody (By Cindy Kerr)

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Southern Baptists are reaping "a harvest of division" because many are living a Christianity that is not Spirit-filled, Jess Moody told students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"I'm not talking about speaking in tongues or a word of knowledge," said the retired pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Baptist in Van Nuys, Calif., and current adjunct teacher of pastoral ministry and evangelism at Southwestern.

"I'm talking about what George Truett, Lee Scarborough and B.H. Carroll preached years ago that Baptists stopped preaching 30 years ago. Now we're reaping a harvest of division from our carnal Christianity."

Moody said he believes God wants revival at Southwestern.

"That doesn't infer that we're a bunch of corrupt bureaucrats. It means that so many of us have been shamelessly untaught concerning the ministry and power of the Holy Spirit in a human being's life," he said at the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary Oct. 22.

"Baptists are stuck at the new birth and that's it. If revival doesn't come here, we are in a big mess nationally. You are tomorrow for the Southern Baptist Convention," he told the seminary students.

"The Holy Spirit is the Edsel of the Southern Baptist Convention according to Herschel Hobbs," Moody added. "I'm not criticizing what Baptists don't do -- we'll get to heaven all right, but we'll be stripped of our rewards if we walk all during our ministry as carnal Christians."

Moody said a marked difference exists between how carnal Christians and Spirit filled Christians treat other people.

"Carnal Christians order people around, direct everything, command, threaten, fire, preach at, judge, criticize, blame, name-call, ridicule, shame, probe and make rotten husbands, wives and pastors," he said. "They're not able to accomplish anything and wonder why when they stand up and preach and extend an invitation, no one comes forward.

"But if you're filled with the mighty, loving Holy Spirit, he will console, reassure and sympathize with you so you can support, trust, have the power to interpret, analyze, suggest, diagnose, praise, suggest, advise and model."

Much of the blame begins in the pulpit, Moody said.

"Chaucer said, 'If the gold rusts, what shall the iron do?' What are those folks going to do out there if we put in the pulpit carnal men of God?" he asked.

"Called, born again, saved for sure, but missing the marvelous truth that we must not lose -- the filling of the Holy Spirit."

Citing his own efforts to duplicate Christ's life in his, Moody said only the Holy Spirit can do that work. He added people can't always tell who's walking in the Spirit and who's not.

"Trying to live the Christian life in your own flesh is like riding a bike with square wheels in mud up to your waist," he said. "People doing that are miserable, even if they may be posing as great pastors, as great denominational leaders, as great professors and students."

At stake is not the believer's salvation, Moody said, but the church's mission to reach the world for Christ. "We will never change the world until all of us are filled with the Holy Spirit," he said.

Using the acronym RIBS, Moody said five things happen to Christians when they accept Christ as Savior. They are Reborn, Indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9, 11; John 3:3), Baptized into Christ's death (Romans 6:3) and Sealed. The fifth thing, he said, is that they are filled with the Spirit.

"You can't lose your ribs," said Moody, "but you can lose your filling" by grieving the Spirit (Romans 4:30) and quenching the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19), making the person a carnal Christian.

The good news is that carnal Christians can be filled with the Holy Spirit again, Moody said, citing 1 John 1:9. "If you confess your sins, remember that God will forgive you and cleanse you of the sins you can remember, plus the ones you can't," he said.

He added praying for the Holy Spirit to come is not the answer. Instead, he said, Christians should "pray for the Holy Spirit to come out."

Faith in God's power to act and believing he will also are important to being filled with the Holy Spirit, Moody said.

"I believe in miracles. I believe in God's healing power. I believe God can do anything we will allow him to do," he said. "By his strange design, he has made our willingness one of the conditions for Great Awakening."

The greatest miracle, Moody said, is the power of Jesus Christ to transform lives. "When I talk about a miracle, the new birth is a greater miracle than turning water into wine," he said.

Before anyone start the old "ah ha, but I'm not a Baptist" routine, be aware that I've been associated with nearly every Protestant denomination in America and witnessed the same thing. The farther we move from the applied truths of God's Word, the more carnal and ineffective we become. It's time to get back to the Bible, regardless of denomination. Let His truths stand supreme. Live by the written Word, or else be satisfied with a empty, ineffective Christian walk on this

earth. The choice is certainly up to you!

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Study 1: The Strength of the Word of God; It's Influence on the Christian Belief; Secular Logic; The necessity of Dogma within the Biblical Realm

Study 2: How God is Revealed Unto Man; How We Must Know There is a Supreme Being; A Study In The Scientific Witness

Study 3: Defining The Almighty One True God Through His Name and Attributes

Study 4: The Doctrine of the Triune God; Continuing The Study of the Incommunicable Attributes, And The Compound Unity of God

Study 5: The Essence, Person, Union, and Life Of The Logos, The Christ

Study 6: The Doctrines of Grace

Study 7: The Doctrine of Sanctification, And It's Four Theological Aspects

Study 8: The Holy Spirit and Regeneration

Study 9: The Holy Spirit's Work of Baptism and Filling, The Spiritual Gifts

Study 10: The Absolutes of Salvation, The Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints, Biblical Evidence to Support "Eternal Security"

Study 11: The Holy Spirit of God, His dealing with man, and work among the Church of God

Study 12: God's Design Of The Family; Roles of Man And Woman In Both Church and Family

Study 13: God's Design Of The Family; The Christian Man

Study 14: Dispensational Theology - Mankind From Birth to Infinity

**Study 15: Soteriological
Concerns - (1) Of Repentance
and Water Baptism: Can Our
Works Secure Our Salvation? (2)
Mustard Seed Faith (3) Will
Blaspheme of the Spirit Cause
My Damnation?**

**Addendum: Why should I study the
Scriptures systematically?**

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Deacons are to be men of character that others look up to and admire. They are to men of their word, and someone you can count on to accomplish the tasks that are put before them. They are to be Spirit control men who love the Lord more than they love the world and the things in this world. They believe God's Word is true when it says, "*No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon*" (Luke 16:13). They are called Christians, because that is the word which best describes their character. They are not perfect men, but men who are running the Christian life to win regardless of the obstacles that they encounter. If they stumble, they get up and resume the race. When they see a need, they help without being asked to. They are more than just servants of the church, they are servants of the King.

[Other Works
by Pastor
Willmouth](#)

... from Doctor Joseph "Mike" Willmouth's Sermon:
["The High Calling of Deacons"](#)

July 25

This Gospel of Christ is the same Gospel I preach, that any Christian minister preaches. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Christ was buried in a tomb, and on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures. He was seen by Peter, then of all the Apostles, and then of five hundred brethren in the Lord. Then He was seen of James, then of all the Apostles (this being the eleven faithful disciples, minus Judas – who killed himself).

This is the Gospel. This is the “good news” that Jesus Christ saves. Yet, even having acknowledged the truth that Jesus Christ died, and rose again, and that by believing on Him I have eternal life – do I truly understand what it means when I say “Jesus saves”? What did the work of Christ accomplish, exactly accomplish, when I believed on Him? Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the past President of Dallas Theological Seminary, stated:

In turning to the Scriptures to discover what it has pleased God to reveal of His saving work in the individual at the instant he believes, it will be found that there are at least thirty-three distinct positions into which such an one is instantly brought by the sufficient operation of the infinite God. All of these transformations are superhuman, and, taken together, form that part of salvation which

Excerpt from
Pastor David's
["The Benefits of
Salvation, Part 1"](#)

[Other Works by
Pastor David](#)

is already the portion of every one who has believed.

Why do we study these things? Because, Beloved, if a person fails to understand what Christ has done for him – what was accomplished by our Savior – then that person has no capacity for life. Today many Christians walk in this life as if they are no better endowed than the unbeliever in their pathway. This is not true. Christians are well endowed from the moment of their salvation to accomplish that which Christ has commissioned them to do. It is a sad fact that many Christians have wandered away from the life of God in Christ because they have failed to understand their position in our Father's Kingdom.

August 13

This was God's expressed judgment on the lack of fire in one of the Seven Churches, and it is His indictment against individual Christians for the fatal want of sacred zeal. In prayer, fire is the motive power. Religious principles which do not emerge in flame, have neither force nor effect. Flame is the wing on which faith ascends; fervency is the soul of prayer. It was the "fervent, effectual prayer" which availed much. Love is kindled in a flame, and ardency is its life. Flame is the air which true Christian experience breathes. It feeds on fire; it can withstand anything, rather than a feeble flame; and it dies, chilled and starved to its vitals, when the surrounding atmosphere is frigid or lukewarm.

True prayer, must be aflame. Christian life and character need to be all on fire. Lack of spiritual heat creates more infidelity than lack of faith. Not to be consumingly interested about the things of heaven, is not to be interested in them at all. The fiery souls are those who conquer in the day of battle, from whom the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and who take it by force. The citadel of God is taken only by those, who storm it in dreadful earnestness, who besiege it, with fiery, unabated zeal.

Nothing short of being red hot for God, can keep the glow of heaven in our hearts, these chilly days. The early Methodists had no heating apparatus in their churches. They declared that the flame in the pew and the fire in the pulpit must suffice to keep them warm. And we, of this hour, have need to have the live coal from God's altar and the consuming flame from heaven glowing in our hearts. This flame is not mental vehemence nor fleshy energy. It is Divine fire in the soul, intense, dross-

**Excerpt from
E.M. Bound's
"The Necessity of
Prayer"**

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consuming -- the very essence of the Spirit of God.

July 27

from [Matter of FAX](#)

by **Dr. Joe McKeever**

First Baptist Church of Kenner, Louisiana

A young minister asked a veteran pastor, " Was there ever a time in your ministry when you just wanted to quit?" The old-timer leaned back and thought for a moment and said, "Well, how many Mondays are there in forty years?"

This morning---Monday, as I write---I do not want to think about how to solve the Iraqi situation, how to deal with the energy problems of the Northeast, what to do about the West Virginia copycat killer, whether gays should have the right to marry, the Southern Decadence festival and attendant debaucheries that went on in our French Quarter this weekend, or college coaches who funnel money to their players then tell them to lie about it. I'll solve all of these issues tomorrow. Monday is for other things.

On Mondays, I need to rest my spirit. That surprises some people.

A relative of ours once told my mother (who has two preacher sons), "I wish my boys had become pastors so they would have good salaries and not have to work hard." Mom just listened and smiled. When she told me, I said, "You know, I grew up on the farm. I cleaned out stables and built fences and plowed. In college, I worked at the train station, and after college, I worked in a cast iron pipe plant. But I have worked far harder as a pastor than I ever did in those jobs. You may quote me on this."

August 20

"There's someone out in The shed!" Mary nudged her husband awake. Todd swung himself out of bed, threw open The curtains and peered into The darkness outside The window. Then as his view became clearer, he could make out The flitting beams of light through The windows of his back yard storage shed. Burglars! He reached for The bedside phone and called The police.

"There's someone breaking into my storage shed!" He told The dispatcher as he gave his address.

"I've got some valuable tools and equipment in there!"

"Is there anyone in The shed?" The dispatcher asked.

"No, we're all in The house but you've got to send an officer out there!"

"We're shorthanded at The moment and I don't have anyone available. sir," The dispatcher told him. "Just lock your doors and stay in The house and I'll send someone as soon as I can."

Todd hung up and thought a minute, growing more frustrated and angry by The moment. Obviously, The police had different priorities than he did! Then he got an idea, and called again.

"I just called a minute ago about burglars in my storage shed and you said you couldn't send anyone because you didn't have anyone available." He told The dispatcher. "Well, you don't have to worry about sending anyone since I've taken care of The situation myself. I shot them."

He hung up and within a few seconds... " (from "The Right Call")

Excerpt From
Anne Adams new
[DUFFS and
Encounters With
God](#)

[Other Works
by Anne Adams](#)

July 9

I recently read a book that bears the title of my sermon, titled: [Living Above Your Circumstances](#), by *Bob George*. Upon completion of the book, as I always do I record the date, and add my initials just inside the cover page. Sometimes I will add a comment along with the date and my initials. In this book, I wrote, "*Read on 5/22/03, while going through difficult circumstances at church. I thank the Holy Spirit for leading me to read this book.*"

This book, along-side the Word of God, with much prayer, has helped me through difficult days and although I have not yet fully arrived to the place I want to be, I am learning that one can live above one's circumstaces.

Excerpt From Dr.
Benny Wood's
sermon:
[Living Above Our
Circumstances](#)

[Other Works
by Pastor Woods](#)

In this message, based on Habbakuk 3:17-19, I will share with you three basic principles that have sustained me through difficult circumstances, and I believe that they will help you as well if you will make application of them to your life..

August 1

Important Announcements

If you would like to post a link to this ministry - I would be more than honored! If you like, you can use the following image:

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Didaskalos Ministries

Systematic Theology

STUDY ONE

The Strength of the Word of God

Its Influence on the Christian Belief

Secular Logic

The necessity of Dogma within the Biblical Realm

The Absolute: The Bible is true in all that it affirms in its Autographa, which we have a nearly perfect reflection of via Textual Criticism of the 5000 manuscripts that are extant today.

"The Bible is the watershed for Evangelical Christianity ... and true in all it affirms.." (Francis Schaeffer)

In our era there has risen a faction of evangelical - theologians who are in reality "liberal" in their approach to the Bible. They hold that the Bible is *only true* in its affirmations of faith, but is *erroneous* on all matters pertaining to science or history. The debate rages on: the conservative camp holds that the Bible is totally inerrant; the liberals, only partially inerrant.

I am a conservative believer, as you can see if you have spent any time studying these writings. This theological treatise is addressed to you, dear Reader, so that you may see that logically, historically, and textually the Bible is fully inerrant.

The Bible *must be* without error, or else Christianity is indeed another passing fad.

Through God's Spirit I will show you that the *consequences* of accepting an errant Bible into the Christian faith.

C.S. Lewis ... "The Scriptures cannot be legends. They are not good enough to be legends: no prose, no art in fact, no explanation of where God came from. If they are legends and not historical, then they are realistic prose fiction of a kind which actually never existed before the 18th century..."

The Historical Evidence of the Total Inerrancy of the Bible

IN CHURCH HISTORY

Because the authenticity and the inerrancy of the Scriptures were never seriously challenged, the early Church never debated at-large on this subject. In the period of the Reformation dogma on the integrity of Scripture was not seriously considered, for the major theme was "Justification by faith alone". The Reformers were basically in agreement with the Roman Catholic Church on the matter of the integrity of the Scriptures.

Even so, there are many quotations and creeds (which we will see later) which more than show the hard truth that the early Church fully accepted a totally inerrant Scripture.

IN JEWISH HISTORY

Josephus, the famous Jewish Historian, wrote: "... There are no discrepancies in the facts recorded. The prophets learned their message by reason of the inspiration which they received from God ... they compiled accurately the history of their own time."

The Jewish faith is built upon the concept of the *absolute inerrancy* of the Scriptures. As God's chosen people, their duties were to carry their faith untarnished, to preserve the Scriptures free from error as documents from the hand of God.

IN ROMAN CATHOLIC HISTORY

Clement of Rome .. "You have carefully studied the sacred Scriptures which are the true utterance of the Holy Ghost. You know that in them there hath not been written anything that is unrighteous or counterfeit.."

Justin Martyr .. "The writers received from God the knowledge which they taught .. Men whose sole foundation was to present themselves pure to the energy of the Divine Spirit, in order that the Divine Plectrum itself, descending from Heaven, and using righteous men as an instrument like a harp .. might reveal the knowledge of things Divine .."

Augustine .. "His members gave out the knowledge which they had received through the diction of the Head; whatsoever He willed us to read concerning His own words and acts, He bade them write, as though they were His very own words .."

In addition to the above Catholic scholars, Polycarp, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Chrysostom, and Athanasius all believed in the totally inerrant Scripture. All of these men are revered Church Fathers, all Great Theologians.

THE REFORMATION FATHERS

Martin Luther .. "The Scriptures have never erred, the Scriptures cannot err .. It is certain that Scripture cannot disagree with itself .."

John Calvin .. When Calvin admitted error in the Scripture, he always attributed it to his own neglect, or that of a copyist. He believed the Scriptures to be inerrant in their Autographa, the original texts. Calvin held that if a Scriptural book recorded

a man's name as the author, then he was the one whom God used to write the text.

THE CONFSSIONAL CREEDS

The Westminster Confession of Faith, in speaking of the Holy Scriptures, states: *"It is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.."*

The New Hampshire Confession of Faith stated of the Bible, *"..it has God for its Author, salvation for its end and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter .."*

JESUS AND THE APOSTLES

Both our Lord as well as the Apostles frequently referred to the Scriptures in their ministries. In the Gospels alone Jesus referred to the Old Testament Scriptures 33 times, frequently using the Bible to rebuke the Devil or witness to His own prophetic reality as Messiah.

Jesus, the Living Word of God (John 1), as a member of the Trinity of God understood the integrity of the Scriptures. If the Scriptures were errant, would our Lord have misled us by quoting errant Scripture? This I cannot believe! Jesus, as God in the flesh, *knew that the Holy Texts were without error*, and as an Orthodox Jew studied and trusted the same.

John 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

Jesus promised His disciples (and the Church) that the Holy Spirit would come to *guide you into all truth*. This same Spirit has guided the Church from the beginning, leading all those who came before to believe in a fully inerrant Scripture. This Spirit witness of those who came before is a powerful testimony: would the Holy Spirit allow the Church to believe the Scripture to be inerrant for nearly two thousand years if it were not so? Has the Holy One failed in His calling? Or are we, via liberal theological thought, transforming the Truth of the

Ages into what we believe is a higher truth, but in reality trading the truth for a lie?

Biblical - Textual Proofs Of The Inerrancy Of Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness .."

The key to this text is the use of the word ***all***. ***All*** means that which it is speaking of is ***fully inclusive***, no part withstanding. Alford speaks of this text by saying:

"The meaning, unquestionable, both grammatically and textually, means every Scripture, i.e. every part of the Scripture.. "

The liberal theologian states the Bible is errant ***except*** in matters of the faith, yet the Bible in a ***matter of faith*** declares itself to be true in all ways historically, scientifically, and religiously. Even here the liberal theologian is opposed in his quest to destroy the foundation of our faith.

The matter of Scriptural inerrancy is one of an all or none proposition. Either we believe the Word of God to be fully inerrant, or fully errant, full of error. Either we believe it to be written ***free of human impulse***, or written by human impulse. The Bible itself leaves us no other options.

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

We either believe its contents to be true in all it affirms, or else we disbelieve it entirely.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

1 Corinthians 14:37 "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Galatians 1:11-12 "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Either the Scriptures are true or false: the Bible, in its own text, cuts off any possibility of a halfway point.

There is yet another reason for believing in the absolute inerrancy of the Scriptures, the fact of the Sovereignty of God:

Isaiah 46:9-11 "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

It is written, "holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Spirit". If we believe that God controls all creation within His Plan of the Ages, the following things must be true: 1. If God wrote the Bible, then no human frailty would be allowed in His Divine work. Can God communicate or fellowship with sin? 2. If God did not write the Book, then why did He allow such a devious work to be completed and preserved throughout the centuries? Did God purposely allow His people, whom He loves, to be so deceived? Did He allow Israel to guard a lie with their very lives? I cannot believe this.

Through a period of 1500 years God chose out over 40 authors, covering a time span of 60 generations. The Old Testament of our Bible is peppered with over 2000 phrases like "thus saith the Lord", a clear indication of God's hand in the writing. The God chosen writers came from three continents: Africa, Asia, and

Europe. The Bible was written in four languages: Chaldean (Assyrian), Aramaic, Koine Greek, and Hebrew. God took this mix and, in His holiness, created a beautiful work, a work whose words flow like living water from paragraph to paragraph, chapter to chapter, book to book, with a fluidity which no other human work possesses.

Why this amazing phenomena? The answer is simple: the Book, our Bible, is of God, not of men. God in His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence persuaded the chosen authors to write as He so decreed. This is why such an ancient and venerated writing has stood the test of time for thousands of years.

The Bible In The Light Of Textual Criticism

Many liberals roaming the outskirts of Christianity disbelieve the authority of the Bible on the grounds that we *do not have* the original text in our possession today. This is true, we do not have the original text. Yet this is not as big a problem as has been made out in the past. By the science of Textual Criticism we have a highly comparable text to that of the original Autographa. Let me explain, using Textual Criticism on the classics taught by 99% of our colleges today. This same method is used to verify classical works of man, and no one questions the validity of these classics (while running the Word of God into the ground). A little one-sided, don't you think?

I must credit the discovery of this material to Josh McDowell. The material is found in the "Documentation of Classical Literature", located in all complete university libraries.

AUTHOR	CLOSEST MANUSCRIPT IN YEARS TO AUTOGRAPHA	HOW MANY MANUSCRIPTS IN OUR POSSESSION
Plato	1200 Years	7

Caesar on the Gallic Wars	1000 Years	10
Aristotle	1400 Years	5
Aristophanes	1200 Years	10
Sophicles	1400 Years	100

When you compare the above manuscripts to one another to determine accuracy to the original, you really don't have much to work with. So, how do the Biblical texts stand up when compared to the classics?

TITLE OF MANUSCRIPT	YEARS FROM THE AUTOGRAPHHA
John Riley Manuscript (130 A.D.)	100 Years
Papyri II (200 A.D.)	150 Years
Chester Beattie Papyri (155 A.D.)	155 Years
Vaticanus Papyri (250-400 A.D.)	220 Years

In addition to the above "early manuscripts" (much closer to the original Autographa than the classical writings we reviewed earlier) we have 5000 Greek Manuscripts, 1000 early versions of the Bible, and 8000 versions of the early Latin Vulgate. There are a total of over 14,000 early copies that we use in Textual Criticism to compare, giving us a reliable Biblical text that is a near perfect mirror of the Autographa.

As Textual Criticism is a science of comparison, we can see that Christianity has more textual reliability in its Bible than *any other 10 pieces* of classical literature put together. In most of the passages in the Bible, there is a majority of agreement over any given verse. In only a few cases are there left-handed or right-handed texts. Yet even in these verses, the discrepancy has little effect on the underlying message.

Even if you did away with *all the manuscripts* of the Bible in their entirety we would still have the Holy Scriptures. By piecing together all the verses that the early Church Fathers quoted in their writings, we could literally reform the Bible from these texts. By quotation of the verses commented on in the Talmud we could literally reconstruct the Old Testament. God may have allowed the originals to be destroyed, yet He has not left His children without His Word.

Where Do The Alleged Biblical Discrepancies Come From?

There is rarely a week that passes in my life when I do not hear some godless heathen or carnal Christian crying about Biblical discrepancies. For the heathen there's nothing that I can do but pray that they find the truth of Christ. But for the Christian we can list the situations that may make the Bible appear to be fallible. I cannot cover every instance of alleged Biblical discrepancies, but I can refer you to a book written by John W. Haley called "Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible". In over 471 pages Haley looks at all the alleged discrepancies in our Bible, showing them to be misinterpretation from our standpoint, not an error in God's Word. The following information is a condensation of some of the scholarly work found in this book.

The situations which may cause alleged Bible discrepancies are:

THE METHOD OF RECORDING TIME: The Jews had two chronological dating methods, a sacred calendar and a civil calendar. Among the Latin Christian nations there were around 7 different calendars. The Romans also had an entirely different method of recording time.

When we see two Biblical authors using a different calendars to record a historical event, neither is wrong in his record. They are just using the calendar that their expected readers would use at the time of the writing.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE OF MAN: As man historically evolved, his phraseology and language evolved with the times. New words are created. 1,000 years ago Christians did not understand phrases like "the satisfaction of Christ", yet the concept was fully understood.

THE CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES AND SITUATIONS: As the situation changes, so changes (1) God's thought toward man, (2) Man's thought toward man, and (3) Man's thought toward God. All that God created He proclaimed "good". Yet as man fell into sin, progressively perverting his relationship toward the Creator, God proclaimed mankind evil and destroyed all but a few by a catastrophic flood.

WHO DECLARED WHAT?: The Bible makes record of two things: (1) That which God stated and decreed and, (2) That which man or Satan stated. If God states something, we know it is fact. Yet if *man* states it, the validity of the statement must be questioned. Yet, even if the Biblically recorded statement is a lie from man, we can believe that the wording was recorded *exactly* as it was made. The Bible is historically accurate.

THE VIEWPOINT OF THE AUTHOR: TO WHOM WAS IT ADDRESSED?: The authors of the Biblical writings had different viewpoints they were writing from, and different audiences they were addressing. Paul's letter to the Romans was written to Legalists who felt they had to *earn their way* to acceptance by God. Thus Paul wrote "works without faith is dead". John's first Epistle was written to address the Gnostics (who believed that salvation freed you so you could sin), telling the Church "faith without works is dead". Neither writer disagreed with the other, they merely had differing audiences so wrote from different viewpoints. The underlying fact they agreed on was that true faith is accompanied by works, and true works are accompanied by faith. Both go hand in hand.

THE ORIENTAL IDIOMS: Differences in ancient Oriental idioms and phraseology may often seem to present a discrepancy when there is none. The Bible often refers to "the four corners of the earth". When it does so, it does not mean the earth was viewed as having four corners, but rather refers to the *four*

points of the compass.

There are also many statements that confuse newcomers to Christianity such as, "He who loses his life for my sake shall gain it". The Scripture is really not contradicting itself, as you will see if you read the context around the verse in question.

DISCREPANCIES IN NAMES: According to the place and circumstance, a person's name may be changed in the Bible. Why?

The early Greek and Hebrew peoples attached a great deal of significance to the name of a person. The name often reflected the character or motivation of the person. After a person had close contact or a blessing from God, often his or her name was changed by God. Names of geographical locations also changed to reflect usage, dedication to God, or cursing by God.

The early Greek and Hebrew cultures also had a habit of attaching many names to the same object. This may cause some degree of confusion in Biblical interpretation, but is not a real discrepancy in the Scripture, merely a clear representation of the culture to whom the Work was written.

HUMAN ERROR: Human error, often directly from Biblical critics, is by far the largest source of alleged discrepancies. It would be good if we keep in mind the scriptural injunction:

2 Peter 1:20 "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."

There are several points which we should remember in Scriptural exegesis:

1. The context of the verse may not *only* be in the chapter where the verse in question is in, it *may be* several chapters before and after that verse. Thoroughly read the immediate context of the verse you are seeking to interpret.
2. The context of the verse may only be found when it is compared to all *like*

verses. Do a **topical study** of the verse you are studying using a good reference work like "Naves Topical Bible" or the "Thompson Chain Reference Bible".

3. The context of a verse may sometimes be understood only when viewed in the **original** Greek or Hebrew. In this case, a Greek or Hebrew lexicon may be needed, like Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, unabridged edition. Often there is no one-to-one correlation of words translated from one language to another. Often one Greek word may only be fully translated by 3 or 4 English words.

4. The context of a verse may be influenced by the history behind the verse. Was the Doctrine for just that era, or is it also for today? An example of this is the Law of Moses and the Levitical sacrifices, which are no longer pertinent to us today, because we are under the atonement of Christ.

5. A verse may also be taken out of context by **running one context into another**. An example of this is:

Hebrews 10:26 *"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,"*

27 *"But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."*

By running these two verses together we may misinterpret it to mean:

"If a Christian willfully sins, he shall become a non Christian and shall be punished as a heathen in Hell."

Our legalist friends may use this verse to prove their doctrine of eternal insecurity. Yet if the verse is interpreted this way, it actually means "once lost, always lost", for the word **sin** in the Greek means to "miss the mark, to make a mistake". The answer to this text is:

a. Commas, semi-colons, hyphens, and periods were **not found** in the early Greek

manuscripts. The translators of our Bible added these textual punctuation marks because this is what we are familiar with when reading. We cannot allow these man added marks to tell us when to pause or stop within a context.

b. The epistles to the Hebrews were written to Jewish Christians who were still relying on animal sacrifices for the atonement of their sins.

c. Verse 26 is written in first person plural, verse 27 is written in third person plural. Verse 26 is written to those like unto the writer, verse 27 is written impersonally to the world at large.

Taking the historical contextual evidences of the verses into consideration, the correct interpretation is:

a. Verse 26 and verse 27 are *two different* separate passages which are in two separate contexts.

b. Verse 26 is making this statement: "After one has accepted Christ as Savior, he no longer needs to sacrifice animals to atone for his sins. The sacrifice of Christ is eternal, atonement forever.

c. Verse 27 is making a statement totally disassociated from Verse 26. A new paragraph is started warning of how God will deal with those who reject the message of the Cross. The second paragraph runs from verse 27 through verse 30.

Christians largely fail in their defense of the inerrant Scriptures out of fear (I want to be part of the acceptable crowd), faithlessness (I have not really studied the Word, so I am not sure), or both. Often Christians fear the modern-day sciences which have technologically grown immense in the last fifty years. Yet as Lord Kelvin once stated:

".. Physical science has nothing to say against the order of creation as given in Genesis"

Lord Kelvin was being very honest. Physical science has *nothing to say* about

matters of faith, for science only deals with *tangible* items. For something to be studied scientifically, it must:

1. Be observable by the five senses, or by instrumental extensions of these senses.
2. Be observable by repeatable processes to ensure truth and accuracy.
3. Be observable by measuring processes: in other words, it *must* be measurable.

Science has nothing to say about faith, for faith goes beyond the reality of things seen. Science has nothing to say about God, for He is a Spirit, immeasurable and unquestionable. Science has nothing to say about miracles, for they come as God so decrees, and therefore cannot be studied as a repeatable process.

Why The Bible Must Be Totally Without Error:

The Effects Of An Error Filled Bible On The Church.

If the Bible is accepted as inerrant, this gives the Church of Christ validity on which to stand. If inerrant, it is the textbook of God, a Book the Holy Spirit uses to train His people.

C.S. Lewis: "You start arming against the devil when you know and recognize his works. He doesn't want you to believe in him. His first aim is to give you an anesthetic to put you off your guard. Only when this fails do you recognize him."

When we allow Satan to make us believe that there are *parts* of the Bible which are full of error, then how much harder will it be before we believe the whole Book is full of error? True, the Bible is not a scientific textbook. The Father did not create it for this purpose. Yet the Bible as a whole is written fluidly, the scientific passages flowing to the historic passages which flow into the faith passages. If we take away a part of the intricate whole, then do we not dam the creek?

If a part of the Book is errant, then who qualified to declare it? As man is fallible, who will we trust to make such a great decision as to which parts are fallible, which are true? If the Spirit of God allowed confusion to be written in the midst of the Work, does this not in effect make God a partner to deception? By accepting an errant Bible a whole chain reaction of problems arise, problems that will certainly hinder our witness to the godless.

Evolutionists speak of man evolving in intelligence. Yet did man ever "evolve" as these speak of evolution? God gave man creative power. Within this power lies the ability to improve and grow, yet man in his being has *never* been unintelligent (as scientists like to represent the so called Neanderthal man). As C. S. Lewis discovered in his studies:

" .. There has been no progression in intelligence from a thousand years to date. There is no proof of any advance. People may not have known what we know today, but how could an unintelligent man invent the wheel?"

The thought that man *invented* the idea of God to explain the unknown is preposterous. In Ptolemy's *Almagest* (a standard textbook in the Middle Ages) we find the following statement:

"The earth in relation to the distance of the fixed stars has no appreciable size and must be treated as a mathematical point .."

There was never any conflict between science and Christianity until less than 100 years ago. When speculative science rose in popularity many weak Christians ran away. When you stand on the absolute truth of our inerrant Bible, you do not need to compromise your faith to accommodate scientific truth. The Christian faith has always been a faith founded on fact. If we compromise the foundations of our faith, modifying it to suit the current scientific fad, we become, in many ways, worst than the unbelieving infidels. When we give in to the tangible then, just like doubting Thomas, we trade a solid foundation of truth for a hill of sand. Trust the Father, trust His Word: He and His Word are ever faithful.



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Systematic Theology

STUDY TWO

How God is Revealed Unto Man

How We Must Know There is a Supreme Being

A Study In The Scientific Witness

Of all the things that are explained in the Scripture, there is one thing that is never explained: in fact, there is not even an attempt made to explain this phenomenon. The question "Is there a God" is never asked? The writers of the Bible never doubted His existence, but merely accepted it as fact, the only *logical* course of reasoning. The ancients also never tried to define God, other than in a relational sense. The best relational definition of God comes from His own words in:

Exodus 3:13-14 "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? 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."

In Hebrew times the name of a person was always *descriptive* of the person. The title God gives Himself, YHWH, or **I AM**, shows His infinity or eternal nature. God was not created by man, but has always been in existence. He is the great **I AM**. Man did not create the idea of God to cover up his own scientific ignorance, for there are many historical proofs that man has never been unintelligent. There

are proofs that man, even before the time of Christ, understood creation and his relationship to it. If Joseph did not understand the virgin birth as *contrary to nature*, then why did he seek to divorce Mary, believing her pregnancy to be the result of sexual promiscuity? If man did not know that the sun *normally rose* in the East, then why would he have been interested in it once rising in the West? (Isaiah 45.6)

C. S. Lewis "The religion in the world that gives its followers the greatest happiness is, while it lasts, the religion of worshipping oneself."

"We are gods" has been the cry of mankind ever since the Tower of Babel. Atheism has always been a blind faith in the falsehood that God is not there. There are more proofs for God in nature alone than the atheist can ever hope to disprove.

THE PATTERN OF NATURE: In nature there's a pattern, a design, a system of order. A design shows purpose, which in turn points to an intelligent Designer. When you look at a house you know that an intelligent builder made it. You know that it would be preposterous to say, "That house just came into being. It evolved from a speck of wood dust into what it is today." When you honestly look at the world around you, you know that an intelligent God created it.

THE EFFECT OF NATURE: Nature is an effect, so what is the *first cause*? Scientists can explain links in the natural chain that lead up to an event, but cannot explain the first cause of it all. The actual existence of the chain is totally unexplainable unless you accept that it was created by God.

C. S. Lewis "The the law of physics When one pool ball (A) sets another ball in motion (B) the momentum lost by (A) is equal to that gained in (B). This is the law. But this is only provided that something sets (A) into motion. The law does not set the ball into motion. But if on a ship with the pool table, and the same occurred, it was not the law that did this, the wave caused the incident. The wave was moved according to the law but not moved by them. However far you trace back, the laws of nature never causes anything."

To sum up Lewis, we can see the effect, but must attribute the cause to something else other than man, nature, or the laws of physics. If the naturalistic idea of evolution is true, and mankind sprang up from the beginnings of chaos, then every particular thought of man is not intelligent but flawed because of our source. Thought born of irrational causes must needs be flawed itself, totally untrustworthy. If we accept the humanist theory of creation we make our own theory error in the first place.

There are two proofs of God found in human nature. They are (1) the intuitive proof and, (2) the moral nature of mankind.

C.S. Lewis "I could not believe that 999 religions were completely wrong, and the remaining one true. In reality Christianity is primarily the fulfillment of the Jewish religion: but also the fulfillment of what was vaguely hinted at in all other religions at their best."

All men to a degree, whether consciously or unconsciously, believe in a Creator, an intelligence higher than themselves. "There are no atheists in foxholes". If you and I both jump out of a jet plane flying thousands of feet above the earth without parachutes, I am certain I could claim your soul for Christ before we hit the ground.

The *moral argument* for the existence of God relates to the conscience of man. The conscience of all men expresses a *moral viewpoint* in relation to the knowledge that we have. The human race has a sense of morality and order that could only have been given to us by a moral God. If a man at one point history had said, "You know, it would be nice if we had a sense of order", then that man would in reality have already had that sense in place prior to his statement.

Why do men have a sense of right and wrong, good and evil? If good is what man makes it, then why is it *not good* to murder? There is indeed a Higher Being who instruct us all in what is good and what is evil through our conscience.

The proofs of God that we have seen so far, that scientific witness, is what is known theologically as the *General Revelation* of God. These proofs are limited

in their use because of the Fall of man. When Adam fell he caused all of creation to fall with him. When the master falls (as Adam was, by decree of God), so falls the servants.

God's creation suffered the corruption of sin, just as Adam did, when he disobeyed God. Because nature is corrupted by sin we often get a clouded view of the Creator when we look at this spoiled handiwork. We ask "How could a loving God allow such cruelty and suffering?". Nature gives us the wrong idea that the Creator is brutal, torturous, when in reality the corruption we see in nature is a result of Adam's failure. Nature does not tell us that we are unrighteous, unable to get into Heaven on our own. But nature does clearly reflect that it was made by a Creator:

Romans 1:20 "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse".

In order that man understand God and what He expects of us, He has revealed Himself to us through ***Special Revelation***. What are the characteristics of any true Special Revelation from God?

1. It must supply reachable answers to solve man's problems.
2. It must rationally describe God to man.
3. It must explain the justice and mercy of God, and harmonize these two characteristics of Deity.

The Bible is this Special Revelation from God. It supplies the answers to man's problems in the atonement of Christ. It describes God to man by the use of easily understood relationships. It harmonizes the justice and mercy of God in the event of the Cross of Calvary.

The Bible itself ***claims to have*** certain necessary knowledge of God, and describes the necessary knowledge of what God expects of man:

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 "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 hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Romans 3:21-26 "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 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: 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; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

There are *external proofs* that the Bible is the Special Revelation of God to man. These proofs are furnished in the Person and historic authenticity of Jesus Christ.

(Watson) .. "No one has ever discovered the words that Jesus ought to have said No action of His shocked our moral sense Some have puzzled us None have fallen short of the ideal He is full of surprises, but they were always surprises of perfection."

There are about 60 major prophecies concerning the Messiah in the Bible, and Jesus fulfilled them all. All of the prophecies concerning Christ were written before 450 B.C. These 60 prophecies had 270 minor details that had to be fulfilled perfectly in the true Messiah. The probable fulfillment of *just eight* of these being completed in one man's lifetime are one in every 100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000. This proves two points: (1) When Jesus fulfilled all 60 prophecies verbatim, this stands as a testament that Jesus was indeed Messiah, and conversely (2) By accurately foretelling these 60 prophecies we can say this stands as a testament that the Bible is indeed the Word of God. The chances of the various writers of Scripture "just stumbling" on this information is so astronomical that you cannot even assign a probability to it. You have a better

chance of guessing the winning lottery number on the first try!

The Scripture, by its fulfilled prophecies, shows it emanates from the very hand of God. The prophecies of Ezekiel 25-26 were fulfilled in their entirety less than twenty years after the text was penned. The Prophecies of Daniel 2 were also fulfilled less than 100 years after its foretelling. These are powerful proofs that the Bible is God's Special Revelation to us, a revelation we should diligently study if we would understand our Creator.

The Scientific Witness of General Revelation will show you that there is a Creator, but you must understand the Witness of Special Revelation, the Holy Bible, if you are to see Him clearly. In our next section we will study our Maker as He is portrayed by Special Revelation. God Bless!

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Systematic Theology

STUDY THREE

Defining The Almighty One True God

Through His Name and Attributes

How can finite man ever hope to be able to fully comprehend the One who called all things into existence from nothing with but a word? Can we comprehend such Person?

All men, even Christians, have blasphemously portrayed God at one time or another. We represent God as corruptible in our idols. When you represent God in the form of material substance, you *imply* that God is as corruptible as that which you portray Him by. We often choose the idol that we have made over the Word of God and fellowship with God.

In Las Vegas men gamble their lives and fortunes away while trusting on Lady Luck. In reality, no Lady has anything to do with the fall of the dice. God controls this thing we call "luck":

Proverbs 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD."

In America we believe that men are elected to govern our country according to popular vote. And this is true, we do freely vote for or against our leaders. Yet an unseen Hand works behind the scenes, controlling the vote and tides of power.

Leaders may be elected, yet the government is ultimately controlled by the Infinite, totally within the Plan of God.

Proverbs 21:1 "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

All over the world men have a fear of death. Scientists diligently study so that, one day, we might defeat this archenemy of mankind. "Let's freeze the body. One day we can resurrect him, and return him to life". Yet it is written:

Job 14:5 "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.."

Then again there is the atheist who scornfully rejects God. To him God says:

Psalms 2:4 "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision."

How can mortal man understand the Father of all creation? By carefully studying the characteristics of God found in Scripture we may come to know our God. We may not reach a **full** understanding of the Infinite in this life, yet we can understand Him **in relationship** to His creation.

The Base or Simple Names of God

By means of Special Revelation God has defined Himself to mortal man by different names. In early Hebrew and Greek cultures the name of an individual explained something about the person. God uses three base names for Himself in the Bible:

EL or ELOHIYM: This name stresses the power of God. It defines Him as all powerful, all seeing, all knowing, all encompassing. There is not anything that our Creator cannot do.

YHWH: This name has its roots in the name that God gave Moses in Exodus 3.14, I AM. YHWH describe the eternity of the one True God, the fact that He has existed without Creator from eternity past and will exist forever. To the Jews this name of God was so sacred that, even to speak it, was to bring death to the speaker:

Leviticus 24:16 "And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death."

ADONAI: This name shows the Mastery that God has over His people. It also shows that, in relationship to God, we are His servants.

The Compound Names of God

The above three base names for God are used extensively throughout the Scripture, and each name explains some characteristic inherent to our Maker. But God also describes Himself to His creation through the use of *compound names*. There are the compound names that are coupled with the power name of God, EL:

EL SHADDAI: This name is used to show the sovereignty of our Creator, His uniqueness among all within the universe. The name designates God as "Almighty Almighty One".

SHADDAI is derived from the Hebrew SHADDAD, which means "to destroy". The name is often used in Scripture when God disposes of the heathen while protecting His people.

EL ELOINE: This name defines the power of possession that the Creator alone has. Literally translated "The Most High God", it is used in instances when God is described as the true Owner of Heaven and Earth.

EL OLAM: This name stresses the eternity or infinity of God. Literally translated,

it means "The Everlasting God".

A second set of compound names are coupled with YHWH or (as we translate it) LORD:

LORD JEHOVAH: This name is used to highlight God's immutable or unchangeable nature. When used in conjunction with a covenant, it carries a *guarantee* that God will keep the promise He made.

Genesis 2:15-17 "And the LORD God (LORD Jehovah) took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God (LORD Jehovah) commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam should have paid attention, for by using this name God was warning that He would not break His promise to man if man disobeyed Him.

LORD OF HOSTS: This name is used to show that God alone commands all the angelic host. It is also used to convey the idea that God will rescue His children in times of trouble, using all the means He has at His disposal.

In the New Testament the use of the titles "God" and "Lord" are equivalent to their parallels in the Old Testament, yet in the New Testament the other compound and basic names of God are rarely used. Usually the title "Father" is used to symbolize the special relationship that the believer has with his Creator because of the atonement of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Himself usually referred to the head of the Godhead as "Father". As a matter of fact, only once Jesus refers to the Father as "God", and that was when He hung on the Cross of Calvary. When He hung on the Cross He did not do so as the Son of God, but as a *judicial sacrifice* to pay the penalty for our sins.

Classifying the Attributes of God

The attributes or characteristics that God possesses are a part of His nature. They are *not* something which He created, nor something that He grew or evolved into. The attributes of God are both *communicable and incommunicable*.

The Communicable Attributes of God

The communicable attributes are those which pertain to God's essence in relation to creation. God *shared* these attributes with His creation. An example of the communicable attributes are mercy, justice, and love. Though creation shares these attributes with God to a lesser degree (because He is infinite and we are finite), they are attributes which both God and His people possess.

Communicable attributes are those which, to put it more simply, are shared by both God and, to a lesser degree, His creation.

John 4:24 "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

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

God is a Spirit, ethereal yet real, without body as we know it. Regenerated man possesses within himself a human spirit, recreated in us at the point of salvation. It is this part of us that is "born again", as Jesus so wisely put it. The Spirit of God is a shared asset with man, and to this degree is a Communicable Attribute.

Romans 11:33-34 "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?"

God possesses intelligence, and His creation possesses intelligence. Though God's

intelligence is ***much higher*** than that which man possesses, this attribute is still inherent in both God and man. This is a Communicable Attribute of God.

The first two Attributes we have just discussed, the spirit and intelligence of man, are a part of the ***imagery of all mankind***. Man was created in the image of God:

Genesis 1:26 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

and these are parts of that imagery. God is holy and just. His goodness is a pure, untainted goodness. His creation possesses these attributes to a more finite degree, riddled with sinful impulses, yet good in the sense that we are "moral" beings with a conscience. After regeneration we share this Attribute of God closer, to a greater degree, for sin is dampened in the new Believer:

1 John 2:29 "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."

The Incommunicable Attributes of God

The incommunicable attributes are those which God and ***God alone*** possesses. These are:

SELF EXISTENCE: God needs no one to survive. He is the first cause of everything, yet He Himself is caused by nothing.

Exodus 3:13-15 "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? 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. And God said

moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

Because God alone is self existent, no one, save God, has total freewill. Men are dependent on their appetites and these appetites often lead to sin. Even Christians are dependent on God for their survival. God is not bound by dependency.

IMMUTABILITY:

Malachi 3:6 "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Hebrews 1:10-12 "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

All things change and grow old. Yet God will never change in His infinity to the smallest degree. God is unchangeable and immutable.

INFINITY: When we speak about God's *infinity* we are talking about His immensity, omnipotence (all powerfulness), omniscience (all knowing), and omnipresence (He is everywhere).

Psalms 139:12-13 "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb."

2 Peter 3:8-9 "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should

come to repentance."

SIMPLICITY: When we speak of the simplicity of God we are referring to His uniqueness: there is no God but Our God.

1 Corinthians 8:6 "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

Our unique God is One, yet in Three Persons. He is Father:

John 6:27 "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

He is Son:

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

And He is the Holy Spirit:

Acts 5:3-4 "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

As we will discuss the Trinity of God in a later lesson, this is all we will cover on the Trinity at this time.

The Will Of The Sovereign God

The Implication It Has on Man's Free Will

Isaiah 14:24-27 "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"

How much power than does the Father hold over creation? Does the Bible recognize human freewill as a part of God's Plan of the Ages? Many state that the Creator did not build a society of robots. The often heard slogan, "God helps those who help themselves": how much truth does this slogan hold?

The Westminster Confession (Shorter Catechism) states: "The decrees of God are His eternal purpose according to the council of His will whereby for his own glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever things come to pass."

God is a self sufficient being, needing no one to sustain His life. He created men for ***His own glory***. We often forget that, in the arrogance of our humanity.

Revelation 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

He chose to pardon man through the medium of the Cross because He ***desired to***, not because He had to. As Romans states:

Romans 11:36 "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

God is the ultimate source of all life, the only Agent that creates life. The ultimate aim of creation is to glorify its Maker.

James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Isaiah 46:9-11 "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

When a man changes his plans, it is usually because of lack of wisdom or knowledge. Yet God is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. When the Plan of the Ages was made from eternity past, they were established in certainty because our Father knows the end just as completely as the beginning. Nothing is left to chance.

Isaiah 40:13-15 "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing."

God's decrees and plans are made from the *only* completely free will in the universe. His are rational decisions based on sufficient reason. God never acts out of necessity, nor are God's degrees conditioned on any inability on His part: He is sovereign. God's decrees are carried out as He states them, regardless as to our desires. There are no boundaries that the Father cannot overcome: whether of the free will of man, or the course of nature, God can sway it. God is omnipotent over His creation.

When we look through the Scriptures we see many instances where man is disobedient to the Will of God. How can man be obedient to his own will and ignore the Will of the Sovereign God? How can the truth of the Supreme Being be

reconciled with the truth of human free will?

The Decreeative and Directive Wills of God

Theologians recognize that there are *two categories* of God's Will, the ***Directive*** and the ***Decreeative*** Will of God. Both work hand in hand to achieve God's Plan of the Ages.

The Directive Will is that which is God's ***best*** plan for us. The Directive Will can be obeyed or disobeyed by man, based on his free will. The Directive will is a command much like a Father author gives a son, a parent to a child. It is in the child's best interest to obey this direction though he can ignore the injunctions, to his detriment.

Within the Directive Will God tells us not to lie, steal, or cheat, do murder, and so on. He tells his children to pray, to have fellowship with Him. If the child obeys he will be rewarded. If the child disobeys he is punished. C. S. Lewis said:

"God gave us the choice of being able to contribute to the course of His events in two different ways: (1) He made the universe in such a way that we can, in those limits, do things to it and, (2) He made his own plan or plot of history such that it admits a certain amount of free play, and can be modified in response to our prayers."

The Directive Will is that which God would have man to do for our ***higher good***. Man has the power of prayer. If we pray we will bring about our higher good regardless as to whether the prayer is answered negatively or positively. Why doesn't God always answer "yes" to our prayers?

(Satires, Book 4, Satire 10, Line 3) "God has left Himself a discretionary power. Had He not done so, prayer would have been an activity too dangerous for man, and we should have the awful state of things envisioned by Juvinal 'enormous prayers' which Heaven in anger grants."

Though man is directed to pray unceasingly, man does not always pray for the *right things*, the *right reasons*, or in the *right way*. God alone understands all things, and, knowing that all things work together for good, the only way the Father guarantees this is by leaving Himself a *discretionary power* in all things, even prayer.

There are two texts which cause new Christians problems. They are:

Matthew 18:18-19 "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 16:19 "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

These verses seem to imply that the Church of Christ is dominant over God in prayer. How does the Greek texts support these verses? A more correct translation of these verses would be:

Matthew 18:18-19 "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever you may bind (DESETE, Aorist Active Subjunctive) on earth shall have been bound (ESTAI DEDEMENA, Periphrastic Future Perfect Passive) in heaven: and whatsoever ye may loose (LUSETE, Aorist Active Subjunctive) on earth shall have been loosed (ESTAI LELUMENA, Periphrastic Future Perfect Passive) in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

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Subjunctive) on earth shall have been loosed (ESTAI LELUMENA, Periphrastic Future Perfect Passive) in heaven."

With these passages correctly translated we can see that there is **no** New Testament concept of man controlling God as if we were gods ourselves. These two texts in question were first incorrectly rendered by Jerome in the Latin Vulgate, 400 A.D. Yet many within Christianity feel that they can "force" God's hand by prayer, or by "Tithing". "If I give my ten percent then God **must** return this money to me fourfold!" God is omnipotent, not forced into any method of operation by His own creation. You see this best illustrated when we study the Decreeive Will of God.

God's Decreeive Will **cannot** be refused. In the Decreeive Will the Father persuades man to obey according to His wishes. God may sway the freewill of the person in question. God may sway the freewill of the **persons surrounding** the person in question. God may change the laws of nature or environment around the person in question. God may manipulate or change the environment so that man will carry out His Will according to His purpose.

The healing of a physical or emotional wound is within the Decreeive Will of God:

C.S. Lewis: "Doctors themselves do not take the view that medicine heals the body. The magic is not in the medicine, but in the body. What the doctor does is to stimulate nature's functions in the body, and to try to remove the hindrances. A cut heals itself, for no dressing shall heal a cut on a corpse."

Death is within the Decreeive Will of God. There is "appointed unto man a time once to die, and after this the Judgment". Miracles may be within the Directive or the Decreeive Will of God, depending on the circumstance. The greatest objection to the Decreeive Will of God is our jealously guarded idea of human free will. We shall study human free will in detail shortly. For now, though, it is sufficient to say that God **may persuade** man to do of his own will what He, God, wants man to do. God is **not controlled** by his creation. If God did not plan all

things, if He does not have a Plan of the Ages, then God cannot be God. If God did not decree what was necessary to insure the end was as He wants it, then there had to be a time when He *did not know* everything. If there was ever a time that God did not know everything, then He gains in knowledge every time something happens that He did not know would happen. What we have, if this is true, is a changing God. Yet we have seen that it is written, "I am the Lord thy God, I do not change". God doesn't change, therefore God *must control* certain aspects of His creation in order to insure His Plan will be carried out as He desires.

This in turn answers the question, "Why can't man have a totally free will?" Because man would be responsible for the *education* of God. If man had *total* free will then he would have, and any given time, a 50-50 chance of choosing either one fork in the road of God's Plan or another. God did not base His Plan on the frailty of human will. His Plan is based on His unvarying Will; for this reason the Plan will be carried out exactly as He decrees. Man does *not* educate God!

Is the concept of foreordination under God's Decree Will *only fatalism* in another wrapper? Absolutely not! Fatalism has no goal, no joy, and only a series of laws with no soul or spirit. Foreordination brings with it the assurance that it is motivated by a good and righteous goal, accomplished by our loving Creator. The Father *will bring about* the highest good for His children through His Decree Will.

Does foreordination disregard all motive of purpose? Please remember that God not only foreordains the *ends* to meet His goal, but also foreordains the *means* as well. Foreordination is a Doctrine that should drive the believer to achieve more for God in this life, for we have the assurance that He truly loves and watches over us. Our Father wants us to succeed, and in His Will will help guarantee our success. The greater the hope of success, the greater should be our motivation to service.

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Systematic Theology

STUDY FOUR

The Doctrine of the Triune God

Continuing The Study of the Incommunicable Attributes

And The Compound Unity of God

(C.S. Lewis) "All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that "God is Love". But they seem not to notice that the words "God is Love" has no real meaning unless God contains at least two Persons. If God was a single person, then before the world was made He was not Love. Of course, what these people really mean when they say "God is Love" is often something quite different: they really mean Love is God."

It is *impossible* for anyone to truly comprehend the Trinity of God. God is One, yet He is a unique One. God is a *compound unity* of three Persons so close to, so exact to one another, each in submission to one another, so as to move and act as a unified yet incomprehensible One.

Many mock Christianity by stating "You do not know anything about arithmetic. How can three be one?" Yet on closer examination we will see that, without a Triune God, there can be no real concept of God as we know Him. It is the attribute of the Trinity that makes the Godhead believable.

The Biblical Proof of the Triune God

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: "

The Jews often quote the above passage to prove that God is not in three Persons but only One. What is *often neglected* is that there are *two different words* in the Hebrew used for *one*.

YACHID: meaning *an absolute unity or properly '1'*. This word's use is illustrated in Genesis 22.2, where God said to Abraham:

Genesis 22:2 "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only (YACHID) son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. "

The word YACHID is *never used* in the Bible for the Godhead.

ECHAD: meaning *a compound unity, several composites which make a whole or a combined '1'*. We can define this word's usage in passages such as:

Genesis 1:5 "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first (ECHAD) day."

ECHAD is also found in Genesis 2.24, where we read:

Genesis 2:24 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one (ECHAD) flesh. "

ECHAD is also *used of God in Deuteronomy 6.4* and in many other passages that refer to the compound unity of the Godhead. When we compare ECHAD as used in other passages to Deuteronomy 6.4 we see that God is *not an absolute One* but a *compound unity*. This unity is made up of three Persons. Just as *Day* is made up of *evening* and *morning*, and *one flesh* is made up of *man* and *wife*, the Godhead is composed of Father, Son, and Spirit.

In other passages we see clear presentations of the Doctrine of the Trinity:

Isaiah 48:12-16 "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The LORD hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous. Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: "

So far in Isaiah's text we see **God speaking**. It couldn't be anyone but God, for He describes Himself as the *first, I also am the last*. He uses God's Divine title of **I am he**. This denotes His eternality, His forever existence:

Exodus 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."

He also claims to be the **Creator of the Heavens** and the earth. God is clearly speaking here, but in last part of the text, without changing context, God says:

".. and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me .."

Notice that **God says that God sent Him**. In fact, God says that God **and His Spirit** sent him. This is nothing less than an Old Testament vision of the throne room of God. In the throne room the One God sent Jesus to be man's redemption. The other Being present was God the Spirit. They **both** sent Christ so that man might be saved.

The Logical Necessity of the Trinity

See if you can follow this line of reasoning: We know that God is perfect, and we know that God's Love is therefore perfect. If God is perfect (and He is), then He

may only be aware that He is through relationship within His Being. Perfect Love *demand*s an object. Since God pre-existed man, He *must have been Love* before the existence of mankind. In order to recognize Himself as Love before mankind, and Love demands in object, then He *must be in at least Two Persons*, yet be One God. But Two Persons in the Godhead would not be enough for perfect Love. As God is perfect His Love *must be perfect*. To be perfect it must be exercised and return unconditionally. Had there only been Two Persons in the Godhead then Love would *have been conditional* and of necessity returned between the Two. If there are Three in the Godhead then either Member can offer unselfish Love without expecting return. This would be unconditional Love. The Son could Love the Spirit, the Spirit the Father, each Person could love the next selfishly. Without expecting return God could recognize in His assets the attribute of Perfect Love.

If you cannot understand this line of reasoning then there are other simpler proofs of God's Triune nature. These proofs are found when you see the *necessity* of the Doctrine of the Trinity as it influences and is supported by the doctrine of Redemption.

First, the Doctrine of the Trinity is essential for *any lasting plan of redemption* for man:

2 Corinthians 5:19 "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. "

Since the fall of Adam the *foremost theological discussion* has been, "How can men become reconciled to God? Man, by his own volition, chose to follow Satan. Man must pay the penalty. But how can man pay the penalty of the Fall?

Some say that *since we were not there* at the Fall we *were not accountable*. But to say this is to oversimplify the problem. When God created man in the Garden he was perfect, without sin. When man disobeyed God he fell into sin and Spiritual death. Our children are *genetic replicas* of what we are. If the parents are black the child will be black. If the parents are white the child will be white. Though the combinations of parents *do not always* produce the expected child, this

is the norm.

When Adam walked the earth before the Fall he was without sin, and had a functioning human spirit. This human spirit enabled him to physically communicate with God at will. God walked in the Garden every day just to talk to Adam face to face. After the Fall Adam became spiritually dead, and this relationship was lost. Residing in him was sin, the old sin nature. As Eve was also spiritually dead when they came together to reproduce their offspring were also spiritually dead. Can a dead tree produce a live tree? Death only produces death. The offspring of Adam were ***all genetically spiritually dead***, having the old sin nature from birth.

So here is the dilemma. By the fall mankind met spiritual death. God, in his justice, required that man pay the penalty for the Fall. But man was not ***fit payment*** before God. Before a man could repay the penalty of sin for the human race he had to pay the penalty ***for himself***. And since man was spiritually dead there was ***nothing that he had*** that God wanted. The dead cannot contribute to the living. The spiritually dead cannot pay back the penalty of spiritual death.

A substitution ***could pay*** the penalty for sin. One could pay the penalty if he was ***first clean*** himself. But the substitution must first be clean or else it would not be acceptable before God. The problem was that there was ***no one in humanity*** who could pay back the penalty, because all mankind was spiritually dead. The parents might raise a morally right child, but parents could not produce an offspring that was ***without the old sin nature*** and spiritual death.

God knew the fix that man was in. God had every right to destroy the human race and start over. But if He destroyed man because of Satan's deceit, then Satan would have won a battle against God. Thus God set out to show that, regardless of what Lucifer did, He could right the situation.

But God was not ready to bring man out of spiritual death just yet. The old sin nature brings with it an inflated ego, leading man to think that he can become righteous before God with his own works. To disprove this God set up a system of

works whereby man could *see how utterly impossible* it was to get to Heaven by his own efforts. God set up the sacrifices first as a means of *temporary atonement* for sin. If man obeyed God by offering the animal sacrifices religiously, then God would tolerate the fallen state of man for a time. If man refused to obey by refusing to offer the animal sacrifices, then God classified him as an unbeliever and a heathen. After physical death this group of people went to Hades *without hope of redemption*.

God set up another system of works that complemented the sacrifices. This system was called the Law and was composed of about 2500 statutes of do's and don'ts. Each day you woke up you had to face a *strict system of religion*. If you broke the Law, then you atoned for this by making an animal sacrifice. On top of all this *once a year* you had to make a sacrifice to atone for portions of the Law you broke and forgot to atone for.

This system was *less than satisfactory*, and God knew it. But He wanted to leave the system in place *until men knew it as well*. Mankind must understand that there is nothing that we can do before God to get out of the mess we're in. Mankind had to know that he could not pay the penalty, for man was totally filthy before God.

Man was between a rock and a hard place. Man need to pay the penalty for sin but could not. God was the *only One* who could pay the penalty. Hence the Trinity. God had to solve the problem of man, but as Man and not God. God lowered Himself to become Man in the Person of Jesus Christ. Since Jesus as God was sinless, When He took on flesh as God-Man He was also sinless. He went to the Cross as a Man to pay for our sins. He rose again on the third day to *show that the payment* was acceptable to the Godhead. While on the earth as a man, Jesus used to the powers of the Spirit to perform miracles, to teach, and to lead people to salvation in Him.

But this is not the entire story of redemption. When man was *allowed* to temporarily redeemed himself through animal sacrifices, none of the sacrifices *had any lasting value*. Not only was the sacrifice improper in itself (for an animal

cannot pay the penalty for men), but as soon as the sacrifice was made man went *back out and began to sin again*. We are all compulsive sinners. Even as a hermit man will still find a way to sin. Again comes the Trinity of God to the rescue. Christ is seated at the right hand of God the Father forever, making intercession for our sins:

Hebrews 7:22-28 "By so much was Jesus made a surety (EGGUOS, guarantee) of a better testament (DIATHAKA, covenant). And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. "

When we sin now, rather than being "saved again", Christ *immediately makes intercession* for us. This ensures that we retain our salvation rather than lose it. God the Holy Spirit also *indwells* us, aiding us in making better decisions for the Lord, and convicting us to repent when we sin. Only *through the Trinity* are we maintained in God's redemption.

The Christian Monotheist would tell us that the Jesus manifestation makes intercession with Himself, which is *nonsense*. The Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses say that the "lesser god" Jesus makes intercession for our sins. But a mediator or intercessor *must be equal* with both parties that He tries to reconcile. If Jesus was merely a man He *could not* be an Intercessor, for He would not be equal with God. If Jesus was pure God then he would not be equal with man. If Jesus were lesser god that he *would not be equal* with either God or man. Jesus must be pure God in the flesh, forever sitting at the right hand of God the Father in Heaven. Any other combination throws our salvation away. The Doctrine of the

Trinity, though many may not understand it, is true. It is a foundational Doctrine in the Christian faith that cannot be lightly thrown away because of Catholic prejudice.

A parallel study can be found [here](#) on this subject.

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Systematic Theology

STUDY FIVE

The Essence, Person, Union, and Life Of The Logos

Who is the Christ

We need to look into the uses of the Greek word LOGOS and how it relates to Jesus Christ. The word LOGOS is *never* found in the Greek text as being used to denote reason or the function of the mind. Whenever the Greeks decided to describe these concepts they used terms such as PNEUMA (which meant the spirit or mind of man), or CARDIA (which referred to the heart or emotions of man). LOGOS was never used in reference to the created being in the Greek manuscripts.

In classical literature LOGOS is never used to denote the *subjective* faculty of reason, but is used to designate "the reason to be given, in an objective manner, to anyone else". LOGOS means, literally, "speech or word".

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Who is the LOGOS John is talking about in the above text? From our study of the history of the word LOGOS we already know that the word is *never used* to describe a *created being*.

John 1:14, 29 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace

and truth. ... The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

It is obvious from the context of these verses that the LOGOS is Jesus Christ. Yet even with the context of these verses can we prove that Jesus Christ is Divine? Let's look at John 1.1 in detail:

In the beginning. This phrase is similar to the Hebrew RESHITH found in:

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

This phrase shows that Christ was with the Godhead at the beginning of time, yet does not *successfully* show that Christ was with the Father *before* this time.

.. was the Word, and the Word was with God. The latter part of this phrase is the Greek PROS TON THEON, which shows that the LOGOS was *not only* coexistent with God in the beginning, but *face-to-face* with the Father so that He communicated with Him as an equal. Yet even here we do not see the Christ pre-existing before the RESHITH. Is He truly infinite, or only a Created Being like man and the angels?

.. and the Word was God. In this last phrase we see the ultimate truth about our Lord Jesus Christ. The word *was* in this phrase is the Greek EN, which is an Imperfect tense of the Greek EIMI, which means "to be". Whenever the EIMI is used or placed between two nouns, according to the Greek laws of grammar the two nouns are parallel in meaning in *both* essence as well as in nature. This law is only in effect in the event that an article is placed on the first noun (which is the case in this instance).

The LOGOS is Christ, according to the Greek laws of grammar. The LOGOS equals God and God equals the LOGOS exactly. Christ is Divine with all of the attributes of the other members of the Godhead. This is the essence of what John is telling us in his introductory passage.

Jesus Himself testified that He was God in John 8.58:

John 8:58 "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."

How does this passage verify the Deity of Christ? The Greek for ***I am*** in the passage is EGO EIMI. These words clearly show that Christ was saying He was God because:

1. EGO EIMI is a Present Tense Double Nominative. In this construction it shows a ***beginning*** for the existence of the subject (Abraham), yet shows ***no beginning*** nor end for the object of the construction (Christ).
2. ***I am*** is out of context with the rest of the sentence. Christ is not illiterate, for when He was young His wisdom was such that He taught the wise men of His time.

Luke 2:46-47 "And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers."

With the knowledge that Christ possessed (and has even now), would He be so ***ignorant*** as to not know proper grammar? In order to form the sentence properly He could have said:

Before Abraham was, I existed, or,
Before Abraham was, I was, or,
Before Abraham was, I lived.

Yet Jesus used extremely bad grammar and said, "***Before Abraham was, I am***". The only possible explanation for Jesus' faux pas was that He ***wanted*** to draw attention to the phrase ***I am***. He used the phrase ***I am*** as the personal name of God, just as it is found in:

Exodus 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."

and applied that Holy, Sacred name of God to Himself. The Jews who heard Jesus understood that He used the Holy name of God and applied it to Himself.

John 8:59 "Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

After hearing His statement these Pharisees pick up stones in order to kill Jesus for blasphemy, in accordance with Jewish Law. Jesus called Himself God, the Jews recognized this, and it's high time that we ourselves acknowledge that He was and is God in the flesh.

An Introduction to the Person of Christ

His Hypostatic Union

(C.S. Lewis) "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic, on a level with a man who says he is a poached egg, or else he would be the devil of hell. Either this man was and is the Son of God; or else a mad man or something worst. You can shut Him up for a fool; you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him the Lord God. But let us not come out with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us, He did not intend to ..."

Matthew 16:16-17 "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Who can truly understand Jesus, the (CHRISTOS = anointed one) Christ? We have never experienced the union of pure sinless humanity and pure Deity in one

Person, until we experienced it in Jesus.

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Earlier we saw that the LOGOS, the Word, is Jesus Christ, and He was and is fully God in the flesh. In John 1.14 the King James team "missed the mark" when they translated this verse. They render the passage ***Word was made flesh***, suggesting that there was a time when Jesus was not in existence. A better rendering from the Greek text would be ***Word was became flesh***. The LOGOS was already pre-existent in another form as God in eternity past, and took on another form (humanity) in order to become our Savior. In Phillipians 2.6 we see:

Philippians 2:6 "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:"

Taking this verse section by section from the Greek text, we see the following teaching:

Who, being... being is the Greek HUPARCHO, which means "to exist".

in the form of God... form is the Greek MORPHE, which means "the exact shape or nature of".

thought it not robbery to be equal with God... is best translated from the Greek text as "did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped".

Put it all together and we see that Jesus pre-existed in the exact same nature and Being as the other members of the Godhead, therefore He did not have to "seek" Deity, nor pretend to be God. He was and is God from eternity past and into eternity future. Christ was not only fully God, but He walked the earth as fully man, as witnessed by His own words and the words of the prophets:

John 8:40 "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth,

which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham."

Romans 1:3-4 "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"

Romans 9:5 "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

Philippians 2:8 "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Hebrews 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"

There was confusion over the exact nature of Christ in the organized Church until the council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.). At this council the Church leaders conferred and agreed on the following:

"(Christ is) known to be in two natures, unchangeable and indivisible. The distinction of the natures being in no wise being taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Substance; not pointed or divided into two persons.."

The Council decided that, Scripturally, Christ is not God in man, but a Member of the Godhead who possessed a fully operating Human nature. The two natures in Christ, both God and Man, are called by theologians a "Hypostatic Union". Whenever we use the term "Hypostatic Union" throughout the rest of this study we are talking about the unique union of both Man and God in the one Person, Jesus Christ.

When we understand the Hypostatic Union of Christ we understand why He was impeccable (unable to sin and able not to sin). Though Christ was human, He was sinless human, without any trace of the Old Sin Nature that we have. It was and is

essential that Christ be in Hypostatic Union in order that we be saved. Why?

Between God and His creation there was a wall of sin erected from the time Adam made his decision to turn his back on God in the Garden. This wall grew greater and larger each year that creation existed as we move farther and farther from our Creator. God's love wanted to find a way to heal this breach, yet His righteousness demanded that the sinner (mankind) pay the penalty. Yet the one who paid the penalty could not be bogged down in sin himself, for then the sacrifice would be tainted and unacceptable to God. An innocent and sinless man who, representative of humanity, would have to be offered as a substitutionary atonement for the sins of mankind. The substitute had to be willing to make this offer, not be forced into it.

Why wouldn't an *animal sacrifice* work?

1. The Jewish nation performed frequent and yearly sacrifices, yet by the very fact of their *repetition* we see that these sacrifices were ineffective. If they were effective, they would *not* have been repeated year after year. The animals used were ineffective substitutes because, (a) They were *not* on the same level with those they were substituting for, (b) They were not truly *willing* to accept their role as sacrifices as they were senseless animals, (c) These animals were *not sinless*, as when Adam fell all of creation was also tainted by his act of sin. Animals were placed in the care of mankind, were dependent on man. When we fell, the animals fell as well.

2. After the act of atonement by animal sacrifice the people fell back into unnatural sin patterns. *No person* can live perfect according to the Laws God, for there are thousands of ramifications and degrees within this Law. If a man breaks one of the points of the Law he breaks all them.

James 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

3. There was also *no animal or human* sacrifice that could live in substitute for the people because (1) The guilt and transgression of sin are passed down from

human to human *in the blood* of the person. For this reason there are no sinless humans born. We are all sinful as our Father Adam made us.

Leviticus 17:11-15 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood. And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off. And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean."

(2) Even if there were a sinless animal somewhere on the earth it could not live in man's behalf, as it is not on the *same level* with men. Thus we have a dilemma seemingly without solution. How does the Hypostatic Union of Christ solve this dilemma?

Christ was innocent , born free from sin. He was born of the virgin Mary, yet His Father was God Almighty. In the creation of the child the ovum of the mother contributes to the development of the body of the child. The sperm of the father contributes to the formation of the blood of the child. The blood contains both the physical life and the spiritual death of man. If the blood of the father is contaminated with sin, then the child will, by genetic necessity, be sinful. When Adam fell his soul was tainted with sin and the soul is contained within the blood of man (see the verse above). In Jesus' birth, He came into humanity completely pure. No man contributed to the formation of the blood in the baby Jesus. Mary became "with child" by the supernatural power of the sinless Holy Spirit, and the curse of Adam was not imputed to Christ. He was and is a sinless, holy atonement

for our sins.

Christ was willing to die for the people God. He was *not forced* against His will to do that which He came for.

Christ was resurrected so He could sit on the right hand God the Father to forever make intercession for us when we fail in Godly living.

Had Christ been merely man He could *not* have been a *living sacrifice* for the believer. Had He been purely God, He would not have been an acceptable sacrifice, for He would not be on the same level as the people He was to represent. Christ was *fully God and fully man* so He could be our Redeemer.

Because of the Hypostatic Union of Christ, His work accomplished three objectives:

- (1) His atonement met the *demands* of the Law for the sinner once and for all.
- (2) His atonement appeased the *wrath and justice* of God.
- (3) His atonement met the demands of the Law of God, yet at the same time showed forth the *mercy* of God.

The Satisfaction of Christ

The theological term "satisfaction of Christ" indicates that Christ not only did a *good work* on earth, but that this work was both *perfect and eternal*. The work was finished, so salvation is *not* what we do *in addition* to Christ, but our salvation is based on what Christ *alone* did for us. Can we prove the Satisfaction of Christ is a Biblical doctrine?

The saving power of the Satisfaction of Christ works in *three* simultaneous aspects toward the believer:

(1) Christ saves us as our High Priest:

Hebrews 10:1-10 "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Hebrews 10:11-12 "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God"

Christ's offering was accepted by the Almighty as a one time *eternal work*. The Christian does *not* have to fear the loss of his salvation, for the work of Christ was and *is* a finished work. Can we ever forget the last words Christ on the Cross:

John 19:30 "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Jesus was not referring to His life, for it was not really ended. He was referring to the work of the Cross: *It is finished*. Praise God for His mercies!

(2) Christ saves us as our sacrifice:

Ephesians 5:2 "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

The offering of Christ was and is a one time, eternal work. It was pleasing to God because it ***not only*** paid for sin, but also released the believer from the bondage of guilt.

Leviticus 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Blood may make ***an*** atonement for the soul, but only the blood of the pure and perfect creature may make ***the*** atonement for the believer. Such was sacrifice of Christ.

3. Christ saves us as our Redeemer:

Galatians 3:13 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

The Greek word for ***redeemed*** in this passage is EXAGORAZO, which means "To buy from or pay the price for". Christ put Himself forward as ***our payment*** for sin, took the penalty of the wrath of God that we all richly deserved. Mercy is abundant in salvation, not justice, for we did not get the justice we so richly deserved.

We are all like blind men, walking the wrong way down a one way street. We should not be on that street, but we are because of the disobedience so rich within us. A truck careens around the corner (the Law), and barrels our way, ready to crush us. Yet Christ reached out, pulled us out of the way, and took the crushing weight of the Law on Himself. He EXAGORAZO us, paid the penalty in our stead.

The payment Christ made was full, perfect, and harsh. To merely say "He paid the penalty" is to oversimplify what Jesus did for us. Prior to crucifixion the victim was ***scourged***. This is not an ordinary whipping by any means, it is simply

horrible torture. The victim was strapped to a vertical post so that his feet barely touched the ground. The executioner then lashed the man with a whip interlaced with razors or broken pottery. Of the scourging of Christ it is written that *no part* of His body was left untortured, His very *beard* was ripped from His face:

Isaiah 50:5-6 "The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."

Next the victim was to carry the mode of His death, a 70 pound post grinding into his wounded shoulders. The original Cross was not that which the Christian Church today knows. The Greek word for Cross is STAUROS, which means a "pole or post". The "t" shaped Cross infiltrated Christianity when paganism was allowed into the early Church during it's "Dark Ages". The worshippers of the bull god Tammuz entered the Church. As they worshipped the Tau (a symbol of Tammuz), they worshipped his symbol which was "t". Once they were forced into Christianity they carried this symbol with them which later became known as the Christian Cross. (see W.E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Fleming H Revell Company, page 256 "Cross, Crucify", A.Noun). However, the Bible is very plain that Jesus died on the *tree*:

Galatians 3:13 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

Historically Jesus had to carry this post approximately 660 yards from Antonia to Golgotha, the "refuse pile" of the city. Here He was nailed to the post in such a way that every breath He took was excruciatingly painful. In this humiliating manner Christ died for us. This was the redemption. This was the EXAGORAZO.

The World View Of Jesus Christ

C.S. Lewis: "You must show a man he is wrong before you start explaining why he is wrong."

The world has viewed Christ in many various forms and persons for many many years now. In this section we will study the various cultic views of Christ, and seek to explain why they deviate from the Biblical view of Jesus.

Ebionism and the Ebionites

"Ebionism" literally means "the poor ones". This early cult sprang up in the first and second centuries after the death of Christ. The Ebionites were a branch of Christio-Judaism which today we would classified as "Galatian" believers.

There were both Christian and non Christian Ebionites. These people denied the Deity of Christ because of Deuteronomy 6.3-4 (which we have studied before. See our studies on the Trinity of God). The Ebionites believed that Jesus became God only when the Holy Spirit descended on Him at His Water Baptism. In the same way the Ebionites believed that ***all believers are a little God*** just like Jesus was. In reality we all are only men, not God. Jesus was and is the only Man who ever walked the earth who could be rightfully called "God in the Flesh".

We have already refuted all of Ebionism's claims except one: that we become God-like at the point of salvation. This is a confusion of the ministry of the Indwelling of the Spirit. True, we do receive the Holy Spirit of God at the point of salvation. But the Spirit ***indwells or lives*** in us, yet distinctly separate from our souls. The Spirit ***does not mix*** with our souls, but works in union with us. Even God ***does not have the power to re-create Himself***: He cannot make other Gods out of mortal man, even with His infinite power. Christ was and is God, not because He was created to be so, but because He self existed as God from infinity to infinity.

Sorinthianism and the Sorinthians

Sorinthianism is very close in theology to Ebionism. The Sorinthians believed that there was ***no real Godhood in Christ*** until after His Water Baptism. After Water Baptism the Sorinthians believed that Jesus possessed ***two distinct personalities*** in

one body. They believed there was both a Divine and a human person living in the same shell, that Christ was a type of schizophrenic. This cult never really took hold in the Eastern world, dying out shortly after it's birth, yet it's doctrine lives on in several of our "modern day" cults.

Dolcicism and the Dolcitists

Another cult that was prominent in the first century was Dolcicism. This cult takes it's name from the Greek DOKETOI, meaning "to seem or to think". Dolcicism was the direct antithesis of Ebionism. They believed that Christ was **fully God**, and in His Deity only **seemed** to be like man. The Apostle John dealt with this group quite extensively. He wrote in response to their false doctrine:

1 John 4:2-3 "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

.. Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. This heresy was widespread in the world in the time of the Apostles. Sabellius, a heretic condemned at the council of Rome (253 AD), extended this doctrine so that it also perverted the doctrine of the Trinity of God. Sabellius held that God was not in three Persons. God was only one Person who showed Himself to man in **three manifestations**. Sabellius claimed that **Jesus was the one true God** who manifested Himself as Father, Spirit, and Son. Though Dolcicism is no longer known by its original name, its theories live on among the **Christian Monotheistic** cults. The most popular of the modern "Jesus Only" cults is the United Pentecostal Church.

Arianism

In the fourth century A.D. Arianism came into being. This cult reached its height of power in 325 A.D. In that year the cult's leader, Arius, was called to stand before the Church council at Nicea. Arians *denied the Deity* of Christ. They believed that, rather than being self-existent, Christ was *a created being* from God. It goes without saying that Arianism also denied the Doctrine of Trinity. Arius' reasoning was:

1. If Christ was the *only begotten of God* then there must have been a time when He was not begotten.
2. The Son possessed a nature like the Father's yet *not the same* nature as the Father's.

Arius based his arguments on two texts:

John 14:28 "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."

Arius reasoned that, *if* Jesus said the Father *was greater* than Himself then He was lesser than the Father and a created being. But he failed to take the verse in its proper historical context. As Calvin stated:

"Christ does not here compare the Divinity of the Father with his own, neither His own human nature with the Divine essence of God, but rather His present state with the celestial glory to which He must shortly be received..."

When Jesus walked the earth He walked it as a Man. This is because the Plan of God required that He live, work, and die as Man to atone for our sins. This was the *only way* He could be a proper redemptive sacrifice for us. Arius failed to recognize this because he failed to recognize Christ's Hypostatic Union.

The second verse Arius used was:

Matthew 19:16-17 "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master,

what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

Arius felt that Jesus, by rejecting the title of **Good** and applying it only to God, Jesus was directly stating that He was not God. There is nothing farther from the truth.

First, *look at the context*. In the background a young man is coming to Christ to *earn his way* into eternal life. This young man has rejected Jesus as the way unto life (John 14.6). The young man has determined that he can be *good enough on his own* to get into Heaven without the help of the Son. He further recognizes Jesus as *mere man only*, with no power to help him obtain salvation. This is seen through the title RABBI or **Master**. RABBI is a term applied to a *human teacher*, and by using this term to Christ the young man shows he was rejecting the Hypostatic Union of Christ.

So the young man comes to Christ, refers to Him as a *mere* human teacher, and dresses up the title with the adjective **Good**. Jesus rejects this adjective, not because He is not God, but because He is trying to prove a point. No *mere man* is ever good, for *all men* are dead in their sins (Romans 3.1-13; Ephesians 2.1-3). Jesus teaches, "If you are going to recognize Me as a mere man rather than your Savior, do not call Me **Good**. There are no **Good** people. All men are dead in their sins." The young man obviously missed the doctrinal point (as did Arius), because Jesus went on and explained how hard it would be to *get into Heaven using works*. If Jesus was a mere man saying that the things He said, then He could not be good. As C.S. Lewis stated, He was either a demon from hell or a madman. Jesus is either in Hypostatic Union and **Good**, or out of Union and possessed. There is no midpoint!

The Cult of Apollos, Bishop of Laodicea

Apollos developed another twist that rejected the Hypostatic Union. He and his

followers believed that Christ was *fully God* with *only a semblance of humanity*. Apollos held that Jesus possessed only the body and soul of the man, but had *no human spirit*. The human spirit of Christ, Apollos asserted, was *destroyed and replaced* by the Holy Spirit when He was baptized. This early cult still has a small following today under different names.

Cults Headed by Early Church Authorities

Nestorius (the Bishop of the Church at Constantinople, 4th century A.D.) led a group of followers who believed that Jesus had *two natures* in His Hypostatic Union, which is correct. But Nestorius also believed that Jesus possessed *two personalities* to go along with the two natures. Again we have a cult that believed our Lord Jesus was a schizophrenic. This heresy was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D.

Eutikese (an Abbot at the Church of Constantinople, 5th century A.D.) invented yet another twist. Eutikese held that Jesus had *three natures and one personality*. He said Jesus had a Divine Nature, a Human Nature, and a mixed Humano-Divine Nature. This cult was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D.

Modern Theological Cults

One liberal theologian, Shlarmaker, mixed Buddhism with Christianity. This was no worse than the early cults mixing Judaism with Christianity. What made Shlarmaker's Theology so bad was that he taught that Christ was *exactly equal* to the created being, man. The only real difference between Christ and us, he contended, was that Christ reached a higher God consciousness than we have. He said anyone can reach what Christ was with *hard work and dedication to good deeds*. This is a particularly blasphemous doctrine as it not only denies the Hypostatic Union, but also de-emphasizes the work of Christ on the Cross. The Cross no longer stands for atonement to pay for our sins, but is now an *unfortunate event* brought on by those jealous of Christ's created Divinity.

Shlarmaker's Theology is not taught or condoned by the Scripture. Mormonism contains elements of this theology.

Another theologian, Ritchell, introduced what he called "German Radical Criticism" of the Bible. He taught that Christ had no Hypostatic Union, that it was *impossible* for any man to have two natures. Ritchell declared that Christ was *merely a man* who totally submitted Himself to the will of God. In the same sense, according to this teaching, any of us today could reach what Christ did by exhibiting the same submission to God.

Harry Emerson Fosdick taught that every Christian has the *same amount* of Divinity that Christ had: *only in degree do we differ* from what Christ possessed before God.

Joseph Settler (a quasi-Lutheran theologian), taught that Christ was *not preexistent with God* literally, but Christ was *only foreknown* in the mind of the one true God. Settler emulated his mentor Arius in most of his doctrinal views. Settler, as did Arius, denied both the Hypostatic Union as well as the Trinity of God.

Professor Henry Van Doussan, a quasi-Presbyterian theologian, used a slightly different twist to reject the Hypostatic Union. He held that Christ was *not fully God*, but that God was fully present in Christ as He would be *in any man*. God and Christ were one only in the sense of their *unity of purpose*, but Christ was certainly not the equal of God. Doussan stated:

"Unless God is present in the life of every man, then He cannot become present in the life of Jesus of Nazareth .."

Doussan did not create a new Theology, but only emulated his earlier cultic mentors. There are many different cultic views concerning the person of Jesus Christ today. All such views are inspired by Satan, the Father of lies. Satan tried to trick our Lord Jesus (Matthew 4) into turning away from His Hypostatic Union and the Plan of God. When this failed Satan convinced unbelievers of both yesterday and today that Jesus was no more than a mere man. If such attacks succeed then there can be no salvation for these people, because the heart of

salvation is to accept the *historic Jesus Christ as your personal Savior*. We cannot work our way into salvation: we must rely on what Jesus did for us at the Cross and beyond within His Hypostatic Union.

If Satan can trick the believer into minimizing or disregarding the unique Person of Christ he can cause:

1. Stunted growth in the believer. This doctrine is pivotal to so many other Bible doctrines that to reject the unique Person of Christ leads to deeper and deeper departures from the truth.
2. An idea that we can "work our way" to Heaven. The witness of the Cross is destroyed when we tell the unbeliever "you must accept Christ and do this, or do that" to be saved. Unbelievers become believers when we tell them of their hopeless situation and show them that Jesus is the way out of Hell. Unbelievers stay unbelievers when we tell them to work their way to Heaven, to work their own way out of this hopeless situation.

Too often I hear the mantra, "It's just an opinion, a harmless way of belief". There is nothing harmless in rejecting the Hypostatic Union of Christ. The Apostle John didn't seem to think that such deception was "harmless opinion", and neither should any right thinking Christian.

Jesus Christ Is God

Proofs Through His Attributes

John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

When Jesus spoke these words He effectively divided the world, with all of it's false gods and goddesses, asunder. His statement was both negative as well as positive. In the negative sense, Jesus is the *only* way to God. Christ, and Christianity, are exclusive concepts. There is no other way to God *but* through

Jesus. In the positive sense we see that, if we put away our blind stabs at seeking God, there is one *sure* way to God, and that way is Jesus Christ.

This was not the only statement Jesus that Jesus made about being the exclusive way unto God. Jesus is the *only Begotten* of God:

John 3:18 "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Who better to lead man to God than the only Son of God? Jesus is also the *only mediator* between God and man:

1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

Who better to talk on our behalf than the "only Mediator"? In our society people often become wishy-washy when they talk about religion. "Can't we just all love one another and be in one accord?". But when you read the Foxes Book of Martyrs you see that the early Christians, strong in the faith, were feign to forsake Christ in either word or deed. They held up the exclusiveness of Christianity for all to see, and in so doing kept the Church alive when it would have otherwise been blotted out by "religious people".

Paul's letter to the Galatians emphasizes, over and over again, the exclusiveness of Jesus Christ. The Jewish Christians wanted to add in the rituals of the Temple with their Christian worship, and to this Paul replied "God forbid". It is true that all other religions carry, to a small degree, some elements that are parallel to Christianity. The Moslems believe that there is one God; so do we. Yet should the Christian compromise the exclusiveness of Christ in order to accommodate the religions of the world? Is it right to allow the Buddhist, in ignorance, to starve himself to death seeking Heaven and, after dying, only finding Hell? I don't think so, and neither does our God!

There are many verses of Scripture that we can look at topically to prove the Deity

in Christ's perfect union. For instance, we can look at an Old Testament quotation that ascribes a certain attribute to God, then find the parallel verse in the new Testament that ascribes the same attribute to Christ. This clearly shows the Deity of Christ in Hypostatic Union.

God is the only Savior of the world.

If God is the only Savior, and Christ is declared to be the Savior, then Christ *must be equal* to God.

Hosea 13:4 "Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me."

John 4:42 "And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

God is declared to be the Creator of all things.

If God is the Creator, and Christ is declared to be the Creator in parallel, then *Christ must be God.*

Isaiah 40:28 "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

John 1:3 "All things were made by him (Christ); and without him was not any thing made that was made."

God is declared to be the Judge of all.

If the Judge, and Christ is declared to be the Judge in parallel, then ***Christ must be God.***

Joel 3:12 "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about."

John 5:26-27 "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."

God is declared to be the believer's Shepherd.

If the Shepherd, and Christ is declared to be the Shepherd in parallel, then ***Christ must be God.***

Psalms 23:1 "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

God is declared to be the believer's Rock and Fortress.

Since God is the Rock, if Christ is declared to be the Rock in parallel, then ***Christ must be God.***

Psalms 18:2 "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

1 Corinthians 10:4 "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was

Christ."

God alone is to be worshipped.

If God only is to be worshipped, and Christ in parallel is worshipped, then ***Christ must be God***. Not even the Archangels are allowed to be worshipped.

Psalms 148:1-5 "Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created."

Hebrews 1:6-8 "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

Matthew 8:2-3 "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

The Matthew passage is particularly telling. Jesus was ***worshipped*** by the leper. The word in the original tongue is PROSCHUNEO, which means "to lay prostrate before an object of worship, to kiss or fawn over an object of greater Deity". In Judaism it was ***blaspheme*** to worship a mere man; to do so would subject you to immediate death by stoning. Yet Jesus, a Orthodox Jew, did not discourage the leper; He merely accepted the worship given as if it were His due (and it was). If Jesus were not God then He contributed to blasphemy by His own actions, and was ***not*** a "good" man or a prophet: He would indeed be a sinner. That Jesus believed

Himself to be God is obvious. He WAS and IS God.

PROSCHUNEO is a word used only for worship of God. The same word is used in the following context:

John 4:20-24 "Our fathers worshipped PROSCHUNEO in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship PROSCHUNEO. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship PROSCHUNEO the Father. Ye worship PROSCHUNEO ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship PROSCHUNEO him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship PROSCHUNEO him must worship PROSCHUNEO him in spirit and in truth."

Furthermore the leper addressed Jesus with the title *Lord*, ADONAI, which is one of the holy names of God. Jesus was not only addressed as ADONAI in this one passage, but over 200 times in the Gospels alone. In each instance Jesus accepted the title as His rightful due, never rebuked the speaker. This is carried forward in the following text:

John 5:23 "That all men should honour (TIMAO, To prize or show reverence to) the Son, even as they honour (TIMAO, To prize or show reverence to) the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."

Jesus expected the same honor attributed to the Father, for He was and is equal in power and authority to the Father. Jesus Christ is God!

God alone is to be called "Lord".

God alone is to be called the Lord (KURIOS) as this is a title of Deity. But Christ is referred to in the new Testament *exclusively* as the Lord. This is the

New Testament equivalent to the Old Testament YHWH, the Divine name of God. Cults usually try to play down the use of KURIOS when applied to Jesus by noting that many Kings and Rulers were also called KURIOS in the ancient Greek literature. This is because many Rulers of this era set themselves up as gods. Many believers were martyred in the early Christian Church because they called Jesus KURIOS, refusing to bow down and worship Caesar as God. KURIOS is a title of Deity, and though wrongly applied to carnal Rulers, it *was rightly applied* to Jesus Christ in the Scripture.

The Prophetic Word of Christ

Jesus' manner of Prophecy points out the fact that He is God. Whenever the Prophets gave a message from God they preceded the message with "Thus saith the Lord". For example:

Exodus 4:22 "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:"

Joshua 24:2 "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods."

This phrase is found 415 times in the Bible uttered by the Prophets, prior to making a proclamation from God. Whenever Jesus prophesied He never used these words, as if He were saying "I am the source of this message, I am the Divine Son of God".

The "oneness" of Christ and God

John 10:30-33 "I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to

stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."

one in the above passage is the Greek EIS, which not only refers to oneness *of purpose*, but also oneness *of being and substance*. The Jews understood that Jesus was declaring Himself to be *equal with God* because, they immediately picked up stones in order to execute Him for blasphemy. Jesus knew what He was saying: He is God.

1 Corinthians 8:5-6 "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

In contrast this passage shows that both Christ and the Father, though co-equal, are unique within the Godhead. Each Member have their own specific functions, each their own place without struggling for supremacy. The name and title *Lord Jesus Christ* even points out the Deity of Christ. *Lord* is the Greek parallel to the Hebrew YHWH, meaning I AM, the Divine name of God. *Jesus* comes from the Hebrew YEHOSHUA, translated "God with us". *Christ* is CHRISTOS, meaning "The Anointed One, the Messiah". Jesus' name and title could literally be rendered, from the original languages, as: "I am God the Anointed One".

Thus do we see the Scripture unequivocally declares the Deity of Christ, fully co-equal with both God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He IS Lord!

A parallel study can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) on this subject.



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Systematic Theology

STUDY SIX

The Doctrines of Grace

These studies were previously developed in full as "stand alone" studies. Rather than just "copy" these studies here, you will find them in the links shown below. God Bless!

[The Doctrine of Grace \(Part 1\): Universal and Saving](#)

[The Doctrine of Grace \(Part 2\): Living](#)

[The Doctrine of Grace \(Part 3\): Dying and Eternal](#)

[Common Grace And Spiritual Death: Can Man Do Good?](#)

[Common Grace And Spiritual Death: What Is Divine Good?](#)

[Common Grace And Spiritual Death: The Path To Salvation](#)

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Systematic Theology

STUDY SEVEN

The Doctrine of Sanctification

And It's Four Theological Aspects

We need to clarify the *different* views concerning "Sanctification". I do not intend on spending an inordinate amount of time discussing the history of the doctrine in the Church, yet when we are able to see all of the different viewpoints it helps us to fix in our minds the Scriptural truth about Sanctification.

A Brief History of The Doctrine of Sanctification

In the Roman Catholic view, there is *no difference* between Sanctification and Justification. Catholics hold that the sacramental water of Baptism removes all the stain of original sin from man. If a Christian commits a "mortal sin", the stain is placed back on his soul by the act of the sin. "Mortal sin" can only be removed by an act of penance (a good work), preceded by confession to a Catholic priest. The Catholic view holds that Sanctification is a *job of improvement* which enables God to Justify man while the job itself is done by man. The Catholic view is equal, in essence, to that of the historical Pelagian view.

Saint Augustine was the first person in the Church age to seriously ponder the acts of the Spirit in relationship to the Sanctification of the believer. He held that Sanctification was a *supernatural infusion* of life newly acquired by the believer.

Augustine also held that Sanctification came by the Spirit and operated only *through* the Church and its sacraments.

Taking the teachings of Augustine along with Thomas Aquinas (a Roman Theologian), the Catholic Churches held to this as the true Doctrine of Sanctification ever since. The Church never sought to define the detailed mechanics of the act, often confusing Justification and Sanctification as one in the same.

In the Weslian View Sanctification is a *process of improvement* which may be completed while the believer is in the flesh. Sanctification is a work which is a *partnership* between God and man. Weslians hold that man *may reach perfection* while in this life, if we walk the earth sinless and without blame.

The Reformed View of Sanctification is based on the Scriptural injunction:

2 Corinthians 3:18 "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The Reformationists hold that Sanctification is a series of processes all accomplished by the Holy Spirit of God. They believe that the work is *separate from the ability of man* because man is, in essence, unable to contribute due to the oppression of sin.

With the rise of the Reformation movement, the act of Sanctification was seen as a different action from Justification. Justification was taught as the legal action performed on the believer by God when he, by faith, accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. Through Justification God placed our sins on Jesus Christ while placing His righteousness (imputed righteousness) in us. Sanctification is viewed as a *continuing process* directed by Spirit of God whereby the believer is improved in maturity through study of the Word of God. Justification is immediate, at the point of salvation. Sanctification is progressive, an act that continues throughout believer's life.

The Reformers also held that the sacraments were only a *lesser part* of Sanctification, but certainly not the entire act. The sacraments (the Lord's Table, Water Baptism) are useful in that they help to conform the believer to the image of Christ. But the sacraments do not bring total Sanctification on the believer.

The Biblical Terminology

In order to fully understand all the *aspects* of sanctification we need to understand the word as it is found in the original language.

In the Hebrew text we find the word KADESH, meaning "to withdrawal or to separate from a common gathering". The word does not have a moral connotation unless used with the Godhead.

Deuteronomy 23:17-18 "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God."

In the Old Testament there were false religions in which worship consisted of having sexual intercourse with harlots. The above word, ***whore***, has no good moral definition. Yet the root of the Hebrew word for ***whore*** (KADESHAH) is the same as the word KADESH. In other words, the temple prostitute was "set apart" to serve evil.

Let me further illustrate the use of KADESH. If I have a box of pencils and take one out for use in ***a specific task***, it may be said that I KADESH the pencil. The word has no moral or religious meaning to it: it just means "to be set apart". It eventually became associated with holiness because of its frequent use with God, but in the beginning it was not so.

In the New Testament there are two basic words used for Sanctification. The first is HAGIOS, which translated means "separated one, Saint". The word again carries no specific moral connotation. It merely refers to those whom God has set

apart as a tool for a *specific purpose*. The second of these words is HAGIAZO, which translated means "to set apart or sanctify". As it is with HAGIOS, the word in its original meaning had no specific moral connotation, yet gained one from its continual use in reference to God.

The Biblical Breakdown of The Aspects of Sanctification

PRIMARY SANCTIFICATION

In our study of Grace we briefly mentioned that we briefly mentioned *Primary Sanctification*. We should fully explore this subject so that this Bible truth will be fully fixed in your mind, as you will need this "foundation" doctrine later in our other studies.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: If primary citations the act by which God to set apart his children or marked his children as his own. Notice the wording: the. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit."

Remembering that "Sanctification" or HAGIAZO means "to set apart", Primary Sanctification is that act of God whereby He *set apart* the human race within the Plan of Salvation. God *chose* to offer us a way out of the mess that Adam led us to, chose to offer up His only Son in substitution for the punishment that we so richly deserved. God also chooses to *offer each person* on earth salvation through the Spirit of God at least one time in their life. Notice the wording:

".. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit .."

This "choosing" or setting apart does not *guarantee our salvation*, but guarantees

that salvation *will be offered* at least once. God's act of Primary Sanctification made it possible that we be saved. This is a recurring theme in Scripture:

1 Peter 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

We are **Elect** or "Chosen Ones" because we were chosen to participate in the Plan of Salvation from eternity past. The Angels who fell do not have that luxury, for they will be cast into Hell in the latter days without chance of penance. We are also **Elect** for, once we accept Christ as Savior, we are "set apart for God's use" from the moment of salvation on.

1 Peter 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

The believer is a "chosen" vessel, set apart for God's use. We only chose God because He first chose us.

Ephesians 1:4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: "

Mark 13:20 "And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days."

Calvinism takes the "choosing out" of God to the extreme: They teach that only the Elect will be saved, and only the Elect were chosen by God. I do not believe that Primary Sanctification extends so far as to completely rule out all human free will. However, there is Biblical evidence that God maintains humanity on this earth for the sake that the Elect all be gather to Him. We can interpret this to mean that (a) God has sanctified or "set apart" a specific people to Himself in the Plan of Salvation, or (b) God has sanctified or "set apart" a specific *number* of people to be within the Church in His Plan of the Ages. I honestly do not know the right

interpretation to these texts other than to say, "Let God be God". Primary Sanctification (Election) and the FreeWill of man are like two rails on a railroad. When viewed up close they seem forever separate, forever disunited from one another. Yet as they approach the horizon (eternity) they seem to merge together as one. When we meet Him face to face we will understand the solution to this age old dilemma.

POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION

After the believer enters the Plan of God by faith in Jesus Christ, he enters a state called *Positional Sanctification*.

1 Corinthians 1:2 "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"

..to them that are sanctified is better rendered from the Greek, "To them who *have been* sanctified". Positional Sanctification is found described in:

Hebrews 2:10-11 "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,"

Positional Sanctification is a *finished work of separation* done to the believer because he was *justified* through the sacrifice of Christ. We who believe are now separated from the unbeliever in the eyes of God because we accepted what Jesus did for us. Primary Sanctification is an act of setting apart *because God chose* us. Positional Sanctification is the state of being separate *because of the finished work of Christ*. In Primary Sanctification we were chosen, but not yet born again as Children of God. In Positional Sanctification we are regenerated, set apart because of the work of Another.

Hebrews 10:10, 14 "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

Positional Sanctification *runs hand in hand* with Justification. Positional Sanctification is *entirely Spiritual*: Spiritually we are perfect and sinless because of the Blood of Christ; physically we are imperfect, still sinful, because of the flesh that we still reside in. Positional Sanctification is, in reality, below the level of human consciousness, non experiential. We are set apart *in God's eyes* because of Christ, not because we are good or moral creatures.

PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION

2 Corinthians 7:1 "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

The words *perfecting holiness* are literally, from the Greek, "maturing in Sanctification". *Progressive Sanctification* is that work of God whereby we, through the power of the Holy Spirit, grow in Christian maturity. We become "more set apart" on a daily basis if we are obedient to His will.

Romans 8:13 "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;"

Through Progressive Sanctification the believer is gradually "pruned" by the Spirit

until he becomes a fit vessel to serve the Will of God. It is a *steady process* of renewal by the Spirit of God to the body and soul of the *believer*, a process that only ceases at death. The work is experiential, yet only within the grasp of human consciousness *after the fact*. Progressive Sanctification may be described by relating it to the hour hand of the clock. You may not see the hand move by watching it, yet if you come back later you definitely *know* that it has moved. We may not notice the effects of Progressive Sanctification until one day we reflect back on the way we used to be.

PROSPECTIVE SANCTIFICATION

The fourth act of spiritual separation is called *Prospective Sanctification*. Prospective Sanctification better known under the theological term *Glorification*, and is the state in which both the spirit and body of the believer is totally separated unto God.

Romans 8:17-18 "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Hebrews 12:14 "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:"

holiness in our Hebrews passage is the Greek HAGIASMOS, translated "sanctification, being set apart". Without Prospective Sanctification man is never fully cleansed in both body and spirit. Without Prospective Sanctification we can not enter into Heaven. It is written:

Revelation 21:8, 27 "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are

written in the Lamb's book of life."

Prospective Sanctification is that stage of the believer where *both Positional* and *Progressive* sanctification meet.

The Misconception of Perfectionism

The orthodox reform faith has always held that Sanctification is a "steady growth period which touches the whole man at once, *through and by* the Spirit of God". The orthodox Church also holds that the work *never reaches full maturity* while we are in this life.

Just as you may take a tomato and ground, pulverize, or burn it, it will always chemically be a tomato. For man to reach perfection there must *first* be a work of God in *recreating* the old flesh into one that is completely new and *untainted by sin*. We as "tomatoes" must be turned into butterflies by God in order to reach perfection.

Sanctification can be likened to the physical growth of man. We are physically born once, then move through different stages of growth. From infant to tot, from tot to child, from child to puberty, from puberty to adult. Yet there is never a time in the life of man where we cease growing, for we are never fully developed, never know all there is to know.

The Scripture most perfectionists (Pelagians) use to prove their Theology is:

Matthew 5:48 "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

The text is better rendered from the original language as:

"YE SHALL BE perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven IS perfect."

Alford (*Alford's Greek Testament*) states: "*.. It is not altogether imperative in meaning, but including the imperative sense: such shall be the state, the aim of*

Christians .."

Alford further says that the *historic idiomatic translation* of the word **perfect** should be: ".. complete in your love of others, not one sided or exclusive, but all embracing and God like." "No countenance is given by this verse to the ancient Pelagian heresy of perfectibility in this life. Such a sense of the words would be utterly at variance with the whole of the discourse (see especially verses 22,29, 32) in which the imperfections and conflicts of the Christians are fully recognized."

The text does not offer the possibility of Christian perfection in this life, but points out that this is the long-range goal of every Christian at the end of his earthly walk.

Another verse which the Pelagians use to support their doctrinal view is:

Philippians 3:15 "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

The word **perfect** should have been translated *mature*. Paul was speaking in reference to maturity *in the Christian life*, not perfectionism in the flesh. If he was referring to the latter (perfectionism) then he is doing so in contradiction to his earlier statement:

Philippians 3:11-12 "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

Paul states that he was not "perfect". Who among us can say that they have surpassed Paul in their spiritual walk? If Paul could not reach the Pelagian mystique of "perfectionism", then why do you think we can?

Pelagians also call on 1 Peter 1.16 in support of their false doctrine:

1 Peter 1:16 "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

The Greek word for *holy* should have been translated "sanctified, separated unto God". God calls all His children to separate themselves from the world, to avoid the lusts of the flesh. He does *not* call us to perfectionism in this life, for He knows that this is an office we cannot occupy while in the flesh. All that we are, we owe to our Heavenly Father. We are fallible, He is faithful. If we remember these absolutes, recognize our weaknesses, we will better able to walk at peace with our God and our world.

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Systematic Theology

STUDY EIGHT

The Holy Spirit and Regeneration

John 3:3-5 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The New Birth which our Lord Jesus speaks about is what we theologically know as **Regeneration**. Do we really understand this act in its fullest degree? What is "New Birth", and what is its effect on the believer? Let's begin our study with a look at the history of the Doctrine of Regeneration:

A Historical Perspective On Regeneration

The Pelagian View: Pelagius taught that Regeneration was no more than a **moral transformation** brought about in man **by man**. In a way Pelagius ignored the power of God in Regeneration, for it is written:

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Most *liberal theologians* hold the Pelagian view. They teach that man is getting better and better, and by the power of our self improvement we will eventually bring the Millennial Reign of Christ to earth. Not only do the Scriptures teach this view is *wrong*, but human history also shows it to be a foolish doctrinal position. If you don't agree try reading a newspaper sometime. As the time rate goes up, the Pelagian view is shown to be more and more impossible.

Roman Catholic: Roman Catholics have traditionally taught that Regeneration is brought on the believer through the sacraments of the Church (Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper). The *specific act of Regeneration* is brought on the believer when he undergoes Water Baptism. The believer may lose this act of cleansing by *willfully sinning*. Note that both Roman Catholic and Pelagian views fail to recognize the power of God the Holy Spirit in the work. Regeneration is viewed as a *work of man in obedience to God*, not a work of God on man.

Anglican Church: The Anglicans hold two distinct and separate denominational views:

- One view agrees *entirely* with the Roman Catholic view of Regeneration. Regeneration is strictly a work of man in obedience to God.
- The second view holds that there *two degrees* of Regeneration.
 - The view holds that Regeneration is a rite, much like circumcision. When you join the physical Church of God you are "Regenerated".
 - The second view is that Regeneration is a New Birth in a higher sense. It is a new change in the *moral character* of the believer that is *not* necessarily dependent on Water Baptism. They recognize Regeneration as a work of the Spirit.

Lutherans: The Lutheran view of Regeneration is that Water Baptism is the *usual means* to accomplish the act, yet not the *necessary means*. In other words, Baptism does not accomplish Regeneration yet *aids the act*. Regeneration occurs during Water Baptism, and the object of Regeneration is passive during the act. Lutherans hold that man may *ruin* this act of cleansing by falling into willful sin.

They teach that Regeneration is a gift from God, yet man has *no assurance* of the permanence of this gift.

The Arminian view. The Arminian view holds that the act of Regeneration is *not exclusively* either God's or man's work. They hold that "it is the fruit of a man's choice to cooperate with the Divine influence being exerted". By this statement the Arminians raise the power of man to equal that of God. If man's will is equal in power to God's will, then it is reasonable to say that man is equal in power to his Creator. The Arminians also hold that Regeneration gained may become *Regeneration lost* by an act of willful sin. There is *no guarantee* or assurance of salvation or Regeneration. To the Arminian Regeneration is *not a Gift*, but a *partnership* with God.

In all these views of Regeneration where the free will of man is stressed we see several things:

1. There is *little or no* emphasis on the work the Holy Spirit in the act. At the very most it is considered a work of the Spirit *in cooperation* with man. At the very least it is *entirely* a work of man. Man is, in effect, raised to the level of God.

2. In these inflated claims of the ability of human freewill there are several major Biblical doctrines that are ignored:

- A. The Bible emphasizes that man is *totally dead* in his sins before coming to Christ. In this state of death can be human free will have *any* real effect toward salvation?

- B. With an over-emphasis on the human freewill there is a de-emphasis on the power of God. If man has *total* free will then can God really be all powerful. Total free will cannot be *out guessed* for it is fluid, ever changing. A total free will is *not subject* to any appetites, therefore it is totally unpredictable. How can God foreknow all things if He does

not, in His omnipotence, render some things certain?

C. With over-emphasis on the human freewill we also, in some degree, make man out to be equal with God. To quote another scholar, "Man permits while God submits". This is arrogance, and blasphemy.

3. All of these views discount any personal assurance of the permanence of Regeneration. Since man creates himself, he may certainly also destroy himself.

The presupposed power of the human free will is illogical in the way that liberal Theologians present it, because:

If man *along with God* are the authors of Regeneration, we are still *dead in our sins*. The Bible tells us that the unregenerate person is spiritually dead. A corpse cannot create life of it's own dilution.

If man along with God are the authors of Regeneration, they are therefore *in partnership*. The lesser partner (man) cannot destroy what is created in partnership unless the greater partner (God) agrees to the destruction.

We can see on the basis of logic, the humanistic ideologies of Regeneration fall far short of the Biblical truth. Let's look at Regeneration in the light of the Holy Scripture.

Biblical Analysis of the Doctrine

Matthew 19:28-29 "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters,

or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

Titus 3:4-7 "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Above we see the *only* occurrences of the word **regeneration** found in the Bible, though the same concept is discussed in other terms such as "born again", or "new birth". In the Matthew text the word **regeneration** refers to the *creative renewing* process of God *through the presence* of Christ on the earth. When Jesus sits on His throne in Jerusalem during His Millennial Reign (Isaiah 11, Romans 8), His very presence will bring about the *renewal of creation*. In the Titus text **regeneration** refers to the *washing process performed by God the Holy Spirit* on the individual believer.

In both texts the word carries the implication of re-creation, or to be newly created. In both texts the Controller and Bringer of Regeneration is **God alone** (either God the Spirit or God the Son). Nowhere is there *any* implication that we as frail humans are involved in Regeneration other than as *passive recipients*. Man is *not* a partner with God in the act of Regeneration, as the liberal theologian would have us to believe.

If man is *not a partner* with God, what does this logically imply?

1. Since the act is done by God and God alone, then the act is *perfect*. God would not needlessly perform a perfect act on man if He knew man has the power to destroy it.
2. The act may *not be destroyed* by man because it is completed according to the plan of God. God will not trust His plans to the hands

of fallible man. God foreknows all things because He renders certain things as *absolutes*. The act of *Regeneration is a absolute*.

3. Since the act is wholly ordered by God, then God's honor rests on the permanence of the act. *He* has *made certain promises* that are legally binding in the Bible:

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

If a Christian could be condemned to Hell by falling into willful sin, God shows Himself to be *less than righteous*. Nowhere does it teach us in Scripture to believe in Christ AND do something else. The road to salvation (and hence Regeneration) is an act of believing in Christ *alone*. Man has added the AND to the rear of God's covenant promise; it was never added by the Almighty.

Regeneration may be defined as the "Completely Divine act of communicating Spiritual life to a believer who was previously in Spiritual death. This act is eternally permanent, and no act of sin may change its effect".

The Biblical illustrations of Regeneration permit man to be passive only in its reception. For instance:

John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

1. Those who are Regenerate are those who are "born again". If we did *not cause ourselves* to be physically born, then why should the Biblical concept of "new birth" be any different?

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:"

old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Galatians 6:14-15 "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

2. Those who are Regenerated are "new creations". Did you call yourself into being from nothing.? Man *can not create himself*, this is strictly an act of God.

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Isaiah 64:8 "But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Romans 9:21 "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

3. Those who are Regenerated are recognized as the "handy work of God". When you are working on a cabinet, did you build the cabinet or did the cabinet build itself? Any person would answer "I built the cabinet". The cabinet was entirely passive in the role of its building. We are entirely passive in the role of our Regeneration.

Why is Regeneration Necessary?

Ephesians 2:5-6 "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"

The Bible teaches that we, prior to God's act of Regeneration, were ***completely and irrevocably Spiritually dead***. The word ***dead*** in the above text is the same word, NEKROS, used throughout the Bible in reference to those who are physically dead, corpses without life. An object that is NEKROS is totally without animation, totally unable to function in the world around it. As those who were Spiritually NEKROS we were unable to serve God, unable to do anything of worth for Him. We were ***corpses***.

Colossians 1:21-22 "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:"

Not only were we NEKROS, but we were at ***war with God***. You cannot be a friend of God and reject the Son. You cannot be a friend of God if you are unregenerate. We could not be partners with God in Regeneration because we were ***alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works***. You cannot be NEKROS and be His friend and partner!

Ephesians 4:18-20 "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. But ye have not so learned Christ;"

Not only were we NEKROS and enemies of God, but ***we were blind as well***. The unsaved unregenerate man is interested in his own life, in his own ways, not in the ways of God. Our understanding was darkened. The only time we ever actively sought out God was when we were in trouble, and as a last ditch effort cried out "God, help me".

Ephesians 2:13-14 "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;"

Man in his unregenerate state has a **great void** between himself and God. There is a great river of sin and death that stands between God and man, and Christ is the only bridge that will help us cross that void.

Romans 6:20 "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness."

As unregenerate creatures we were slaves to our own lusts, our own desires. Seeking to be free we actually enslaved ourselves to the death that separated us from the peace of God. The unregenerate man, even if outwardly a "good man", is a slave to his own appetites, totally separated from God.

1 John 3:8-10 "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Wherever the infernal doctrine that "all men are brothers" came from is a mystery to me. It certainly did not come from the Word of God. The Bible teaches us that we are to care for our neighbor. Yet nowhere does it command that we accept an unregenerate person as a brother. Those who are unregenerate are ***the children of Satan***, not of God. Their father is heading toward hellfire, and the unregenerate are deftly following.

Regeneration is necessary in order that man ***become a Son*** of the living God. Regeneration cannot be a work of man, for we do not adopt God; God adopts us. If there is no act of Regeneration in the sinner, that person is ***condemned to hell*** following physical death. Just like the song says: "Sin shall not enter in there". No child of Satan shall be received into Heaven with open arms. It is not possible that the father of lies will enter Heaven, and is equally ***not possible*** for any of his followers to share in eternity with God.

2 Peter 2:9 "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and

to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:"

Regeneration is necessary because of the literal truth of Heaven and Hell. Those who have not received Regeneration by faith in Christ shall stand before the Great White Throne Judgment of God and be judged according to their own evil works. All men are sinners in the sight of God unless the blood of Christ is applied. Those who have not accepted the finished work of the Cross shall go into eternity separated from God, in order that the justice of God may be satisfied. The character of Heaven *demand*s that there be a work of Regeneration by God on those who would enter in.

Revelation 21:27 "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

The only way in which a man's name may enter the Book of Life is if that person has accepted Jesus Christ as his only Savior. This acceptance is *not based on good works* but on faith alone. Once we accept by faith the finished work of Christ, we are Regenerated by the Spirit of the living God.

Further Scriptural Proofs

1. Regeneration is solely a work of God:

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Ephesians 2:5-6 "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"

Regeneration is both an act of creation as well as an act *of resurrection*. Only God can contribute to either act.

2. Man is totally passive in Regeneration. The act is instantaneous at the point of salvation, below the level of human consciousness.

3. Regeneration is accomplished without any means or sacrament. Water Baptism does not bring about Regeneration, neither does the Lord's Table. These are all sacraments that the Regenerate believer enjoys *because* he is in union with Christ.

4. Regeneration resurrects the human spirit so we can once more have communion with God.

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,"

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

The will of Regenerate man is *enlightened* so he can do works pleasing to God. Man is no longer enslaved to his appetites to the degree he previously was, now having the power *through the Holy Ghost* to break the enslavement completely.

Regeneration is not just a *mere correction* of our attitude toward God, it is much more than this. Regeneration is a form of resurrection, but one which does not change the *ego* of its recipient. Regeneration does not change the essence of man. I was David prior to Regeneration, I am still David. The human is *still human* even after the work. What generation does change is the *nature of man*.

Man in the Garden was created as *one unit* composed of three indivisible and yet

distinct parts. Man was Body (the outer shell of the person), soul (that which makes us who we are. Our personality), and human spirit.

The human spirit was designed to receive orders from God and transmit these orders to the soul so we could serve God. After man fell by disobeying God, the spirit of man died just as God so promised:

Genesis 2:16-17 "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

After Adam brought spiritual death on man, man's soul became dominant in the place of the human spirit. The soul was not equipped to handle the job of the human spirit, so the body of man stopped responding to and serving God. The soul was like a child without parent, without guidance. Ill equipped to do the will of God the soul developed a whole new set of negative emotions: lust, anger, hatred, envy. The soul grew farther and farther from God into new levels of sin. Because of sin the life span of man shortened. Rampant sin slowly killed the house of the soul.

With the coming of Regeneration through the Holy Spirit the three-part harmony of man was re-established. The human spirit is resurrected so it can discipline the soul and protect the body. We now have a functioning line of communication with God, reunited with the One whom we were so long estranged from.

Logical Order Of Regeneration

The logical order in man's lifetime leading to to his Regeneration by faith is:

1. First, we were dead because of sin:

(Abraham Kiper) "As a dead body is incapable of any other act than inclined to

dissolution, so is a dead soul inclined to all evil. But this does not imply a dead soul is devoid of any activity any more than a dead body. As the latter contains blood, carbon, and lime, so does the former produce will, feeling, intelligence, and imagination. And these elements of a dead soul become equally more active with still more terrible effects that are sometimes fearful to behold. But as the dead body by all its activities can never produce anything to restore its organism, so can the dead soul by all its workings accomplish nothing to restore a harmony of utterance before God .."

2. God bestows *Common Grace* on humanity to preserve them so that we might all hear the Gospel of Christ. Through Common Grace the soon to be believer hears the message of salvation by an Evangelist, and in faith accepts Christ as Saviour.

3. The Holy Spirit brings the work of Regeneration to the new Believer, resurrecting the human spirit.

1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

1 John 3:9 "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

The *incorruptible* seed that brought our Regeneration is the Holy Spirit of God. We are Regenerated by His actions alone. The Word of God is an instrument that helps the Evangelist spread the Gospel of Regeneration, but does not actually Regenerate us.

(Shedd) "The unenlightened understanding is unable to apprehend, and the unregenerate will is unable to believe. Vital force is lacking in these two principle faculties. What is needed at this point is the life and the force itself. Consequently the Author of spiritual life Himself must operate directly without the use of means or instruments, and outright give spiritual life and power unto the dead. The new life is not implanted because man perceives the truth, but he perceives the truth because the new life is implanted .."

The Conclusion Of The Matter

All three members of the Godhead are active in Regeneration. God the Father is the Author of the act, for He decreed it through His Plan of Salvation. The Holy Spirit is the **Agent** in the act, for it is He who accomplishes it. And Jesus Christ, by His atoning sacrifice, made the act **possible**.

How can we, as believers, **know** that another person has been Regenerated? Well, there is no substantial mark, no unerring flag that lets us know another person has been saved. Yet there are **clues** that may lead us to conclude that a person is saved.

1 John 5:1-2 "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments."

If a person shows outward signs of godliness, if he **keep his commandments**, this is a good indication that he has been Regenerated by the Holy Spirit of God.

1 John 2:19-20 "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

Also, the Regenerate have "staying power". This is not to say that the believer will not fall into sin and out of fellowship: this is entirely possible. But if he does fall, a truly born again Christian will **not stay** in this state. The Father will bring him back to fellowship, even if discipline is required.

Hebrews 12:8-9 "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"

Yet who can truly know, but the man his own self. That is why we end with this verse:

Philippians 2:12 "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

If you are not ***certain*** of your own salvation today, then now is a great time to make certain. Accept Jesus Christ alone as your Lord and Saviour. May I see you all in Heaven!

Please feel free to E-mail me your questions, comments, and any difficulties you experienced accessing this study at [DIDASKALOS Ministries](mailto:info@didaskalosministries.org)



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Systematic Theology

STUDY NINE

The Holy Spirit's Work Of Baptism and Filling

The Spiritual Gifts

Matthew 3:11-12 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

The entire Charismatic Movement is one of the fastest growing Christian groups in America today. Before I start, let me state that I believe the Charismatic practicing believer to be as much a Christian as the non-Charismatic practicing believer. We are all saved by faith in Christ and Christ alone. This section of this Systematic Theology is not designed to attack the Charismatics. However much I love these believers, though, it is the calling and responsibility of *every Christian* to earnestly search the Scriptures to see if we are serving God according to His wishes. When what we preach and teach diverts from the teaching of the Word of God then we must change our behavior to *conform to the Word*.

This portion of our Systematic Theology was developed from the original two chapters into a ten part study (also found on this site) called "[Tongues of Fire](#)".



Didaskalos Ministries

Systematic Theology

STUDY TEN (Part One)

The Absolutes of Salvation

The Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints

Biblical Evidence to Support "Eternal Security"

Though it saddens me to say it, the Doctrine which is the most clear, the most majestic, the most glorifying to the Lord in the Bible, is the same Doctrine that is spurned by many Christians and non Christians alike. This Doctrine is that of "Eternal Security" (or, as some snidely call it, "Once Saved, Always Saved").

The basis of most of the sins we commit in humanity is *pride*. "I can do it myself", "I am an island", "I don't need anyone". When man is confronted with a teaching where *only God is magnified*, where man's accomplishments are minimized, then this teaching automatically held up to ridicule. The same is true of Perseverance of the Saints (which we will refer to as "Eternal Security").

Eternal Security teaches that the Grace which God offers to man is founded on God's power alone. Eternal Security in no way relies on the works of man for man is enslaved to sin, unable to do any good in the sight of God. Any works which man does of his own power is sinful because *we just aren't able*. Any work which man does *through the power of God* is acceptable, certain to succeed. Eternal Security is reliable because it is entirely "God powered".

The great Preacher, Charles H. Spurgeon, wrote:

"Now you are aware that there are different theories of redemption. All Christians hold that Christ died to redeem, but all Christians do not teach the same redemption. We differ as to the nature of the Atonement, and as to the design of the redemption. For instance, the Arminians hold that when Christ died, He did not die with the intent to save any particular person. And they teach that Christ's death does not secure beyond a doubt the salvation of any one man living (in other words, Christ died for all men) and whosoever believes is saved. They believe that Christ died to make the salvation of all men possible, and that by doing of something else, any man that pleases may obtain eternal life. Consequently they are obliged to hold that if any man's will did not give way, and voluntarily surrender to grace, then Christ's Atonement would be unavailing. Now we believe no such thing. We hold that when Christ died He had an object in view, and that object will most assuredly and beyond a doubt be accomplished. We cannot so belie our reason as to think that the intention of God Almighty could be frustrated, or that the design of so great a thing as the Atonement can by whatever way be missed. We hold that we are no afraid to say that we believed that Christ came into this world with the intention of saving a multitude which no man can number, and because of this every man by which He came into the world to die for must, beyond a shadow of a doubt, be cleansed from sin and stand, washed in blood before the Father's throne. "

When we talk about "Eternal Security" we want to make it plain that the believer does *absolutely nothing* to remain in a state of salvation once he has entered in it. As Spurgeon also wrote:

"It is not man who perseveres, but God .."

When we say "Eternal Security" we say it meaning that we believe that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ *alone*. The work of salvation is an *unconditional* covenant from God to the person who accepts that Gift. Salvation is secure, as secure as God's Word is pure.

Preliminary Considerations And Misconceptions

I had a conversation with a young man the other day on salvation. He had recently attended a Church service where the Pastor preached a "hellfire and brimstone" sermon (something sadly lacking in our pulpits today). The young man was frightened because he wasn't sure if he was going to hell or Heaven after his death. He thought that by just ***acknowledging*** the fact that Christ died for him was enough, that he was saved with God's guarantee of Heaven, yet the sermon made him examine his life and realize that the fruits of salvation were not evident.

Eternal Security is often confused with "on the fly" salvation. Some people promote Eternal Security without repentance on the part of the believer. Be aware: such doctrine is ***never taught*** in Scripture.

In the early Church a group of hedonists rose up from among our congregations known as the ***Gnostics***. The Gnostics taught that once you accepted Christ as Saviour you were ***free*** to return to your old sinful way of life, certain that you were Heaven bound no matter what. In other words, the Gnostics did not believe that salvation worked any lasting change in the nature of the person who was saved. I want you to understand this: Eternal Security does ***not*** teach that a man is saved so that he is free to seek out sin. If, after salvation, you do not experience a change in your walk (if you do not walk as a Child of God, or attempt to), a change in your desires, a change in your relationship with God, ***then you were never saved in the first place***. This is exactly what I told that young man. Salvation brings with it a new nature, one that wants to please God.

2 Peter 2:22 "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

1 John 2:19 "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that

they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

The true Christian will, in his walk, persevere in works that honor the Lord while seeking to minimize those that do not. This is the outward evidence of the inward change that salvation brings.

1 John 3.9 - Greek Text Literal Translation "Whoever is born of God does not habitually commit sin, for His (God's) seed remains in him, and he cannot habitually commit sin, because he is born of God."

Though good works *do not save* you, nor keep you in salvation, they *are evidence* that let you know you have, indeed, been saved. Good works (or perhaps better, Godly works) are a natural by-product of Godly saving faith. They are a natural by-product of the new nature you receive at the point of salvation. If you go forward to be saved as a dog (unsaved), and return from the altar a dog (unsaved), then it is certain salvation has not occurred. But if you go forward as a dog and return as a lamb of God, you have been saved.

Conversely, true Salvation does not mean that a Christian *never sins*. As long as we are in the flesh we are able to sin, and sometimes fall out of fellowship. Although salvation in Christ does bring a change in the *nature* of the believer, that change occurs only in our *nature*, not in our flesh. Until we reach our glorified states in Heaven our bodies (the flesh) will retain it's weakness, it's propensity to sin. As long as we are in this sinful flesh there may be occasional acts of sin, and the possibility of falling out of fellowship with God.

Hebrews 12:8 "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

The true Christian knows that, when he willfully sins (breaks the discipline of the family), God will discipline him for this act. If a professing Christian enters a state of habitual sin and *no punishment* is forthcoming, then it is certain that this *professing* Christian was not saved in the first place. As the writer of Hebrews put it, *then are ye bastards* (illegitimate children, never children of the Family),

and not sons.

Any person who enters salvation (is under Eternal Security) will have a *new nature* from God. This new nature will cause the believer to have a *new relationship* with his Heavenly Father, and his Father will have a intimate relationship with him. If you have not experienced this new relationship you had best re-examine your state of salvation: do not be deceived.

Biblical Proof of Eternal Security

1 Peter 1:3-5 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

If Eternal Security is not Biblical, then God is *not Sovereign* in matters concerning His own Family. If this is true then it is obvious that the above text is *not* an inspired writing, and that the Bible is only a work of man, not of God. But this is *not true*, for I believe the Bible to be an inspired writing of God to His Family. What is this passage telling us?

The Christian is *kept in salvation by the very power* of the eternal God. How strong is our God? The foundational declarations of the Christian faith hold that our Creator is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. In other words, God *is Almighty*. This verse teaches that the strength of the Christian's salvation is based on the *very power and sovereignty of God*. Notice that the verse says that we are ***kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation***. How assured is the Christian of his salvation? According to this text, the Christian will remain in salvation as long as *God is truly God*. In other words, if a Christian ever loses his salvation, then we can be certain that there is indeed no Creator God, and we are

all yet dead in our sins.

The power of God brings the Christian to salvation *through faith*. Faith is not a work of man, but something our Father enables at the point of salvation. Faith is *the means* by which God leads a person to salvation, and this faith is a gift from God to man:

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

It is certain and Biblical that salvation is a work of God only. In *no* way, shape, or form is man a *partner* with God in the work. Since man is *not a partner* then there is no way that he can lose his salvation by an act of sin. The glory of the Gift of Salvation goes to God alone. Since ***God is God*** the work is effective and complete. Did creation cease to be creation because man fell under sin? Absolutely not! Does salvation cease to be salvation because the Christian falls out of fellowship? Absolutely not!

John 6:39-40 "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

2 Timothy 1:9 "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"

In the Gospel of John, Jesus paralleled the Eternal Security of the believer to the Sovereign will of God. Jesus said, ***this is the Father's will*** that ***all which he hath given me I should lose nothing***. It is God's *omnipotent Will* that those who are saved, in the arms of Jesus, ***not be lost, but resurrected*** in the latter days. What is the resurrection our Lord is talking about?

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

This resurrection is the ***bodily resurrection of the believer*** in Christ on the day of Rapture. On this day we shall be ***personally*** resurrected by the Lord Jesus Christ, the previously dead in Christ first, to be followed by those yet living. Whether or not you are in fellowship with Lord at the time of Rapture is not an issue, nor is it made an issue by the Scripture. As God is Sovereign, then all who are Christians shall meet Christ in the air in resurrection. Since we meet Him in Rapture, then it is ***certain*** that our salvation is secure in this earthly sphere.

Can the Pelagian prove, through the Scripture, that man is a ***partner with God*** in the work of salvation? According to the Gospel of John the believer is ***entirely passive*** in the work of salvation. Notice that we were ***given*** to Jesus by the Father. If you give something to someone else, does the thing given ***have any say so*** in the exchange? No, for the thing given is entirely passive in the episode. Even though God has created men to a higher level of intelligence than the animal, and even though God has been more merciful to us than we should ever have deserved, in the end we are still God's creatures. The Creator God does not have to ask your permission to give you to the Son. To think that man has the ***ability*** to be a partner with most Infinite Being of all is foolish. We are not now nor will we ever be equal to God!

In the Timothy passage we see two things:

1. We were ***not saved according to our works***, but according to the ***purpose and grace*** of God. Since we were not saved according to our works then how is it possible that we can become ***lost according to our works***? It is not only illogical, it is impossible. God alone brings the believer to salvation, and only God is able to cast him away. Yet

according to His Covenant God will not cast anyone; man, woman or child; away if they have accepted His Son as their Savior. We were chosen *according to God's plan* of the ages. God is not man that He changes His mind. God knows all things and has already foreseen *all obstacles* that may lay in the future way. God knows your life from beginning to end. He knows when you sin, and knows all the sins you will commit in your lifetime. *He knows*, and because of this knowledge He had Christ pay the penalty for all that you would do in this life. He has planned *all things*, even the smallest aberration of your life, into His plan so that it can be truthfully written:

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

How could all things be *good* for the Christian unless God rendered all things *certain*? The God who renders all things good for the believer is the same God who guards our salvation in this life. We are Secure.

2. We were *not called* according to our works. Some Christians get the idea that since *they are better* than the others around them God called them out of the world. Yet the Bible teaches we were chosen for one reason only: God desired to call us. Before we were saved we were *just as evil* as the lowest sinner. We are *not saved* according to our merit, we were *not called* according to our works.

John 10:27-30 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 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. I and my Father are one."

Jesus makes several important statements in these passages:

a. Those who follow Jesus are *freely given* eternal life by the Son. Once a person is born again there is a *change in the nature* of that person. With that change comes a *willing desire* to follow Jesus. In other words, we want to do good works, to serve our Lord after salvation. Believing in Jesus is the act which leads to salvation, and *following* Jesus is the natural fruit of the new saved nature. Following Jesus alone does not bring a person to salvation, for Simon the sorcerer followed the Apostles (Acts 8.9-24), and yet remained lost. If you profess belief in Christ, yet show no evidence of salvation, chances are *you have not been saved*. Belief is the basis which brings us to salvation, yet Godly works are the *fruit* of salvation. The fruit follows the belief, and both must be present in the Christian life.

Those who are freely given eternal life by the Son are *completely secure* in their newfound possession. The text tells us that no one shall plug these out of the signs hand. It also tells us that *no one* shall pluck us out of the Father's hand. The Greek text says *no one* not *no man*. What is the difference between the two?

If the Greek text said *no man* then the Pelagian could argue that the text meant "no other man besides yourself" could take you out of God's hands. But instead the text reads *no one*. By using the broader generic term Jesus makes it plain that *not you*, not Satan, *no one at all* may take you out of the Father's hands. Jesus then reinforces this statement by saying, *My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all*. As God is Sovereign those who are in the realm of His Grace are secure.

In this text we also see how man is *passive in the work of salvation*. Notice again that Jesus says *My Father, which gave them me*. We were given to Christ by the Father, totally passive in the work of salvation. We may have believed in Christ, yet it was God who, through His Spirit, made it possible for us to believe. We may have accepted, yet it was God who wooed us to Grace.

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom

the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

We are secure in our salvation because we have received the indwelling Spirit of God. Jesus used emphatic verbs in referring to the promised Spirit: ***I will, he shall, he may abide***. The Holy Spirit fully indwells all who accept Christ as Saviour.

1 Corinthians 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

If you are a Christian you were ***not given a choice*** as to whether the Spirit would indwell you or not. You were ***all made to drink into one Spirit***. The Holy Spirit indwelt you at the point of salvation, immediately after you accepted Christ as Saviour. Looking back at our John 14 text we see that this same Spirit does not just come to visit the new believer, but ***abide(s) with you for ever***. How can the believer ever lose his salvation if the Spirit comes to stay? Will God cast the out of fellowship believer in hell, dragging the Spirit along with him? Absolutely not! Jesus promised that the Spirit would come and abide ***forever***, and places no conditions on His coming. Since we have the ever abiding Spirit, we have Eternal Security in our salvation.

Romans 5:1-2 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Romans 5:9-11 "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 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. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

The believer is secure in salvation because of the death and resurrection of Jesus

Christ. We are *saved from wrath through him*. In both of our Scriptural passages now in view the major *focus* is on Justification by Grace *alone*. We are Justified by faith in Christ because of His Hypostatic Union and Atoning sacrifice at the Cross.

If you do not understand the theological term "Hypostatic Union", you can find a series of studies that explore this Biblical doctrine: [Study One](#), [Study Two](#), [Study Three](#). You will need to use your BACK button on your browser to return here, or re-enter the study through the [index](#) listed at the end of each of these studies.

Among the Jews there was a yearly sacrificial atonement to God to "pay for" the sins of the people. These sacrifices never, in reality, made a lasting atonement for any sin. If they did then why was it necessary that the sacrifice be repeated every year? If the Jewish sacrifices were sufficient to atone for the sins of the tribes of Israel then why did not God forgive these sins *forever*? In true atonement God not only *forgives* the sin, but He also *forgets* it. By repeating the sacrifice of atonement every year it was evident that God, though He did forgive the sins, did not permanently wipe out the effect of the sin. The Jewish sacrifices were ineffectual and temporal because:

a. The first stage of true atonement rests in the *satisfaction of the wrath of God*. The people were supposed to bring a *willing sacrifice* who would stand as a *substitute* for the sinner. It was imperative that the substitute be completely *innocent*, free from sin. The sacrifice of an impure object would not fully satisfy the righteous judgment (or wrath) of God.

The Jewish sacrifice in no way fully satisfied the first stage of God's atonement. There was no sinless human in Israel that could bear the penalty, so they used "unblemished" animals for the sacrifice. But animals were not sinless, nor were

they a fit substitute for man. When Adam fell to sin all creation fell with him. Animals were also unable to *willingly submit* itself to the sacrifice. They did not have the mental capacity necessary to perceive what was taking place.

A true substitute for atonement must *be equal* in being to it's object. An animal, contrary to what Darwinism teaches, is not equal to man, nor will it ever be. The Jewish atonement for sin did not satisfy the judgment of God, though it did serve as a teaching tool and a shadow of the Christ who would one day come. But the Jewish atonement was, in reality, only a weak facsimile of the true satisfaction of the Cross and Jesus Christ.

b. The second stage of atonement requires the satisfaction of the *purity* of God. The people who are atoned for must *live a sinless life* in the sight of God after the atoning sacrifice. Yet man is and will always be sinful. The Jews, after the sacrifice, returned to their sin and spoiled their walk in God's eyes. Since we are unable, by our very constitution, to live sinless before God, it was necessary that a *substitute* stand in our place, satisfying the purity of God. This *living sacrifice* would stand in our place. Who would be that substitute?

The substitute would be Christ, our risen Saviour! The Hypostatic Union of Christ satisfies the Atonement of God fully. Christ is fully sinless man, a perfect substitute for man. As a man He willingly underwent the atonement for His people. He did not go to the sacrificial altar as a dumb animal did. Christ is *absolutely pure* from sin. He is also God. Within Him is all the attributes (characteristics) of the Godhead. He is as pure and holy as God the Father for He is *God the Son*. The sacrificial death of Christ *fully satisfied* the first stage of God's atonement: It satisfied the wrath/ judgment of God.

Christ is Divine, and in the light of this was able to resurrect from the dead in order that He could be a *living sacrifice* for the people of God. His substitutionary life for us satisfies the second stage of God's atonement.

How do these facts apply to the believer's Eternal Security within salvation? Since Christ *not only* died but *also resurrected* from the dead to live as a

substitute for us, then how in the world can the believer *sin and be cast into hell* for that sin? It is utterly impossible! God is not looking at the life of the human believer to determine whether or not he enters Heaven. God is looking at the substitutionary *life of Christ*, and accepts the believer into His family on the basis of whether not you have accepted Christ as Savior. On the *basis of the sacrifice of Christ* no man who has accepted Him as Savior shall ever become lost.

Logical proof for the Doctrine of Eternal Security

There are three logical points that *prove* the Doctrine of Eternal Security:

1. In John 19.30 Jesus said "*It is finished*". Too many people take these words and assume that they were uttered by someone who has been defeated, trodden down, or destroyed. The Greek text does not agree with this interpretation of the word TETELESTAI. The Greek is set forth in such a tense as to assert that Jesus was making a *victory cry*. These were not the words of a defeated man, but the words of a Victor. Jesus realized that His death *had redeemed* the people of God. The *work of salvation was and is finished* in Christ. Salvation is not made perfect by the work of finite man. "Finished" denotes that the work is, was, and ever will be perfect in the eyes of God. The work is fully mature. How can something be added to perfection? Salvation is not what Christ did PLUS what man does after, it is what Christ alone has accomplished for us.

2. If the Doctrine of Eternal Security is *not true*, and it is possible that a man may be saved - lost - and saved again, then this saved - lost - saved concept will certainly be reflected in the Word of God. Yet throughout the entire witness of the New Testament there is *no record* of any man who was ever saved - lost - and saved again. A good example is found in the Church of Corinth. The Apostle Paul recognized the Corinthians as carnal people:

1 Corinthians 3:1 "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."

How carnal were these Corinthians? Paul recognized these believers as puffed up with pride:

1 Corinthians 4:18 "Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you."

1 Corinthians 5:2 "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you."

They were fornicators:

1 Corinthians 5:1 "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife."

They were covetous, idolaters, revilers, drunkards, and extortioners:

1 Corinthians 5:11 "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."

If the saved - lost - saved concept ever applied to a group of believers, it certainly ought to apply to the Corinthians. Yet Paul called these non-functioning Christians *brethren*:

1 Corinthians 3:1 "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."

and *Sanctified* by the Holy Spirit:

1 Corinthians 1:2 "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"

As those who were *Baptized* by the Holy Spirit:

1 Corinthians 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

And as believers who were *indwelt* by the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

1 Corinthians 6:16 "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Paul *never recognized these believers as non Christians*, though their actions were a shame to the Family of God. Where is the saved - lost - saved principle so vaunted by the Pelagian? It is non-existent.

When a person comes to accept Christ as Savior he gives a *physical testimony* of his conversion by means of the sacrament of water baptism. If the saved - lost - saved theory is correct, then you would expect to find at least *one* passage in the Bible where a person was re-baptized because he had lost his salvation. As water baptism is *commanded by the Lord* Jesus Himself, you would expect at least one of the disciples to tell us to re-baptize a person who *returns* to fellowship after a bout with sin. The concept, neither historically or Scripturally, is contained in the Bible. From this point alone it is evident that the saved - lost - saved theory is *not Scriptural*.

If saved - lost - saved is Biblically correct, then there should be at least one

teaching in the Bible telling us to cast a wayward member from the local Church. We are supposed to rebuke the wayward, refuse to serve them the Lord's Table, but never are we exhorted to cast them out of the Church. What is my point? If a Christian may *become* a non Christian by the action of sin, then Christ as well as the Apostles would have made it plain that this "newly lost" person should be cast from the physical body of Christ. If a person is *not* in union with Christ anymore, then he has no reason to stay in the the physical Body, the Church. Yet no where in the Scripture is such a teaching established.

Logical Defense of the Doctrine of Eternal Security

It is quite natural that the Pelagian, acting as Devils advocate, pull certain Scriptures out of context in order to affirm the teaching of the saved - lost - saved concept. In this section we will try to answer all objections to Eternal Security while staying within the context of each Scriptural passage.

Preliminary Considerations

The Greek word for sin is HARMARTIA, which is defined as "*an offense against God, failing to hit the mark of righteousness, a bad action or evil deed, and error of understanding or a mistake*". There are many sects within Christianity that believe that if you *sin* you lose your salvation and are hell bound, but if you *make a mistake* you are *not* going to hell. They say that mistakes are justified by the Grace of God, and certainly do not carry as much weight as premeditated sin. Yet what the Bible teaches is that there is no distinction between a mistake and a sin. A sin is a mistake against righteousness and a mistake against righteousness is a sin. There is no difference. These same sects also teach that the Christian is no longer under the Mosaic Law, yet each make up their own laws that are used to determine whether a person is a Christian or not.

James 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one

point, he is guilty of all."

Suppose a person is able to go to Heaven on his good works. Well, let's look at a hypothetical situation. Suppose a man accepts Christ as his Savior at an early age. For twenty years this individual lives a life concentrated to the Lord. One day he needs some money for his sick and hospitalized wife. He asks all his friends for money, but all either do not have it to spare or refuse outright. The man, in desperation, steals funds from the company to provide for the needs of his wife. Will this man go to hell if this sin is left unrepentant and unpaid for?

Well, if the individual was saved based on what Christ did for him PLUS what he does for Christ then he will burn in the Lake of Fire. The Scriptures teach that, if you commit the *least* of all sins, regardless of motive, then you're guilty of breaking *all the laws* of God. When this man took from the company he was guilty of, not only theft, but also murder, fornication, idolatry, etc. If the man is saved on the basis what *Christ alone* did, then he will still be Heaven bound (though disciplined of God). The same is true of the believer who back stabs another believer, commits character murder, slips into sexual sins, or lies. Eternal security covers all sins because of the sacrifice of Christ.

Let's rid ourselves of the idea that the Christian can make "mistakes" and yet not sin in the process. There is *no difference*, according to the Bible, between a mistake and a sin. They are both the sign thing.

Colossians 2:20-23 "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."

Here I want to give you Dr. Blackwelder's translation of the above verse is from the Greek new Testament:

"If through union with Christ you died to the crude notions of the world, why, as though you still belong in the world, do you allow yourselves to be subjected to decrees such as 'do not handle this, do not handle that, do not touch those'. reference to things which cease to exist as soon as they are used? Rules of that kind are only man-made injunctions and precepts. Such regulations make a pretext of wisdom by advocating self imposed worship and so-called humility and austere asceticism, but are worthless in combating the desires of the unregenerate nature."

What Paul was stating is this: if you have been *truly regenerated* through the blood of Christ, if you have been truly cleansed through His redemptive substitution, then why do you create man-made laws by which to live? Among the holiness Churches today there have been laws established as "Christian behavior" like:

1. If you wear jewelry you are in disobedience to the Word and are hell bound.
2. If you braid your hair you're in disobedience to the Word and are hell bound.
3. If you do not keep your hair trimmed short you are in disobedience to God and are hell bound.
4. If women wear bermuda shorts or any clothing which does not extend below the knee, they are hell bound.
5. A man cannot be a Christian and smoker a cigarette.
6. A man cannot be a Christian and take a drink of wine.
7. A man cannot be a Christian and say a curse word.
8. A person cannot be a true Christian who does not periodically "fast".
9. A true Christian does not chew gum, for it is unseemly.

And on, and on, and on. Paul plainly states that these man-made laws have neither earthly nor heavenly value. The only thing they do is to pervert and cloud the true Gospel of Christ. These laws create a type of asceticism that breeds not humility, but pride. A person truly in Christ will allow God to direct him in *what to do* and *what not to do*. God directs His children to avoid fornication, lying, stealing, and murder. Yet nowhere in the Bible are we told anyone will lose their salvation if they fall into any sin. In all matters the Christian is directed to live his life guided by the Spirit of God. This applies to smoking, drinking, the way we wear our clothes, or in the way we groom our bodies.

Can we prove the statement, "A Christian is still a Christian, even if he sins?" There are several places in the Bible where people known as Christians fell into sin, yet were still recognized as Christians.

1 Corinthians 5:1, 5 "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Do you lose your salvation if you fall into fornication and incest? The Corinthian man was not only in fornication, but in fornication with *his father's wife*. According to Paul this man was still a believer, still under Eternal Security. He specifically directed the Corinthians to commit the believer to Satan *for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*. It is obvious from Paul's command that he still considered this person a soul under the familial care of God. Is this concept furthered by other Scriptures?

Hebrews 12:8-11 "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we

might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

The Doctrine of Divine Discipline *demand*s that there be a Doctrine of Eternal Security. God does not chastise or punish the unsaved. He only extends this Fatherly rebuke toward His children. Note the Hebrew text: *if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

Why does God chastise the believer? Just like any earthly Father, He only uses the rod of punishment on His children when they are disobedient. If disobedience to God leads to *loss of salvation*, and the unsaved are not punished, then why would God *ever* have to chastise one of His children? If you are no longer a child God after disobedience then God would never chastise the Family, for there would be none disobedient in His family. It is a circular, and irrefutable argument.

"But", the Pelagian states, "a little sin gleans only chastisement whereas a *big* sin brings damnation". Yet we have seen earlier in James 2.10 that a little sin *breaks the law* of God *equally* as much as the alleged *big sin* does. Stealing a dime breaks God's Law just as does murder, and murder is as evil as fornication. If the saved - lost - saved doctrine is true, then God has *unnecessarily* created the Doctrine of Divine Discipline, a principle that He will *never carry out*. If you steal a dime you are eternally damned, not His son, and with no need of Divine Discipline.

But if there is such a thing as Divine Discipline (and there is), there is such a thing as Eternal Security.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it,

because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

The Doctrine of the Judgment Seat of Christ also supports the Doctrine of Eternal Security. Why?

The Bible tells us (above) that the children of God will have their works tested *by fire*. Some of these works will burn, whereas others will survive the flame of spiritual judgment. God realizes the weaknesses of His children. If you try to serve God earnestly and the work is ineffectual, the work will *not necessarily* be destroyed because it failed. The success of the work does not guarantee its rewardability. Rather, the Father looks at *the heart* to determine the *intent* of the work, then rewards the believer based on his motivation.

Say, for instance, you give one million dollars to the Church out of pride, without the intent of glorifying God. The gift may be effectual, it may help the Church, yet the work is not rewardable in the eyes of God. Yet if a pauper gives one cent to the Church with *the intent of glorifying God*, this work will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

What are the works that will be burned at the Judgment Seat? Works that were initiated out of pride, conceived from lust, out of greed, out from the flesh. These works have a foundation not of righteousness, but of sin. These are not done in obedience to Christ, but in a desire for worldly gain. It is evident that these erroneous works (conceived in sin) were not repented in this life, for the Bible teaches us that when God forgives a sin He *forgets it* as well.

Jeremiah 31:34 "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Hebrews 10:17 "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Those who are being judged at the Throne of Christ are being judged, not for their fitness to enter Heaven, but to determine the relative righteousness of the works they did while on the earth. If their works are burned (because the foundation of the work was sin), they ***do not lose their salvation***. If we do not lose our salvation at the Judgment Seat of Christ (though some of our works are built on sin, and since all sins are equally repugnant to God), then there is no reason to believe sins ***in this life*** will cause us to be removed from Heaven. If there's truly a Judgment Seat of Christ where our works are judged, then there ***must*** be Eternal Security. Anything else just doesn't make sense!

Continue with Part Two, [Verset Which Seem To Dispute Eternal Security](#)

Return To [Systematic Theology](#) Table of Contents

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Return to the beginning of this study!



Return to DIDASKALOS MAIN MENU

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Systematic Theology

STUDY ELEVEN, Part One

The Holy Spirit of God, His dealing with man, and work among the Church of God

In any study of the Scripture it is *imperative* that we study the Holy Spirit of God. This Spirit is the power of the Church, the Third Person of the Godhead sent to us by Christ to enable us to do the will of the Father on the earth. This study is broken down into several subchapters, each viewing the Spirit from a slightly different perspective as presented by the Scripture. So let's get busy and see what the Bible has to tell us about the believer's closest friend, the Holy Spirit.

Historical Views of the Spirit

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit to be our power, a means of building the Church He so loves. Many liberal theologians advance the theory of the *self sufficiency of man*. Many pastors teach that it is the "I" who must do the work of God if it is to be done on the earth: *I* will edify the saints, *I* will persevere to glorification.

Whenever man feels that he can do good of his own accord, whenever we begin

to believe that it is our works that promote the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth, there is an immediate *de-emphasis* of the work of the Spirit. We are not gods, nor can our finity ever approach the infinity of God. Because we are limited God gave us His precious Spirit so we could do His work on the earth.

From post Apostolic times to the Reformation era the Church neglected the power of the Holy Spirit in it's everyday life. Pelagianism was in full swing, teaching that *only* be ascetic acts of holiness would we ever be fit to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Man and man's power was glorified over the omnipotence of God's Plan. God was literally placed *in a box*.

Following the Reformation the Church once more restored the Word of God to the people. Whereas Romanism limited study and interpretation of the Scriptures to the "holy seers", the Reformation taught that each person should individually study the Scripture under the guidance of God's Spirit.

Arminian thought rose up in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, teaching that salvation was, in fact, a partnership between God and man. The Arminians placed a strong emphasis on the will of man and downplayed the will of God. As man's will was held supreme, the power of the Holy Spirit was de-emphasized in the believer's life.

Following Arminianism came the groups dedicated to Mysticism. The Mystics taught that *no Christian needed* fellowship with another, that the believer only needed to be submissive to the will of God the Holy Spirit. The Mystic beliefs, formed in opposition to Arminianism and Catholicism, was an excess in the opposite direction, for it ignored Christ's institution of the Church on the earth. If God did not want the Church to fellowship together on the earth then why did He establish the Gifts of Teaching and Pastoring? Again, Mysticism was an excess far removed from Scriptural thought.

Rationalism was another sect that rose up, twisting the Scriptures to suit their needs. Rationalism placed great emphasis on the human facilities of reason as opposed to the guiding hand of God. Many of our modern theologians are

rationalists. By stressing the power of man over God, God the Spirit is made to seem superfluous. Many rationalists have even stepped so far beyond Scripture that they teach God as an impersonal force, not a Creator with an all encompassing Will. In the words of the New Age philosophies, "Use the force, Luke"!

In opposition to these excesses there arose groups such as:

- The Puritanists, who sought to seek a balance between the free will of man and the Will of God.
- The Pietists, who brought new life back into Church worship by a level headed view of the ministries of the Spirit.
- The Evangelicals, who rose from the ministries of Edwards, Whitfield, and Wesley. Their teachings restored the Holy Spirit to His proper perspective during the seventeenth century.
- Irvingism and Plymouth Brethrenism rose up in the nineteenth century, restoring the Holy Spirit to the Churches of this era.

Reformed Theology today holds the following views of the Holy Spirit:

- All men are sinful, fully unable on their own to do good works for God. The Holy Spirit was sent to indwell us who believe so we would be able, in His power, to serve God on the earth.
- Man does have free will, but God has sovereign will. God controls His Plan of the Ages through His Will, regardless as to the relative freedom of our Wills. If God uses the Holy Spirit to sway our will to His Plan, such actions are totally righteous and justified: He has absolute control over His creation.
- The Holy Spirit is not a life force, but a separate Divine Member of the Godhead.
- The Holy Spirit has *always been coexistent* with the Father and the Son. He is *not* a created Being.
- The Holy Spirit is *not* inferior to either Father or Son in His substance or power. He willingly submits Himself to the eternal Plan of God, not out of coercion. He is, in all ways, fully equal with both Father and Son.

The Biblical View of The Spirit

The Scriptures clearly teach that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Divine Person, totally separate from both Father and Son yet in one accord with both.

Genesis 1:2-3 "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

The Holy Spirit is able to act based on His own intelligence. An impersonal "force" could not do so, nor would it have volition apart from God. The Holy Spirit is a Person.

John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

The Holy Spirit, our Teacher, has obvious intelligence, an attribute of personhood. Our Holy Spirit is not just intelligent, but He is ***super intelligent***, for He will teach us ***all things***. If the Spirit does not ***know*** all things, then how can He teach ***all things***? The super intelligence of the Spirit is evidenced throughout Christianity. C.S. Lewis, though certainly not an evangelical, was a brilliant theologian directed by the Spirit of God. Francis Schaeffer, another brilliant theologian, has taught thousands of believers as he was led by the Spirit. No mindless force could have imparted the wisdom that these men showed. This wisdom came by a Living God, the Holy Spirit.

Romans 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."

In this verse we see that the Holy Spirit has a ***mind***, that He manifests the intelligence of His mind by the ***ministry of interceding*** for the Saints. That the

Spirit is *a Person* is proven through this manifested act of intelligence. The Spirit is a *distinct* Person, separate from the Father, because He consciously intercedes in collaboration with the Will of God. *because he maketh intercession* clearly shows the independent intelligence of the Spirit. Only an intelligent being can have a "will" or a "plan". The second Person (the Father) guides or directs the first Person (the Spirit).

By these different actions within the Godhead we see that the Spirit is a separate Being from the Father. When we as humans make a decision to drink a glass of water we do not tell our hands "Now you fill that glass and hold it to your lips". This would be ludicrous! When we make a decision to do something we perform the act by *subconscious direction*. The same is true of God's being. The Father does not tell Himself "Now you do this, now you do that". This, too, is ludicrous. If the Spirit were a part of the Father He would not be addressing Him. Instead, the Father is directing *another intelligent Person* to function in a specific way. By the action of direction and obedience we see that there are two Persons here, both distinct and yet equal in substance. The Father and God the Holy Spirit.

Acts 5:9 "Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out."

Ephesians 4:30 "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Isaiah 63:10 "But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them."

The Holy Spirit may be grieved, vexed, saddened, angered, and tempted. These are all attributes of a Person, *not a force*.

Now that we have seen sufficient evidence that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person from the Father, can we determine whether or not this same Spirit is *equally divine* in Being?

Isaiah 6:8-9 "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not."

Acts 28:25-26 "And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:"

In these parallel passages we see direct proof of the deity of the Holy Ghost. In the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah, we see that this Word came by the "*voice of the Lord*". The Hebrew word for "*Lord*" is ADONAY, a word used *only* for the Almighty God. We see the same word used in Isaiah 7.7, which reads:

".. Thus saith the Lord God .."

By reading our parallel in Acts chapter 28 we see that the Apostles applied the prophecy of Isaiah (which came by the *voice of the Lord*) *specifically* to the Holy Spirit (*spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias*). This is a clear indication that the Holy Spirit is equal in His Deity to God.

Acts 5:3-4 "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

The Holy Ghost is equal in deity to God. This is clearly emphasized by Peter in this text alone. The Apostles did *not* consider the Holy Spirit to be a *thing*, or an *extension of God*, but co-equal with God while completely separate from the other Members of the Godhead.

1 John 4:16 "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

We can also prove that the Holy Spirit is a separate member of the Godhead, though completely equal with it's other Members. God recognizes Himself as perfect love. In order for Him to have recognized this attribute in Himself, He must have *experienced* love. God does not grow or change:

James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

He does not increase in perfection daily. Any attributes (characteristics) that God possesses have been His for as long as He has been in existence. God is infinite in His Being, and since He is infinite then these attributes have been with Him throughout eternity. Love is one of these eternal attributes of God.

Since the Love of God has been evident in Him from eternity past, then it was in operation *before the Creation* of man and the Angelic Hosts. Love *must* have an object to be exercised. You can not love just yourself and recognize true pure love in yourself. Self love is selfishness. There must be *an object* for love. Since God's attribute of love is eternal, the object that the attribute is exercised on *must be* eternal also. For God to recognize Himself as perfect love, it must indeed be an *unconditional love* that He shows to love's object. If the object of God's love is lesser than Himself, then the love He exercises would be conditional. If the object of God's love is greater than Himself, then the love He exercises would be slavish or servatile. The object of God's love must be *equal to God Himself*, else it would not be unconditional and perfect love.

In order for God's love to be completely unconditional, God would need to exercise that love on at least *two other Persons* equal to Himself. Why? If God the Father exercised love toward only God the Son, He would be exercising that love knowing that it *must be returned*. God the Son would also have to exercise

His attribute of love in order that recognize it in Himself. The only way God could recognize Himself as unconditional love from eternity would be if He exercised that attribute toward *two other Beings* equal to Himself. God the Father could love God the Son who could love God the Holy Spirit who in turn could love God the Father. Each Member of the Godhead would be giving unconditional love, giving and expecting nothing in return. This is a deductive proof of the Trinity of God. If we remove one of than members from the Trinity by stating that the Holy Ghost is not a Separate Person, then we proclaim, by this very belief, that God is *less than perfect*. A proper understanding of the unique Person of the Holy Spirit is not only essential to any proper study of the Trinity, it is also essential to any proper understanding of the Infinity and Perfection of God.

The Holy Spirit and His Ministry To The Word of God

1 Corinthians 2:10-14 "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

We need to have a proper understanding of God and His Word now, more than ever. Not only the unregenerate, but the *fearful regenerate* as well, have come up with the unfounded belief that the Bible is errant in it's content, that the Holy Word of God contains contradictions. Many theologians are turning from the long proven truths of the Bible to erroneous doctrines such as because of fear. They fear what the man-made sciences have "discovered" as "truth". Many Christians

fear science like a rabbit fears a wolf. This should not be! The reverse should be true, for we are the Children of the Almighty, the Creator of all that science studies.

The Human mind has a God-given capacity for logical system, not confusion. We were created this way because we were created by Him in the image of God. The textbook which God gave to man for our good is systematic and complete in it's content, and when we study it we need to approach it as a complete work. You can see the system of Scripture through teachings like the Ten Commandments. In the first part of the Commandments we are told to **love God**. In the second part of the commandments we are told to love our neighbor.

When man fell into sin, he fell from the **stability** that God put in him into **confusion**. The only way we can return to this former stable state of mind is by accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior. At the point of salvation the Holy Spirit **regenerates** us (makes us spiritually alive again) so that we can have a right relationship with God, along with **peace of mind**.

Isaiah 26:3 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

The Christian who fears what science has to say about the Word of God is needlessly giving up that peace. Those who condemn the Word from the standpoint of science are unregenerated unbelievers. They are in a confused state! They have no power to understand that wonderfully systematic work of teaching set forth in God's Word. It is only natural for the unbeliever to attack the Bible as contradictory or full of error. To fear that which an unregenerate person says is true is foolish. The unregenerate mind does not have **the capacity** to perceive the pure truth of the Word.

2 Peter 1:20-21 "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Holy Spirit is the literary agent of the Holy Scriptures. How much of the writing came from man, and how much from the Spirit?

"by the Holy Ghost" The word **by** in our passage is the Greek HUPER. In the passive voice (which it is in this text) it denotes **direct agency**. The Holy Spirit was **in complete and direct control** of the prophecies given; both in reception and in transmittal. The Spirit controlled the writers of Scripture in such a way that there could be **no error**. As the woodworker uses tools to create masterpieces, the Spirit used the writers to create the masterpiece of the Scripture. The Word of God is completely and totally free of error, as God would **not** transmit error to His children.

Psalms 95:7-11 "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."

Hebrews 3:7-11 "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)"

By paralleling these two verses we can, again, see that the Holy Spirit wrote the Scriptures. But did the Spirit alone write our Scriptures, or was it a work created by all Members of the Trinity? The Israelites believed that it was God the Father who spoke to them through David, yet the New Testament passage clearly indicates that it is the Holy Ghost who spoke. The Father was the **source** of the writing of Scripture, and directed the Spirit in its writing. The Holy Spirit was the author of the writing. He personally directed man in the writing. Christ made the

writing of the Scripture *possible*. If He had not agreed to become a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins then there would have been *no need* for the work. Without the regeneration provided through salvation we would be spiritually unfit to receive the truths of Scripture. Without the Son's substitutionary sacrifice we would be living a empty life without hope of salvation. What the Son did made it all possible, and in this capacity we recognize Jesus as the *direct reason* for the writing.

John 14:16, 26 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ... But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Since the Holy Spirit is the direct Author in the writing of Scripture, who is better qualified to teach its content? There are teachers in the Body of Christ, placed there by God to disciple His sheep, yet without the internal teaching ministry of the Spirit, the Believer could *never comprehend* what he was being told. When false teachers enter the Body of Christ, it is the illumination of the Holy Spirit that keeps us from falling into error.

Mark 13:22 "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

False prophets and Christs will *try* to seduce the Christian (notice the phrase, "*if it were possible*"), yet it is not possible. Why? If a person is truly born again, and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, then God protects His people from falling into blasphemous false doctrine. The truly saved are protected from the false prophets by the Spirit of God, if they heed His call!

2 Timothy 3.14-17 (Greek Textual Translation) "But you, Timothy, abide in the things you have learned, and of which you have become certain. Knowing from you have learned them, and that from a babe you have learned the holy writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which

is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture is God breathed and inspired of God, profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for discipline in righteousness; that the person of God will reach maturity, completely equipped to do every good work.."

There are three very important points that we can gather from the above passage:

(1) The Scriptures play a very important part in the role of salvation. Though Salvation is through faith in Christ alone, the Scriptures *point us in the direction* of Christ. They guide us to accepting Jesus, convict us to repentance so we can enjoy the regeneration of the Holy Ghost. This guidance of the Scriptures comes to every man by the preaching of the Gospel by holy men of God gifted in ministry. Preaching is a function of God's Common Grace to mankind.

The scriptures call all men to salvation, even though this pathway is spurned by many. God is entirely just and righteous to all; those who reject His offer of salvation have only themselves to blame for their eternal damnation.

2) The Apostle recognized *all of the Scripture* as inerrant, totally free from error. states. Paul said *Every Scripture*, not just those which we agree on. What does this specifically mean?

a. The *narrative parts* of the Bible are exactly recorded, word for word, as they were spoken. Just because God *exactly* recorded these words does not mean that He agreed with all that was recorded. When He recorded Satan's raving "I will be like God" (Isaiah 14.13), God did not exactly record the statement so as to affirm that He agreed with it. But God recorded the statement *exactly* as it was made.

b. The *doctrinal passages* are exactly and absolutely true. We may not understand portions of the Scripture in it's entirety (such as the difficult doctrine of the Trinity), yet this does not diminish the truth of the passage.

3) The Scriptures were given to man so that we can reach and retain a certain level of Spiritual maturity. The Scriptures are *the means* of sanctifying the

Christian when his mind is illuminated *by the teaching ministry* of the Holy Spirit.

How does the Holy Spirit teach the Christian?

There are three words we must define before we can understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God:

1. ***Revelation***: The unveiling, uncovering, or manifestation of God's truth to man.
2. ***Inspiration***: The mode by which God secured an *infallible* communication of His revelation unto man; the recording of God's revelation perfectly.
3. ***Illumination***: The teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby He *grants us an understanding* of the revelation which we have received; an enlightening of the human mind by the infinite intelligence of God so that we can understand infinite truth.

There are two degrees of revelation from God. They are:

Special Revelation: This is the mode of communication where the Holy Spirit directly and personally speaks to man. The Word of God, Visions, Dreams, prophetic trances, and certain historic events (The Cross and The Exodus) are all forms of Special Revelation.

General Revelation: This is the mode of communication by which God speaks to man through impersonal and mediatorial ways. *Nature* is a form of General Revelation. In nature you *cannot see* a clear message of God because of the taint of sin on it, yet you can *see by it's design* that there *had to be an intelligent Creator*.

Doctor B. B. Warfield advanced the idea that there were three periods of time

where the Holy Spirit revealed God to man through Special Revelation. He states:

"Revelation has been given to man in three fairly marked periods of time ... the Patriarchal Age, the Prophetic Age, and the Apostolic Age. In the Patriarchal Age revelation was given largely through outward manifestations (burning bush,, Pillar of Fire, etc.) ... It was given by symbols, by Theophanies (The Appearance of God in human forms) ... In the Prophetic Age, this was the age of internal suggestion. The Holy Spirit moved on the hearts of the Prophets and the Prophets gave to men words that God was giving to them .. In The Apostolic Age, this was the age of concursive operation. .. The Age of the Spirit through the medium of the written word by human organisms .."

Of the accuracy of these forms of revelation, Doctor Warfield states:

".. As light that passes through the colored glass of a Cathedral window is light from heaven, but is stained by the attempts through the glass in which it passes, so any Word of God that is passed through the mind and soul of man must come out discolored by the Personality through which it is given (and just to that degree ceases to be the pure Word of God). But what if this personality itself has been formed by God into precisely the personality it is for the expressed purpose of communicating, to the Word given through it, just the coloring which it gives? What if the colors of the stained glass window have been designed by the Architect for the expressed purpose of giving the light that floods the Cathedral precisely the tone and quality it receives from them? What if the Word of God, that comes to His people, is framed by God into the Word of God it is precisely by the means of the qualities of the men formed by Him for the purpose through which it is given? When we think of the Lord giving by His Spirit a Body of authoritative writings to His people, we must remember that He is the God of Providence and of grace ... and that He holds all the lines of preparations as fully under His directions as He does the specific operation, which we call technically in the narrow sense, by the name of inspiration.."

2 Peter 1:19-21 "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

To what extent did the Holy Ghost inspire or authorize the texts of the original Autographa? The word used for ***moved*** in the above verse is the Greek PHERO, which translated means "to bear along, to lift up and carry". The same word would be used when speaking of carrying a crippled person to bed. The word ***does not*** mean moving in the sense of a father telling a lazy son to go to work. It also ***does not imply*** a forced moving. The prophets were moved or controlled by God the Holy Spirit while writing the Scriptures, but not forced into this movement. They were carried along by the Spirit while surrendering their wills to Him. How much of the Bible, then, is of God and how much is of man?

The individual ***style of the writer*** is retained by the writer himself. Yet on further consideration might we not also agree that God, being sovereign, prepared each writer ***from birth*** so that the Word of God could be manifest through that writer's ***peculiar style of writing***? The Bible is a work of God in its entirety. Surely there is no jot or tittle within it that was not placed there by God the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1.22 -- Greek Textual Translation: "Now this whole thing has come to pass in order that which was spoken directly by the Lord through the intermediate agency of the Prophet might be fulfilled."

The Prophets were only ***intermediate agents*** that the Lord used, as tools, in order to accomplish His Work. Were they forced into this position? No, but they were persuaded (with a persuasion that they did not want to refuse) to do the holy work they were called to do.

How Are The Finite To Comprehend that Holy

Work?

There are two ways of learning the truths we find in the Word of God, neither method inseparable from the other. The human element in Bible research is called "Inspiration". We use our God given capabilities of logic and reason to seek to understand the whole of the Bible. This method is finite, and subject to failure. Often human emotion creeps into what we would otherwise intelligently comprehend. This rampant *emotionalism* often leads us to accept that which "feels right" as Biblically accurate.

Our Father understands our fallibility. Because of this He created a second means of learning Scripture. To facilitate this means the Father sent the Holy Spirit to earth to indwell the believer. The Spirit's activity in teaching us the Word is known as Illumination. Through Illumination the Spirit empowers our understanding so we can grasp (understand) the truths of our infinite God. There are many radio waves in the air around us at this very moment. We cannot hear what is being said without using a radio receiver. Even so, the Holy Spirit is our radio receiver for the spiritual things of God.

1 Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The natural men are those who do not possess the Holy Spirit. They do not hear the directives of God, for they are unable to do so. Even if they heard them, they would still refuse to follow these directions, for they could not *comprehend* them. The unbeliever is *totally dead* to the preaching of the Gospel, dead to the call of God Almighty.

1 Corinthians 3:1 "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."

The carnal Christian has slipped back into the sin of his old ways. This is a person

totally out of fellowship with God, and therefore *not attuned* to The Holy Spirit of God. When we first accepted Christ as Savior it is *quite natural* that we be babies. Yet when we have been in Christ for many years, and are yet unable to explain the rudimentary doctrines of Scripture, then it is certain that we are fallen from fellowship with God. *Every time* the Christian sins, he commits an act which to some degree impedes his spiritual growth. Maturity in the Body of Christ is *not measured* by time. You may have been a Christian for fifty years and even now be a baby in spiritual maturity. Our growth is measured by our willingness to follow the directives that God the Holy Spirit has given us. The pupil who will not pay attention to the teacher will perhaps grow a little. Yet it is certain that he will *not* grow as much as he would have if he had been more attentive in class. So it is with the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Christian that is out of fellowship with the Lord will grow only a little, if at all. The Christian will only see true growth when he is in submission to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The two facets of learning, interpretation and illumination, are inseparable. The Christian *must* "Study to show himself approved" so he can place in his mind materiel for the Holy Spirit to teach or illuminate. The Lord God expects us to participate in our progressive Sanctification. We must participate in our own growth if we are to grow at all. Many have the idea that, after salvation, they can lay back and say "Ok Lord, Grow Me!". Nothing is farther from the truth. We either participate in our growth by studying God's Word, or we remain carnal and useless within the Plan of God.

On the other hand, the unbeliever cannot study God's Word and hope to gather anything of worth out of it. If you do not have the Holy Spirit in your life *illuminating* that which you study it is only dead and useless text. A good example is Isaac Asimov's study of the Bible. A very scholarly work, very thorough, and yet very dead.

John 14:16-17, 26 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye

know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.... But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

It is God's Plan for your life that you learn His Word. Christ said, "*he shall teach you all things*". If the Christian falls out of fellowship the Father will chastise him until he repents and returns to the fold. God wants us to grow, to participate in our sanctification *through the illumination* of the Spirit. It would be well if all of us, would remember this maxim:

"Unless the Spirit empowers the work it shall only be like trash before the eyes of God."

The Holy Spirit and His Ministries In The Old Testament

Doctor B. B. Warfield ".the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit of God is exclusive to the Bible. It is foreign to Hellenism, it is foreign to thoughts outside the world of the Bible."

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit is *not exclusive* to the New Testament. In the Old Testament the Spirit is *mentioned in all but sixteen books*. In both Old and New Testaments the Holy Spirit was active in *three spheres* in connection with man:

- 1) **In the world:** The Holy Spirit was active in creation. He was active in forming its order.
- 2) **In the Theocracy:** The Holy Spirit was concerned with the creation of the people of God. He installed order and government in Israel and the Church. He worked to prepare a kingdom for these people for when they have reached full maturity.
- 3) **In the Individual:** The Spirit ministers to the people of God. He *individually prepares* a people for the Kingdom of God. His ministries of Calling,

Justification, and Sanctification are evidenced in this sphere of activity.

Genesis 1:2 "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

This is the ***first*** mention of the Holy Spirit in the Bible. Please note there is ***no introduction nor explanation*** of who He is or where He came from. From this fact we can say that the Hebrews fully understood the presence of the Holy Spirit. If not, if they were just becoming to understand Him, then why were they so ***familiar*** in their speech toward Him?

We can learn more about the Holy Spirit from this text by looking at it in the original languages. The Hebrew for ***moved*** in this passage means: "To hover over as a bird hovers over its young". We can see the Holy Spirit's ***attitude of love*** toward creation.

Job 33:4 "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

Genesis 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

How did the Spirit of God work in the Creation of man? God the Father is the Chief Executive of the Godhead. God the Holy Spirit is the Active Agent in the Godhead. The Father speaks and directs, the Spirit moves in obedience to this direction. Specifically:

- It was the Father who planned the event, who finished the event by breathing life into the lungs of newly created man.
- It was the Son who ***made the event possible***. As God is Sovereign He foresaw that, even before Creation, man would fall. The Son agreed to pay the penalty for man's eventual disobedience from eternity past.
- It was the Spirit of God who actually formed man out of the dust of the

ground. The Spirit is the spiritual hands and feet of God, the Agent who does the work of the Godhead on the earth.

Job 34:14-15 "If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath; All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust."

The Holy Spirit of God is not only *the source* of all spiritual life in creation, He is also the source of all physical life. Man is not self sufficient. If God the Spirit were to *draw back from this earth* for but a moment, then all that was life before His withdrawal would cease. We would all become just so much dust.

The Holy Spirit is also the source for the retention of all *decent life* in the world. He wills order in society to cause us to create governments and laws for our own preservation. Because of the Holy Spirit's prompting of mankind we have laws like the Rules of the Geneva Convention (which protect the soldier against cruelty from the enemy during times of war). In this country we have freedom to worship God as we will. We have the freedom to accrue materiel possessions, and laws to protect our freedom.

Psalms 104:30 "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."

When life was created in the Garden this was not the only time that the Holy Spirit was to perform this ministry. He repeats the act of creation somewhere in the world every day by delivering new life. Every time a baby is born it is because the Holy Spirit has united the sperm and ovum of its parents. Every time a plant grows, it is because the Holy Spirit breathes life into it. We live and breathe because of the loving ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 6:3 "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."

What is this passage telling us? In the Hebrew text the word translated *spirit* is

the word RUACH, which means "spirit, wind, or conscience". The Holy Spirit also ministers to mankind by *directing our conscience*.

Romans 2:14-15 "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"

The Holy Spirit directs mankind into *external acts of good*. He does this by either of two ways: (a) He *persuades* the conscience of man into doing that which is right, and (b) Using *peer pressure* the Spirit creates laws and governments that work together to protect creation.

Our verse in Genesis also states that the Spirit shall ***not always strive*** with man. The Hebrew word for ***strive*** is DUWN, meaning "to contend with or remain among". What do you think the effect will be when the Holy Spirit no longer influences mankind to external good? Imagine walking into the department store knowing that you might not get home. Imagine having to carry a weapon with you no matter where you go. Imagine having no Bible to read from nor to cherish, for even if they were still printed, owning one would be an open invitation to death. Imagine all these things, and worse, and you will have a proper conception of a world devoid of the control of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit withdraws there will be an equal insinuation of evil into the vacuum left by His departing. When the Spirit departs the morality of mankind will also break down, along with civilization and government.

Proceed to the [second part](#) of this study
Return to the Systematic Theology [Table of Contents](#)

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Return to the beginning of this study!



Return to DIDASKALOS MAIN MENU

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Systematic Theology

STUDY TWELVE

God's Design Of The Family

Roles of Man And Woman In Both Church and Family

Introduction

Today many Christians have taken a world view totally contrary to the Word of God. They have ignored the Divine designs of creation and began to blur the roles of man and woman into a unisex sort of thing, a perversion of what God originally intended in the Garden. This is obvious from the many letters I have received from feminists and Christian women's liberation movements. Some have responded with "Well, back in Jesus' day men were chauvinists, and this shows in the writings of the Scripture". To which I reply, I believe the Scripture to be God inspired, not written based on the whims of men. Others have formed in their minds a vast conspiracy among Christianity to "put women in their places". This is foolish, and paranoid.

Let me be plain: I believe women are just as capable as men, perhaps moreso, in all areas of life. I believe women are just as intelligent, just as thoughtful, just as able as any man. I am glad that women have the right to vote in this country, and frankly I wouldn't have it any other way. But having stated this, I am also certain that God designed men and women to fulfill specific roles in the Church and in the family. When we depart from these roles we harm ourselves and others who

come in contact with us.

In our society today same-sex marriages are becoming more and more acceptable, as is fornication and adultery. The Christian and the Church are called by God not to be swayed by the world, but to exist in such a way as to convert the world to Christ. When we modify our views to that of the world to please feminism, God is not pleased. When we address God as "she" in order to placate militarism, we sin in His eyes. He is not man as we know man, but He incarnated Christ as man for a specific reason. Yes, Christ *could have* been incarnated as woman, but He would have been ineffective as our Savior. Christ had to be man. We have to follow God's roles. There is no in-between.

Solo Scriptura

In this highly charged debate about men and women the standard we *must adhere* to is "What saith the Scripture?". This should be a frank and untwisted study of the gender role as taught by Scripture.

Galatians 3:13, 28 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

The feminist movement in Christianity have taken this verse, ***there is neither male nor female***, and tried to use it to teach that the God designed roles between man and woman were erased by the atonement of the Cross. Not only is this false doctrine, it is faulty interpretive practice. The intent of the verse is to show that God is no respecter of persons, but He offers salvation equally to all. As it is written:

2 Peter 1:4 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

If the verse is teaching that gender roles are erased at the atonement, then it is equally teaching that *race roles* and *working roles* are also erased. Though slavery was and is an abominable practice, it was commonly practiced in the ancient world. Slaves were not suddenly "freed" after accepting Christ as Savior. Paul's letter to Philemon proves that point. And Jews do not cease being Jewish, nor Gentiles as they are. This is foolish! You maintain your race after Christ, just as I maintain mine. And we all, male or female, bond or free, Jew or Gentile, can equally approach the Throne of Grace in prayer and thanksgiving after salvation. But do we cease being who we are? Absolutely not! We are who we are, but now we are saved. Our roles, as designed by God, are still intact for this earthly time. The Apostle Paul understood this:

1 Corinthians 14:34-37 "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Paul made it plain that his treaty on women *keep*(ing) *silence in the churches* was not based on Jewish custom of the day, nor on the basis of his own prejudice. This proclamation was made as a series of *commandments of the Lord*. A commandment is *not* something subject to interpretation, or to the whim of the Christian. Paul taught in our Galatians text that there is no *spiritual distinction* between men and women - we are all of equal worth to God. Yet the New Nature brought on by salvation *does not* remove the distinctive roles between the sexes. There is equal worth, but does *equal worth demand equal function* in the Body?

To hear the feminists speak, worth and function are one in the same. Much of this type of generalization is an over-reaction to the over abuses of yesteryear, when men refused women even the most basic rights in America. Yet equal worth *does not* demand equal function. Within the Godhead there are Three equally powerful

Beings, each possessing the same capabilities as the other. Yet of these Three only ***One***, the Father, leads the Trinity. Both Son and Spirit are in subjection to the Father's will, and the Spirit is in subjection to the Son's will. Though all Three are equal, they each adopt their own roles without diminution. The Godhead functions so well because each maintains His activities within His role, setting a prime example of how we as humans should maintain our human activities and marriages.

Furthermore, Paul's command to women in the Church was ***not based*** on the Mosaic Law. Many teach that, since we are no longer under the Law, we are not bound by the restrictions of the Law. Yet Paul's command did not stem from the Mosaic Law, as is evident in his statement:

" ..they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law .."

That small phrase, ***as also***, makes it clear that the command to be under obedience was a Law that ***was in addition to*** the Mosaic codes, a Law present at Creation, a Law on a totally separate set of books. This Law is ethereal, eternal in being, a Law of unity and order used by God and handed down to His Creation. This was not a Law that we were freed from with the death of Christ. The Mosaic Law comprehended and repeated this Law and incorporated this Law into it's working. But when the Mosaic Law was transcended by Christ the former Law, a Law of Creation, still stood.

Genesis 1:26-27 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Both male and female were created in the image of God (***male and female created he them***). The Hebrew for ***image*** is TSELEM, which means "a phantom or resemblant likeness, a representative figure". The word was often used to refer to the image of something that came out of a mold: it was not the

mold, but looked *exactly* like it. In other words, finite man was created in such a way as to reflect the infinite God, inasmuch as that is possible.

In what was did ISH (man) and ISHA (woman) represent God before the Fall? They were both equal in value to God, and they were free from sin. In their union they represented God. In God's union, the Trinity, all Three have equal worth though each possesses different roles and submission to the other. The Father is in authority over both Son and Spirit. In the marital union ISH was to be in authority over ISHA. Though mankind would later fall under the weight of sin, this order or "Image of God" would never be countermanded by the Father.

Genesis 2:18, 22-23 "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

God established the standard and the roles in marriage through the act of creation. God is omnipotent: He could have easily raised both ISH and ISHA from the dust of the ground simultaneously. Nothing hinders His absolute power but His own will. Yet God chose to create ISH first, and draw ISHA out of man's rib. Did God forget to create woman at the start, and draw her from man's rib to correct this oversight? No, God did not forget, but waited for man to *desire* woman, to feel a hurt, a need for her before He created that beautiful creature. God created in a specific order:

- Man was drawn from the earth, symbolic of God Himself. God had no rib to draw man from, but drew him out of all He created. Man was to be submissive to the Creator above all.
- Woman was created from the rib of man, and was to be in submission to him as her mate. In the words of an old Chinese proverb, "Woman was not created from the head of man so she could rule over him, nor from the bones of his feet so that she could be trod upon, but from his rib to walk by his side and be protected from harm."

Genesis 2:19 "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."

Notice the *pattern of creation*. As God created each animal, He brought it to ISH to see *what he would call them*. God did this to show that Adam, ISH, was to *have dominion over* creation. This was God's design, God's plan. Notice the following:

Genesis 2:22-23 "And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Just as God did with the animal creation, He brought ISHA to man who in turn gave her her name, *Woman*, or the Hebrew ISHA. Woman submitted to the naming, man did the naming, and God corrected neither: it was His design that woman be in submission to her mate. Did this submission *lessen* ISHA's worth in the eyes of God?

Genesis 1:28-30 "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so."

God gave both ISH and ISHA control over creation (*God said unto them*). There is no doubt that both were of equal value to God, though within their union ISHA

was to be under the leadership of ISH. Again, the idea that equal worth demands equal roles is totally foreign to the Scripture. Even in the Church, the Body of Christ, there are varying roles and lines of authority drawn that in no way diminish those who must follow.

1 Corinthians 12:14-18 "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

In both ISH and ISHA God developed their frames (bodies) and emotional levels in such a way that they would be able to carry out their functions, their God given roles. The male frame is made long, with a long reach and heavily muscled. Man's nature, if uncorrupted by evil, is protective and aggressive, the traits of leadership. Woman's build was slighter, less muscled, with a different temperament. She was built to **respond** to the leadership of the man. This is not a series of roles that changed after the Fall, nor after salvation.

Ephesians 5:21-31 "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as 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. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 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."

Paul parallels the unity of Christ and His Church with the relationship between man and wife. This parallel is ***highly interesting***, and lends itself to many applications. No believer in his right mind would make the statement that the Church, the Bride of Christ, is ***equal in authority and rule*** to the Savior. The Church is in subjection to Christ, under His ruling authority. Does this make us less, somehow diminish us? Again, absolutely not! In the same way the wife, ISHA, is to be in submission to her husband ***in everything***. Again, the words of the Apostle: ***Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing***. The man in marriage is to be the ruling authority, the wife the helper, the follower. Different roles, though equally saved in Christ.

Did the Church become co-equal with Christ when it accepted Christ as Savior? No, but came under Christ's rule to an even greater extent. Does the woman become co-equal with the man after the vows of marriage are made? Again, no, but she is designed and destined by God's plan to become even more under his rule, to recognize him as the leader of the household. Television sitcoms love to berate man, to show him as foolish within his household. Home Improvement shows Tim to be the foolish male often emasculated by his wife, who obviously has all the common sense in the family. The Cosby Show depicted Heathcliff, a bumbling husband barely in charge of himself, superbly dictated to by his wife Claire. American society has watched these male emasculating shows for years and become to believe that this is the norm, the way things should be. Yet television does not portray the reality of God's Plan, nor does it show the norm that is His way. Christ is not the bumbling husband, dictated to by the whims of the Church. The husband is not the bumbling sexually driven male, dictated to by the whims of his wife. These things are contrary to the order of Scripture.

What is man's role in the marriage relationship? He is to ***love*** his wife (***love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it***), to sacrifice himself for her benefit, to do what is necessary to nurture and help her grow in Grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. I find it interesting that ***no where in***

Scripture is the woman commanded to love the man, but man is commanded to love the woman. As we discovered earlier, woman was designed to be a *responder* to the advances of her leader. When a woman is loved by her man she will respond with love. When a woman is neglected by her man, she will respond with neglect. Many of the marriages failing today are failing because the man dropped the ball in the relationship. Love requires doing the highest good toward one's object. Love means correcting when correction is righteous, not when we as men feel like it. Love means showing tenderness and love, the caress of the heart, frequently and without rationing. Love means supplying the woman's needs, both physical and spiritual.

1 Timothy 5:8 "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Christian men, in particular, need to pay heed to Paul's warning: If we ***provide not for his own*** then we have become ***worse than an infidel***, or godless unbelievers. Heed Paul's warning, men! Often we are to blame for the discord that plagues our households.

In 1 Timothy Paul gives directions for the government of the Church and the training of it's members. Within this same context Paul writes:

1 Timothy 2:11-15 "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."

Again, a very straightforward statement. Does Paul tell the woman that she is forbidden to teach at all in the Church? No, for each believer, regardless of gender, is given Spiritual Gifts once they enter the Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every

man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

1 Corinthians 12:13-18 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

The Bible says that these Spiritual Gifts are divided to *every man* severally as He will. The Greek word for *man* is HEKASTOS, which is better rendered as PERSON. The Holy Spirit gives Gifts to both men and women in the Body. Just as there is no "dead weight" in the human body, each member in the Body of Christ has a Gift and a duty to perform. Our Spiritual Gifts are not given based on race or sex, nor based on merit. They are distributed as the Spirit of God sees fit. Going back to our Timothy passage, is Paul teaching that God gave women Spiritual Gifts, then disallowed their usage? Absolutely not! However, all Gifts, whether possessed by man or woman, must be exercised in accordance with the *will and plan of God*.

The woman's Gifts is not to be used to exercise authority over the man in the Body. This is very plain, based on *I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man*. The Gift given must not be used in opposition to the order of rule, nor in opposition to the gender design that God's Law of Creation established. Women may indeed teach:

Titus 2:3-5 "The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to

their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Women, though forbidden to teach in authority over the man, are definitely needed as teachers in the Body of Christ. The woman must teach and preach, as God has called them, but to ***other women*** in obedience to God's design. As long as her Gift is not used as a lever of authority over man, it is not only permissible but ***commanded*** that the woman exercise her Gift. If our women taught one another as God commands I suspect that we'd see the divorce rate among Christianity radically lowered. Many marriages dissolve because both men and women enter that holy state thinking it is nothing but sex, sex, sex. There is much more to marriage than sex. Women, just as men, should be taught ***how to make the marriage work***. They must learn to be level headed, how to keep their household, how to discipline their children, how to be obedient to their husbands. This is half of the battle against the rampant divorce rate in our Churches today.

Christian feminists also point out:

1 Corinthians 11:5 "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven."

teaching that this verse allows the woman to pray or preach out loud in the meetings of the Church. This is indeed a stretch of the imagination. No where in this verse does Paul mention ***where*** women are when this action is done, whether in the public meeting of the Church or while segregated from the men. The verse simply teaches that the woman should pray or prophecy with her head ***covered*** (a reference to her unshorn hair), a sign of her submission to her husband. In the continuing context:

1 Corinthians 11:6-9 "For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the

woman; but the woman for the man."

we see that the woman's longer hair is a sign of her role within the marriage, in submission to her husband. As Paul stated: ***For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.*** Again, the creation order highlights God's design in the marriage. Women are commanded to be in obedience to their men, not to be co-equal rulers with man in the Church.

1 Corinthians 14:34 "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

Christian feminists have used numerous tactics to discount this Scripture. There is the camp that says, "But this is only one verse in the Bible, and written by a chauvinistic man". We've already refuted this, for all Scripture is God inspired. If the Gospel of Christ was offered in only "one verse", would you discount it? No, because Scripture is Scripture. Other feminists have attacked this verse at its root, in the original languages. The Greek word for ***speak*** is LALEO, which the feminists say means "to make an unintelligible noise". Based on this mistranslation they formulated the theory that in the early Church women sat on one side of the Church, men on the other. When the women did not understand what was being taught they leaned across the aisle and whispered questions to their husbands (hence, unintelligible noise). This is a neat response to the verse IF LALEO means "unintelligible noise". However, it ***does not mean this***.

1 Corinthians 14:19 "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

In the same context just prior to this, Paul uses LALEO in reference to his own preaching. He says ***in the church I had rather speak (LALEO) five words with my understanding***. Obviously this is a reference to ***intelligible speech***, not babble. If LALEO is used here to refer to intelligent and clear speaking, it is

certain that it is used in the same way by the same writer just a few verses later.

As to the charge that Paul was a chauvinist woman hater, nothing could be farther from the truth. Paul was a ardent supporter of women in the Church, as long as they followed God's design in their lives:

Romans 16:1-5 "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ."

Paul went so far as to name Phebe as a deacon (DIAKONOS = *servant*) in her Church, and to commend Priscilla and Aquila who maintained a Church in their own house. It is true that in the ancient world the custom was to regard women as inferior to men, less than citizens. Paul was not of this opinion: he revered women, just as did our Lord, and promoted their ministries *within their proper design* in the local Church. God designed women to obey the leadership of their men, regardless as to what society might teach. Paul's teachings were not based on chauvinism, but on God's order and design. To correct any further error on this point, let me quickly point out that Phebe was not *an ordained* deacon or minister in the Body of Christ. When Paul gave the qualifications of minister and deacon to Timothy:

1 Timothy 3:1-2, 12 "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."

These positions of *leadership* were clearly offered only *to men*, not to women.

Again, God's design and order must be maintained in the Body regardless as to the ways of the world. An old preacher I know said, "When a woman can become the husband of one wife, she can become an ordained deacon or minister". This statement wouldn't wash today, for in our depraved world a woman *can* become the homosexual husband of one wife. Again, this is contrary to God's plan and design, an abomination to Him. But is it any less an abomination than women who refuse to follow God's design in marriage? Is it any less an abomination than the woman who, contrary to God's Word, seeks the pulpit in the local Church? Both homosexuality and women in authority over men are from the same root, the root of disobedience to God's design. Both are equally unacceptable to God.

1 Corinthians 14:36 "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?"

The word which Paul gave Corinth applies to us today. It was not a command given just to the Corinthians, but to all Christian families and Churches everywhere. In all that God does He has a specific plan, a plan that He alone controls and understands. When God created woman He made her to be a helper to man, and placed in her emotional makeup the qualities necessary to help her accomplish this goal. Man was given the role of leader and protector, woman the role of follower and helper. When men and women adhere to these rules their lives run smoother. When men and women switch roles, or refute God's creation order for them, then trouble starts.

Romans 1:26-28 "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;"

When the man substitutes his God given design for the design of the world, he in essence loses his manhood. When his manhood goes a vacuum is left in his soul,

and something must rush in to fill this vacuum. As man moves farther and farther away from God's design, he moves closer and closer to aberrant lifestyles like homosexuality. The same is true for the woman. As she moves out of her God given role she loses her femininity, moving deeper into false masculinity or lesbian behavior. Let us not lose sight of our femininity or our masculinity. Live in the role that God equipped you for. Women are not less than men when they walk in subjection to their husbands, but are a reflection of the beauty of ISHA in the Garden. By obeying God's design woman builds up the Church of God, strengthens her family, and helps her husband maintain his role within God's economy.

What duties can the woman serve within the Church? She can aid in all extra-curricular ministries, bus ministries, tape ministries, sound and audio ministries, tract distribution, and door to door visitation and witnessing. She can volunteer to keep the chapel clean. She can tend to the children, nurturing them and leading them to Christ. She can teach the children and women's classes, visit the sick and elderly, and care for those who are disabled. Women are *vitaly needed* in the Church today, not as preachers and deacons, but as helpers to the whole Body. Let us each live our lives according to God's plan and purpose, fulfilling His will in our lives. Let the world stay outside of the Church and outside of our families: God's way is best!

Return to the Systematic Theology [Table of Contents](#)

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Return to the beginning of this study!



Return to DIDASKALOS MAIN MENU

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Systematic Theology

STUDY THIRTEEN

God's Design Of The Family

The Christian Man

Divine Design

In our previous study we discovered that both Adam (ISH) and Eve (ISHA) were created in the image of God, and both were given dominion over all creation. Though both were equally given this dominion, God designed ISH to be the head of the family, and the ultimate Federal Head of creation. This was shown through numerous Scriptures, as well as the *order of Creation*. Man was first created, then Eve to be his assistant. Other signs in Genesis point to the truth that ISH was designed to be the head of the family unit.

Genesis 3:6-7 "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

When ISHA took and ate the forbidden fruit, neither she nor man fell into sin. However *immediately* after ISH ate of the fruit the Scripture says *And the eyes of them both were opened*. Though the Father gave the command not to eat of this

fruit to both man and woman, man was ultimately responsible for keeping this covenant as God regarded him to be the federal head of creation. Paul referred to this later in the New Testament epistles when he stated:

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The fall did ***not*** come by ISHA, but by Adam's transgression (***in Adam all die***). Since the transgression came by Adam, salvation from sin would also have to come from ***the Man Jesus Christ***. The federal head of creation, Adam, caused the mess, and an ***exact substitute*** for the start of this whole mess would have to atone for it (***in Christ shall all be made alive***). As we mentioned in the last study, God could have incarnated Christ as a woman, but it would have been ineffectual. Woman could not pay the price for the fall, for woman did ***not cause*** the fall. She was not federal head, and was not responsible; Adam was.

1 Timothy 2:12-14 "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

The woman was deceived by Satan, tricked into partaking of the fruit. But Adam was ***not deceived***, and knew full well the consequences of his actions. He knew that his action ***alone*** would cause the fall of mankind yet pursued the action anyway, whereas the woman though her action would only be an isolated act of disobedience. Paul ties the fall of Adam and mankind to his admonition of ***I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man***. This seems to be quite a doctrinal stretch until you analyze what happened during the fall of man. Look at our Genesis passage again:

Genesis 3:6-7 "... when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her;

and he did eat..."

Adam did not just walk up on ISHA and Satan while they were having their discussion on partaking of the fruit. Adam *was with ISHA* all the time, watching the exchange as it progressed. Rather than fulfill the role that God designed him for, the role of leadership, Adam *stood and watched* and then followed the lead of the woman in disobedience. Eve stepped outside of her Divine design and partook of the fruit and, acting as the leader, gave that fruit to man. Adam stepped outside of his Divine design and, rather than reject the fruit, became a follower and accepted the tainted gift. It was at this moment that creation fell to sin.

It was for this reason Paul aptly ties the admonition to forbid a woman to usurp authority in the Body of Christ to the fall of man. Whenever we depart from the Divine design in our lives we invite disaster. When Adam and Eve departed from the Divine design mankind fell to sin. When the Church ignores Divine design to accommodate society, to maintain a "politically correct" status quo, it invites disaster. For this reason women are commanded to serve God within their own designed roles, and men are commanded to serve within their designs.

I say this now to the shame of Christian men everywhere: Too often in our Churches today women have been *forced* into positions of leadership, contrary to their Divine design, because men will *not serve as they are called*. Men have allowed society to emasculate them, and have bowed to the feminist demands to the detriment of both Church and family. Many Churches now have female Pastors, totally contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture, totally outside of their design. It seems harmless enough, certainly, but many of these denominations now tolerate homosexual liaisons as righteous in God's eyes. As our Lord warned, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump". When we say, "God, I refuse to believe this part of your Word because it's just not fair", then where do we stop? When we ignore the numerous Scriptures that clearly teach the Divine design in the genders, how can we justify any part of the Scripture? When women are placed in leadership roles in the Body because we men are just too lazy to commit, we harm the woman, we harm ourselves, and endanger the well being of the Body.

The Christian Man and the Family

How should the Godly man behave himself? There are a number of self help books on the market today that all talk about raising the family, yet each gives information that conflicts with the other. Men have increasingly become targets in our world today, on television and in the movies, as buffoons that can barely tie their shoes without the competent leadership of a woman. In fact, society has made it almost criminal to be a man. In a recent Promise Keepers conference (and I am not a Promise Keeper, nor do I endorse the movement) there were repeated interviews on television emasculating the men present because women were not invited to the conference. It's odd that men are never invited to women's conferences (nor baby showers) and feel no threat from the liberal media, but if men have a men's conference without women "it's a conspiracy". At a recent Southern Baptist Convention the attendees adopted a measure that recognized the Biblical roles of man and woman in the family and Church. Shortly afterward I had a United Methodist brother tell me this joke:

"I asked a Southern Baptist man how his wife took the announcement that men are now supposed to be leaders in the family and at Church. He told me, 'She took it fine. After I told her, I didn't see her for a while. But after the third day the swelling in my eyes went down and now we're doing fine' "

Not much of a joke, but it's what's going around Christian circles. In Christian newsletters and e-mail lists there are always jokes emasculating men. I recently wrote and asked the sender of one of these little funnies if she knew any good jokes about African Americans or women. Odd, I never got a reply.

In the middle of all the idiocy that the world has injected into the Church, how is a Christian man to know how he should behave? The answer is simple: What saith the Scripture?

Proverbs 23:26 "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

Matthew 4:10 "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Whether within his family, in the Church, or in his secular job, the man is to set an example of Godliness and adherence to God's Word. If each Christian man made a commitment to serve God to his utmost capability, God would glorify him and bless these efforts.

Christian men must be examples *to their families*. If he sets a perverted example or refuses to lead within the family unit, this action, like a disease, spreads to all the family members. If you have bad habits, if you curse, if you are a slob, your family will follow that example of leadership whether you want them to or not. The children of alcoholics are often alcoholics themselves. The children of child abuse will usually abuse their own children. A foolish and unthinking commander often puts his troops in harm's way by poor action or pitiful inaction.

As the leader of the family the father is best able to influence his children toward Godliness. If he sets an example of honesty and diligence the children will seek to emulate him. If he studies his Bible daily, the wife will surely follow.

1 Corinthians 7:2 "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

The Christian man is to devote himself to his wife faithfully and fully. He must *never* forsake his wife in lieu of another woman, nor allow pornographic materials in his house. No, even the "Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition" is forbidden. It belittles your wife when she sees you looking at other women, fantasizing about other women. We have no excuse for actual or *mental* unfaithfulness, not if we plan to walk as Christian men.

1 Corinthians 7:3 "Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and

likewise also the wife unto the husband."

The husband is to treat his wife with the ***utmost respect*** in private and in public. I cannot count the number of times I have heard a Christian man belittle his wife in public, joke about her cooking, make snide remarks about how she tends her household. Careless remarks are barbs that stick in the wall of the marriage, that will one day come back to haunt you. The husband is to be better tempered than a child, careful to hold his tongue and think, never to fly off the handle at his wife. If you haven't grown up, then don't take a wife! If you're married, grow up!

1 Corinthians 7:4-5 "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

The Christian man will love his wife both emotionally and ***physically***. Your wife needs your touch, your love. Sex should never be used as a hammer or a weapon in the marriage. I have heard of women "withholding" themselves from their husbands as a punishment, or men doing the same to their wives. This is not in God's will, nor is it righteous. Sexual activity in the marriage is God's Gift to the marriage:

Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

and ***absolutely not*** a weapon to be used for reward or punishment. This holds true of ***all things*** in the marriage. Men allow their marriages to dissolve into a battle of wits with their wives out of pride, out of a desire to win the argument at all costs. The Bible commands us:

Colossians 3:19 "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

The Christian man is to have a strict control over his temper, particularly as it

relates to the wife. If he is wronged by the wife then ***explain the wrong*** to her. Perhaps her action was a lapse in judgment with no harm intended. But if the wife errs (and we all make mistakes) and you chew her out, she ***will respond*** by attacking back. This will turn into a cycle of accusations and railing flying back in forth, an argument that will cause scarring in the marriage. Such altercations are avoidable if the Christian man will hold his temper ***and think***. We should also ***limit the duration*** of our anger if we do fall into anger. The Bible offers a simple solution:

Ephesians 4:26-27 "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. "

In the Jewish custom the setting sun signaled the ***start of a new day***. If you, either man or woman, must get angry at your spouse, ***grow up and get over it*** before you go to bed that night. In looking back over the past 25 years of my marriage there are a few times I've been angered by my dear wife. In all instances the anger could be worked out, and compromise reached within an hour or so. Highly immature people allow their anger to control them to drag them along like an undertow. The mature person ***controls*** his anger, ***directs*** the emotion to achieve a Godly result rather than destroy the relationship.

Let me put it another way: When you are angered, and allow that anger to remain into the next day, you do two things. First you cause scarring in the marital relationship. Second, you are engaging in ***active sin***. Yes, sin! Remember this - You do not have to win the argument, but you, as the husband, ***do have to initiate*** the reconciliation. Vengeance is totally in the providence of God. If the wife is in open rebellion and will not repent, the Father will discipline. If the man makes no move toward reconciliation the Father will discipline. Be very careful how you use your anger, lest you fall into the chastening of God!

Colossians 3:21 "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

When children disobey the parents are well within their calling by God to

discipline them. If a father loves his children he can do no less than to punish disobedience. Yet punishment must be exercised with the goal of bettering the child, not just to gain the satisfaction of vengeance. Punishment must *never* be excessively cruel. If the father chastens his children within the boundaries of Godliness and love the children will see it and in turn love him for his care. These same children will grow up to emulate their own fathers, and become a legacy of good discipline throughout the generations. But if a father *abuses* his children, beating them unmercifully for real or imagined acts of disobedience, the child will carry this same behavior to his or her future families. You are the example: discipline wisely and carefully, for what you do today will effect your grandchildren tomorrow.

1 Timothy 5:7-8 "And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

As women have been given greater and greater freedom in our society (and this is good), more and more have moved into the workplace. Again, this is not a bad thing, especially in our society. Even so, do not lose sight of the fact that the *man is responsible* for providing for the needs of his family, *not the woman*. This is an injunction from God that has been in place since the Adamic curse:

Genesis 3:16-19 "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

When ISH and ISHA caused the fall, God gave both a unique punishment. To

woman He caused sorrow in childbearing (*I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children*). Women, from the time of Adam and through today, *suffer when giving birth*. To all those who think the curse of God was removed after the Cross let me ask you, who do you know that has had a happy, comfortable delivery? Every woman I know has suffered in the delivery room, even with the advances of medical science. This is a constant, and this curse will stay in effect until we are united with Jesus in Heaven.

Men, on the other hand, were given the curse of toil (*cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*). As a woman must labor to give birth, the man must labor to provide for his family. This is our part in the curse. Granted there are a few who, because of the toil of their parents, are rich and without need of toil. This is artificial, and such people are "labor free" because others before them sacrificed so much. But for the majority of us, toil is our curse.

Whether the wife works or not, according to Paul *the man is responsible* for providing for his wife and children or he is *is worse than an infidel*. I have heard stories of ministers who have put their wives to work so they could go to Seminary and train for the ministry. How can you reconcile such an action to Godly behaviour? It is *your responsibility* to provide for your family, not your wife's, just as it is her responsibility to suffer the pains of childbearing. When the minister provides such a poor example to his flock he perpetuates a world view rather than God's view to his assembly. These things must not be!

Romans 13:1-5 "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the

sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."

The man must be an example in following the laws of his government. The 1998-1999 Clinton presidential scandal is a good example of poor male behavior and its effect on others. William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, engaged in immoral and illegal sexual activities with a White House intern. Once these activities were discovered Clinton, rather than repent, made a conscious decision to *lie under oath* while being interviewed by a Federal Grand Jury. When the lie was discovered Clinton *continued to lie*, refusing to repent in order to hold on to the Presidency. After the House of Representatives voted to impeach the President the Senate, contrary to all good sense, voted to acquit the President on all charges. What effect did Clinton bring on the nation?

First, the American people with an overwhelming majority acknowledged that the President lied, but the same majority decided to *overlook the matter*. The Senate also understood that the President lied, but decided to *overlook the matter*. One man's action caused a snowball effect in our country, coarsened its moral fabric, and left a legacy of evil that we will one day look back on in shame.

The man *sets the standard* for all things in the family, whether it be the immediate family unit or the American family. Without proper government we would cease from living in an orderly society. A land without government is an anarchy where only the strongest survive. A land without government has no laws to *suppress the sin nature* of man, no laws to maintain orderly human behavior.

When the man avoids paying his lawful taxes he in effect steals from God, for God is the source of all governments in power. When you become a Christian you are not released from governmental law; on the contrary, you are expected to be *more subject* to the law than your godless counterparts. Our government gives us the freedom to worship the Lord as we please. We should cherish our government, love it for its freedoms, and protect it from all those who would see it destroyed. Shame on Clinton, and on every man who selfishly jeopardizes his

government for his own selfish gain!

Matthew 22:36-39 "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

As Christian men our first and greatest commandment is to Love our God, to serve Him, to follow His commandments. The second commandment we must follow is to love our neighbors, love those in our periphery. What is love?

In our society we often confuse God's ideal of love with lust, or emotional excess. This is not AGAPE, God's ideal of love. AGAPE is based on ***doing the highest good toward the object of our love***. If you have AGAPE for someone who is homeless you will not only feed them, but you will try to help them better themselves by leading them to a job or a shelter.

The husband and father must always show AGAPE toward his wife and children. Reward and praise them for following righteousness, gently correct when they move outside of the boundaries of Godliness. Because AGAPE is not based on emotion, but on doing the ***highest good***, it is a particularly hard love to commit to. It is not easy to punish your child when he or she falls into disobedience, nor is it easy to correct the love of your life. Yet we are commanded by God to exercise AGAPE toward our family, our friends, and the people we meet, always following the direction of the written Word of God.

Proverbs 4:1 "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding."

The Christian man must instruct his children in the ways of the Lord. He must teach his children without partiality, knowing that the seed he plants will flower in the life of the child as he grows. Teach only the truths of the Scripture; It is easier to plant the seed of truth now than to weed out false doctrine later. Be careful how you teach your children, for the things you show them will stay with

them all their lives.

Proverbs 4:3-4, 10-13 "For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. ... Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life."

The Scripture emphasizes, over and over again, the importance of the father teaching his children. In many instances and to our shame, the education of the children is often left to the mother and the schools. To all those who rely on the schools to do their job let me warn you: When I was young the schools taught me how to read, write, and gave me mathematic skills. These same schools taught me how to shoplift, how to drink, how to have promiscuous relationships, how to drug my body. If the father neglects the training of his children they may receive an education far from God's standard. If the father gives the children a poor role model, these same children will perpetuate this poor behavior on their own children. Break the cycle of immorality and godlessness. Get involved with your children!

The Christian Man and the Church

The Church, in God's economy, is not run as a democracy nor as an anarchy. The New Testament Church was designed to be managed by earthly God called leaders, ***all men***, holding the office of Bishop or Elder.

Acts 20:16-17 "For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church."

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Philippians 1:1 "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons"

James 5:14 "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord"

The three titles for leadership in the Church, ***Elder***, ***Overseer*** and ***Bishop***, are used interchangeably in the Scripture. When the term ***Elder*** is used it emphasizes the dignity of the office of the servant leader. You can only be called to the position of leader when you have matured to a certain point in Christ, hence ***Elder***. The title ***Bishop*** is used when the function of leadership is being emphasized. The title ***Overseer*** is used when the servant leader's loving concern for the whole flock is being emphasized.

As the Church of Christ has both a spiritual as well as a physical presence, it must have a physical as well as a spiritual leader. Our spiritual leader is, of course, Jesus Christ. The Bishop acts as the physical leader of the local Church on earth. The Bishop holds general charge over the local Church in all matters. In our Churches today we appoint committees, task forces, and other "teams" who make recommendations to the Bishop and the local Church. It must be kept in mind, though, that the Bishop Pastor has final control over the action that the Church will take, as he exists to watch over our souls.

Hebrews 13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

We are commanded to ***obey them that have the rule over you, and submit ourselves***. I heard a Christian man once say, "Ain't nobody gonna tell me what to do but Jesus". This is a false and sinful attitude to have. God assigned your Pastor

to your local Church. While he is fulfilling this assignment you are commanded to obey him, for he must give an account of his actions to God. If you cannot obey the Pastor, move to another local Church. Too many Churches have had severe divisions in them because disobedient believers, usually men, became thorns in the Pastor's side. You do not have the right, under God's theocracy, to sow the seeds of discontent in your Church.

1 Timothy 3: 1-7 "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

The Bishop of the local Church is a man (***the husband of one wife***), ***not a woman***. We have already had this discussion in full detail in study twelve, so this statement should not surprise you. God called men, from the Garden and through today, to fulfill the leadership positions in home, society, and Church. Women were not designed for this role, and stand in opposition to God's calling if they attempt to do so. The other qualifications of the Bishop are fully explained in our verses above. He should be a level headed, mature Christian man (***Not a novice***) who has shown, in his life, the calling to leadership (***One that ruleth well his own house***). He should have a good reputation of honesty and integrity (***he must have a good report of them which are without***) in all his business dealings. He should be a good example to his flock, not a hindrance to their growth.

1 Timothy 3:10-13 "And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have

used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The Greek for Deacon is DIAKONOS, which literally means "servant, attendant, helper". The Deacons are a group of men (*the husbands of one wife*) in the local Church that are ordained to help the Bishop fulfill his duties to the flock. Deacons are *not co-rulers* with the Pastor, but are his right hand men. Too many Churches have had divisions started because the Deacons sought to over rule the direction of the Bishop. Just as with the Bishop, Deacons should have shown a clear outward sign of their calling to leadership (*ruling their children and their own houses well*). They should have good moral reputations, and be known as honest business men. They should be examples to the Church, not anchors around the Pastor's neck.

The offices of the Bishop and Deacon work hand in hand in the local Church to help the Body of Christ grow. The Deacons do not *demand* that the Pastor follow their advise; they merely advise, and trust that the Pastor will do God's best for the flock. Both offices are vitally necessary for the leadership of the Church, and neither should abandon or weigh down the other.

Conclusion

Many of the woes that the family and the Church face today are a direct result of Christian men who refuse to behave as God has decreed. Men who have allowed pettiness and a desire for power to corrupt their actions, causing a negative impact on these God given institutions. It is time that we, as Christian men, started to live the calling that God has given us. We can only do this when we begin to hold our Bibles in the same regard that we hold our fishing poles, our golf clubs, or our football games. Inactivity among the male population of the Church has sent the wrong signals to society and to our spouses. God give us the strength of will to turn this tide by repenting. It is significant that only once in Scripture a woman was ordained by God to rule men. This is found in the case of Deborah, a Judge of Israel. Just prior to her commission the Bible tells us:

Judges 4:1-4 "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel. And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time."

Your calling, Christian men, is to lead with all dignity and godliness as God has called you. You do not need an organization like the Promise Keepers to do this. You only need heed and apply the Word of God to your hearts.

Return to the Systematic Theology [Table of Contents](#)

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Return to the beginning of this study!



Return to DIDASKALOS MAIN MENU

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Systematic Theology

STUDY FOURTEEN, Part One

Dispensational Theology

Mankind From Birth To Infinity

"One must point out that Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance; But if it is true, of infinite importance.." (C.S. Lewis)

The Seven Dispensations Of Time

Our Creator has dealt with mankind in periods of time or *dispensations*, each of these dispensations being fully illustrated in the Scripture. We want to take a look at these dispensations as they relate to man, because a proper understanding of Dispensational Theology is *imperative* to rightly dividing the Word of Truth, the Scripture.

Let me emphasize, I interpret dispensations as *periods of time in human history dispensed by God*. I do not consider isolated events, like the Ascension of Christ, to be a dispensation. The Ascension of Christ occurred just prior to the beginning of the Church Age in the Age of Israel (two different dispensations). As such, the ascension was *part of* the Age of Israel, but not a dispensation in itself.

Having laid the groundwork, let's look at these dispensations.

Dispensation Of Innocence

Genesis 1:31 "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

In the five days preceding the creation of man God created and, after each instance, declared that what He had made was "good". There was no evil or confusion in the world, nothing to mar the beauty of creation. But God did not declare creation ***very good*** until after mankind was created. Why is that?

First, creation was ***not complete*** in God's plan until man was created. The Bible teaches that God is omniscient, so He knew when He put man in the Garden that Adam would fall. He knew this, and from eternity past elected the Son to one day bear the brunt of our sins. You might ask, "If God knew that we would fall, why even create us in the first place?". The only answer to this question is ***because He wanted to*** create us, because we were in His eternal plans concerning creation. Until man was made creation was only "good", but after our creation it was "***very good***".

Man was God's ***signature*** on the work of creation, the final flourish to let all who viewed it know who it's Author was. We were created in the image of God:

Genesis 1:27 "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

We are His living signatures, the part of creation made to be the expression of God on the earth. The Hebrew word for ***image*** is TSELEM, which means "something created as if from a mold, a reproduction that bears a likeness to the original". Adam was created sinless, sanctified, righteous in God's eyes. He reflected the holiness of God. Just as God has free-will, Adam was given a will totally free of restraints. Of course, man's will was under the control of his own appetites (like hunger and sleep) whereas God's will was unrestrained by such limits. Yet man's will had, of yet, come to the state where it was enslaved to any

outside sources (like sin).

God took Adam and placed him in the middle of a Garden full of luscious fruit, an infinite variety of things to eat and do. Man should have been happy with this, but the one thing he was restricted from taking (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), this he wanted.

Genesis 2: 8-17 "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates. And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The pact made between God and man in the Garden is known as the ***Edenic Covenant***. Man was given authority and use over all creation save one tree; he was forbidden to eat of the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil. One small exception should not have caused any problems. Man was given a glorious endowment, absolute freedom, a perfect wife, and simple guidelines for obedience. It should have been easy.

1 Corinthians 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Since God made the Edenic Covenant with Adam, Adam was the *Federal head* of creation. When this Federal head disobeyed and partook of the one forbidden fruit, not only he, but the entire creation plunged into the abyss of sin. Man's offspring followed in the same spiritual death, a will to disobey rather than to obey God. Man came into a state of being that John Calvin called *total depravity*. What do we mean by total depravity?

When we talk about total depravity, we do not mean *absolute* depravity. Total depravity means that everything man does prior to salvation is inherently sinful, whereas absolute depravity means that everything man does is externally evil.

Most men never reach a state of absolute depravity, though all unsaved men dwell in total depravity. Why did mankind as a whole enter a state of total depravity? When Adam fell, he introduced sin like a disease into the human race. This disease so permeates mankind that the Scripture states:

Psalms 14:3 "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Psalms 53:3 "Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Romans 3:12 "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Mankind has two possible responses outside of God: Either he does outwardly evil, breaking the laws of God and of man, or he inwardly does evil while outwardly appearing to be righteous and moral. Adam had a conscience that led him to act morally, and convicted him after he sinned, making him hide from God (Genesis 3.8). But the conscience of man can be *hardened by sin* until it reaches a point of absolute depravity. This is what triggered the Lord to bring a catastrophic flood on the whole earth in the days of Noah.

Noahic Dispensation

Genesis 9:1-3 "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."

When Noah came out of the Ark, the commission that God gave to him was nearly parallel to that which was given to Adam. Man was still given authority over creation, but now that authority was ***tempered by the sin*** that man introduced into creation. Whereas before man exercised dominion and ate of the Garden, now man exercises dominion and eats of both vegetables and animals.

Sin always brings a harsh tempering to whatever it touches. Adam ruled to animals in peace and tranquility before the fall, but Noah established rule by brute strength and fear. Adam ruled the animals and protected them from death, whereas Noah ruled the animals in order to feed from among them. Adam was to reproduce so that his progeny would rule the world in peace, whereas Noah reproduced so his progeny could rule the earth by force.

Both the Adamic and Noahic covenants were righteous, for they were enacted by a righteous God, but one was best and the other was second best. God often offers us the best, yet we reject it because of sin and have to settle for the second best. This is true in your life, it is true in mine. Had man accepted and clung to God's best (the Garden of Eden) we would have all prospered, yet we rejected the best for the second best (Noah).

Did the Noahic flood bring any lasting change on mankind? Well, man, through a hardened conscience, turned farther and farther away from God into absolute depravity. The Noahic flood was a chance to purge this depravity from humanity, to re-direct man's focus back to God. Yet later at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) God had to confuse man's language because, once more, man moved into

absolute depravity, seeking to usurp God. The Noahic flood was a surgical procedure by God to eradicate depravity like a cancer from among His creation, but He knew that this was, at best, a temporary solution. Sin cannot be controlled from the outside, but must be controlled from within the heart. Man *must be willing* to change for the change to be successful.

Abrahamic Dispensation

Genesis 12:1-3 "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

In order to effect permanent change in mankind God had to plant a seed in a people. This was not something that God just one day "discovered" to be true, but He knew it from the start. He chose a people to be stewards of His Word, a people from which one day He would incarnate His Son.

God called this people according to His provisions of Grace, not according to their talents or predisposition to righteousness. It is evident that Abram knew God, and was faithfully serving Him as best he knew how. Yet Abram shows no particular holiness that sets him out above his peers. Abram did have a remarkable *degree of faith*, for when God told him to get up and leave his home place, Abram did so without hesitation. Abram *believed*..

Genesis 22:16-18 "And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the

nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

Genesis 15:8-18 "And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:"

In Genesis 12.1-3 God called Abram and "pre-promised" the Abrahamic Covenant to come. Abram only had to get up and leave his homeland in order to inherit this blessing. Abram's response to the call conditioned when the blessings would start, yet he only had to give a *positive response* in order to be blessed.

The Abrahamic Covenant gave Abram personal, national, and spiritual blessings:

1. In Genesis 12.2 God promised Abram great *personal* blessings, blessings that were his alone. God promised *I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing*. God fulfilled this blessing literally, for among the three great religious movements of history (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), all three revere Abram as the father of that faith.
2. In Genesis 12.1 God promises *national* blessings to Abram. God promised

unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation.

God gave Abram's seed, Israel, possession of a promised land (Genesis 15.18-21). This promised land is ***two and a half the times*** the size of Ireland and Britain combined, over 300,000 square miles in diameter!

3. In Genesis 12.3 God promises Abram ***in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed***. Abram would bring blessing on ***all nations*** of the earth, whether Jew or Gentile. How could this be?

Through Abram there were two children born, one child of Promise, the other of the Flesh.

Romans 9:7-11 "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)"

Ishmael was the child born of the flesh, born because of Sarah's faithlessness, but Isaac was born from Sarah, the child of Promise. The child of promise was the line that God desired, a line that would one day be known as Israel, the promised nation, but the child Ishmael would also be a great nation, the Arab nations.

Genesis 21: 13-19 "And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of

heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink."

The entire world, whether Jew or Gentile, were blessed through the Abrahamic Covenant. The Jew and Arab were blessed with greatness as direct descendants of Abram. The remaining Gentile nations were blessed, for Jesus Christ came out of Israel to bless all who believe with eternal life. God truly honored His word when He promised, *And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.*

The Abrahamic Covenant was a conditional covenant in the sense that Abram had to obey the calling of God, but once granted was truly *unconditional*. In the Genesis 15:8-13 passage we see that God had Abram cut several animals in half, with the exception of the turtle dove and the pigeon. In the Old Testament when two people wanted to make a covenant with each other, they cut the animal in half and *both* walked between the two halves. This was to signify that both parties swore to the oath that they would not break the covenant until *death parted them*. Yet in the Abrahamic Covenant we see:

Genesis 15:17 "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."

.. only God walked between the two halves of the animals. When God walked between the two halves He never indicated that He expected Abram to do the same. God *alone promised*. The entire fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant was on God alone, not on Abram.

Jeremiah 31:35-37 "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

The promises of the Abrahamic Covenant are eternal, for they are totally established by God, irrevocable and without change. Those promises *will be fulfilled in their entirety*, regardless as to the obedience or disobedience of Israel. Israel's spiritual state conditions the time of the covenant's fulfillment, but does not ever negate the covenant which God, in Grace, gave to Abram.

Mosaic Dispensation

The moral indicator, the *conscience*, that God instilled in man was not sufficient to guide man in the way of God. During Adam's time the conscience was attended, but as man moved deeper and deeper into sin that same conscience could be hardened and denied. The conscience could lead man to God if it was unscarred by repeated acts of sin, but did not always lead to the True God. This was not a surprise to God, nor was the Law given to correct some inherent flaw in God's plans. God waited until the time was right, until man was in a position to want to know more about the True God, and at that moment gave the Law of God to mankind through Moses.

The *ten commandments* were the foundation of the Mosaic Covenant and Law:

Exodus 24:12 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them."

Exodus 20: 1-17 "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto

thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

These commandments were given to the nation Israel to guard, protect, and **obey**. The commandments were based on two absolute concepts of behavior. First, the commandments listed the duties of *man to the True God*. Specifically, we were to:

- Have no other God, nor swear fealty to any other God than the One True YHWH.
- Make no graven images of God to bow down to them. Graven images are statues, idols, either of man made or natural substances.
- To avoid taking God's name in vain. This does not mean just to use His name frivolously in conversation, but also to swear an oath by His name then refuse to abide by that oath.

Second, the commandments listed the duties of *man to man*. Specifically we were to:

- Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. In other words, take one day out of seven *off from work* in obedience to God.
- Honor our parents.
- Refuse to murder our fellow man.
- Refuse to commit adultery, illicit sex outside of marriage.
- Refuse to steal from one another.
- Refuse to lie to one another, speak only the truth.
- Never covet another man's possessions.

Jesus recognized the two-fold focus of the Law when He said:

Matthew 22:36-40 "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

The ten commandments all boil down to one point: *love*. Love God, love your neighbor. Treat both God and your neighbor the way you would want to be treated. The righteousness of God is only reflected from our lives when we exercise love both upward and outward, both Godward and manward.

Though the Law was given to Israel, it was issued to all mankind. Israel became *stewards* of the Law, but all were to follow its tenets. God established several things when He gave the Law to Moses.

First, man was given a *definite guideline* by which he was to live his life. This took away our ability to say, "Well, I just never knew". This guideline not only covered the moral codes, but also enacted dietary and sacramental/ religious codes.

Second, the Law was so stringent that it soon became evident that *no one* could enter Heaven by following it. God's righteousness was so far above that which we, on our own, could attain that it became evident that a Saviour would have to come, or else we would be hopelessly lost.

Third, the Law established governmental codes that helped form the theocracy of Israel. Before the Law Israel was formed along lines of tribal authority, but after the Law Israel had a more cohesive governing body.

The Law, though long lived, was only temporary, only maintained until the coming of the Messiah. The Bible teaches us:

Galatians 3:23-25 "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Just as God waited until the right time to send us the Mosaic Law, He waited until just the right time to send us Jesus Christ. We had to see the need for the Law before we could receive it, and had to see our failures highlighted by the Law until we could receive Christ. Thank God for the Law, and thank Him that we who believe are no longer under it's rigid code but now under the salvation that only comes by faith in Christ Jesus.

Dispensation of Grace

John 6:29-35 "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the

true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

John 6:47-50 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die."

With the coming of Jesus a new era in man's history was revealed. The satisfaction of Christ (the fact that God was satisfied with the atonement He made for our sins) made God's Grace available to all mankind. Our relationship with God (vertical relationship) and with man (horizontal relationship) changed. These changes were *radical*, unprecedented in human history:

- In our vertical relationship (Godward), we were given *one commandment* to replace the many requirements of the Mosaic Law: "Love the Lord Our God with all our heart and mind".
- In our horizontal relationships (manward) we were given a simple command: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself. Treat him or her as you would be treated".
- Since God loved us, we could come to understand that *we have worth*, that we must love our own selves. No person should hate or put themselves down .. lift yourself up by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- To he or she who believes, God now is able to look at each believer and accept them as His *adopted children*. God's attitude changed because of the satisfaction of Christ. Or perhaps better, we changed because of what Christ did for us. Since we are "blood washed" we are no longer viewed as sinners fit only for His vengeance, but children of the King fit *only for Grace*.

These horizontal and vertical relationships only change when each one of us accept Christ as Saviour. This change makes all the difference. Contrary to the

sentimental songs of Christmas, there will never be "peace on earth and goodwill" to all men until the work of Christ is accepted by faith.

I had a discussion with a young Christian the other day who told me that once you're saved, nothing else really matters. Not Biblical truth - nothing. This is a foolish and shallow position to take, but one echoed by many people who write me. Several have written me to say "What does all this matter, and why devote a site to Bible materials. If we're all saved, then what else matters?". Yet salvation is more than just a "saved then forget it" proposition. At the moment of salvation the new Christian *instantly* receives multiple blessings from God. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer called these real but non experiential blessings "The Benefits of Grace". These benefits are:

- We enter the Eternal Plan of God
 - We are Foreknown: Acts 2.23; Romans 8.29; 1 Peter 1.2
 - We are Elected: Romans 8.33; Colossians 3.12; 1 Thessalonians 1.4; Titus 1.1; 1 Peter 1.2
 - We are Predestinated: Romans 8.29-30; Ephesians 1.5, 11
 - We are Chosen: Matthew 22.14; 1 Peter 2.4
 - We are Called: 1 Thessalonians 5.24
- The believer is reconciled:
 - By God: 2 Corinthians 5.18-19; Colossians 1.20
 - To God: Romans 5.10; 2 Corinthians 5.20; Ephesians 2.14-17
- The believer is Redeemed: Romans 3.24; Colossians 1.14; 1 Peter 1.18
- The penalty of sin is removed: John 3.18; 5.24; Romans 8.1
- We are under Propitiation: Romans 3.24-26; 1 John 2.2
- All our personal sin is canceled in God's eyes: Romans 4.25; Ephesians 1.7; 1 Peter 2.24
- We are dead to our Old Sin Nature:
 - The believer is crucified with Christ: Romans 6.6; Galatians 2.20
 - The believer is dead with Christ: Romans 6.8; Colossians 3.3; 1 Peter 2.24
 - We are buried with Christ: Romans 6.4; Colossians 2.12

- We are raised with Christ: Romans 6.4; Colossians 3.1
- The believer is freed from the Mosaic Law:
 - We are dead to the Law: Romans 7.4
 - We are delivered from the Law: Romans 6.14; 7.6; 2 Corinthians 3.11; Galatians 3.25
- The believer is regenerated, Born of God: John 13.10; 1 Corinthians 6.11; Titus 3.5
 - We are "born again": John 3.7; 1 Peter 1.23
 - We are children of God: Galatians 3.26
 - We are sons of God: John 1.12; 2 Corinthians 6.18; 1 John 3.2
 - We are new creations in Christ: 2 Corinthians 5.17; Galatians 6.15; Ephesians 2.10
 - We are adopted as adult sons: Romans 8.15, 23; Ephesians 1.5
- God imputes or bestows righteousness on us: Ephesians 1.6; 1 Peter 2.5
 - We are made righteous in God's eyes: Romans 3.22; 1 Corinthians 1.30; 2 Corinthians 5.21; Phillipians 3.9
 - We are *positionally* Sanctified, that is, in God's eyes we are "set apart": 1 Corinthians 1.30; 6.11
 - We are *perfected* forever in His sight: Hebrews 10.14
 - We become qualified to enter Heaven: Colossians 1.12
- The believer is Justified: Romans 3.24; 5.1, 9; 8.30; 1 Corinthians 6.11; Titus 3.7
- We are forgiven *all* trespasses: Ephesians 1.7; 4.32; Colossians 1.14; 2.13; 3.13
- We are brought into Heavenly citizenship: Luke 10.20; Ephesians 2.13, 19; Phillipians 3.20
- The believer is delivered from the kingdom of Satan: Colossians 1.13; 2.15
- We are transferred into God's kingdom: Colossians 1.13
- The Christians is given a secure foundation: 1 Corinthians 3.11; 10.4; Ephesians 2.20
- We are a gift from God the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ: John 10.29; 17.2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24
- The believer is delivered from the power of the Old Sin Nature: Romans

- 2.29; Phillipians 3.3; Colossians 2.11
- We are appointed priests unto God:
 - This is a *holy* priesthood: 1 Peter 2.5
 - This is also a *royal* priesthood: 1 Peter 2.9; Revelation 1.6
 - We are under the care of God as an elect race: Titus 2.14; 1 Peter 2.9
 - We are given access to God: Romans 5.2; Ephesians 2.18; Hebrews 4.14, 16; 10.19-20
 - We become God's inheritance: Ephesians 1.18
 - We become beneficiaries of Heaven: Romans 8.17; Ephesians 1.14; Colossians 3.24; Hebrews 9.15; 1 Peter 1.4
 - We are placed within the *superior care* of God: Romans 5.9-10
 - We are objects of His love: Ephesians 2.4; 5.2
 - We are objects of His Grace: Ephesians 2.8-9; Romans 5.2; 1 Peter 1.5; John 17.18; Ephesians 4.7; Titus 2.12
 - We are given a new position: Ephesians 2.6
 - The believer is a partner with Christ in life: Colossians 3.4
 - The believer is a partner with Christ in service: 1 Corinthians 1.9
 - We become workers together with God: 1 Corinthians 3.9; 2 Corinthians 6.1
 - Each believer is a minister of the New Testament: 2 Corinthians 3.6
 - We are ambassadors for Christ: 2 Corinthians 5.20
 - We become living epistles: 2 Corinthians 3.3
 - We are ministers of God: 2 Corinthians 6.4
 - The believer is a recipient of Eternal Life: John 3.15; 10.28; 20.31; 1 John 5.11-12
 - We are members of the family and household of God: Galatians 6.10; Ephesians 2.19
 - We become the light in the Lord: Ephesians 5.8; 1 Thessalonians 5.4
 - We are united to the Trinity:
 - In God the Father: 1 Thessalonians 1.1; Ephesians 4.6
 - In God the Son: 1 Corinthians 12.13; John 15.5; Ephesians 2.21-22; 1 Peter 2.5; John 10.27-29; Ephesians 5.25-27; 1 Peter 2.9; 2 Corinthians 5.17

- In God the Holy Spirit: Romans 8.9, 16
- We are recipients of the ministries of the Spirit:
 - The believer is born of the Spirit: John 3.6
 - The believer is baptized with the Spirit: Acts 1.5; 1 Corinthians 12.13
 - The believer is indwelt by the Spirit: John 7.39; Romans 5.5, 8.9; 1 Corinthians 3.16; 6.19; Galatians 4.6; 1 John 3.24
 - The believer is sealed by the Spirit: 2 Corinthians 1.22; Ephesians 4.30
 - The believer is given Spiritual Gifts: 1 Corinthians 12.11, 27-31; 13.1-2
- We are guaranteed to receive Glorification: Romans 8.30
- We are completed in Christ: Colossians 2.10
- We become possessors of every spiritual blessing: Ephesians 1.3
- Unlike the spiritually dead, we are given a functioning human spirit: Romans 8.16; 1 Corinthians 2.12; 2 Corinthians 7.13; 1 Thessalonians 5.23
- Finally, all scarring is removed from the soul of the believer: Isaiah 43.25; 44.22

So salvation is not just a "one time and it's done" proposition, but a momentous work that literally changes the life of the new believer. If you accept Christ as Saviour and yet see no outward change in your life, then you have not received the benefits of salvation. And if you haven't received the benefits of salvation, then you are yet dead in your sins!

Click on the link below to go to the second part of this study. God Bless!

Go to [Part Two](#) of this Study!

Return to the Systematic Theology [Table of Contents](#)

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Return to the beginning of this study!

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Systematic Theology

STUDY FIFTEEN (Part 1)

Of Repentance and Water Baptism

Can Our Works Secure Our Salvation?

Repentance

There are two errors in the modern day evangelist's idea of Biblical Repentance. When we think of repentance we associate weeping or some other display of emotion accompanying Godly repentance. Yet this is a mis-conception. Emotional displays *may accompany* true Godly repentance unto salvation, but do not necessarily have to.

There are eight original language words used in our Bible, each rendered as the English word "repent":

1. NACHAM (Hebrew), meaning "to sigh, to breath strongly, to be sorry for".
2. SHUWB (Hebrew), meaning "to turn back or change one's mind".
3. NOCHAM (Hebrew), meaning "to regret".
4. NICHUM (Hebrew), meaning "to have compassion on, to feel pity for someone or something".
5. METANOEEO (Greek), meaning "to change one's mind for the better, to change one's attitude toward (sin)".
6. METAMELOMAI (Greek), meaning "to regret the consequences of an

action, but not the cause. Human sorry for poor behavior without intent to undo the wrong".

7. METANOIA (Greek), meaning "to change the attitude toward an action and its cause. Godly sorrow".
8. AMETAMELETOS (Greek), meaning "a heart of disbelief, unwilling to repent".

There are only two words amongst all of these that characterize repentance unto salvation, the Hebrew SHUWB and the Greek METANOIA. Both words emphasize *changing one's mind* from one thing (the world) to another (Jesus Christ). Though the words are not divorced from emotion, they do not imply that emotion *must be exercised* in order for the action to be effective. People are different. Some people are predisposed to emotion (as I am), whereas others show very little outward emotion. The emotionally constrained believer is not less saved than the emotional believer; their repentance is just as effective as any. Godly saving repentance is not dependent on an outward display of emotion, though such a display may be entirely natural for that particular person.

The second error that the modern evangelist falls into is the belief that *believing* and *repentance* are one in the same. This is far from the truth. When you repent you turn from one situation to turn toward another. Belief in the Godly sense means that that which you turn to is Jesus Christ. You can repent your actions, change your lifestyle, and turn toward the wrong thing in belief. Many people repent their lifestyles and turn to Yoga, Buddha, New Age Philosophies, Spirit Worship, Wicca, Positive Thinking, or Charismatic Emotionalism. None of these (or any one of a thousand other belief systems) will bring a person into a Biblically Saved state. You must repent *and* believe to be saved, but is important that the second element (believe) be directed toward the right object of faith (Jesus). If not, repentance is ineffective.

When we preach the Gospel we should refrain from making the statement: "You must make Christ the Lord of Your Life". To tell a heathen that he must make Christ the Lord of his life is ludicrous. This man is totally unable to do this for himself. The only thing any person can do is, like a drowning man reaching for a

lifesaver, reach out and cling to Christ as Savior. *After* salvation we work on making Christ Lord of our lives. Before salvation all we can do is reach out in faith, accepting Christ as our only hope.

Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Psalms 51:5 "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Romans 3:10-18 "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Another misleading call to faith is to "make a public profession of your faith". It is certain that each Christian should be willing to publicly confess that he has accepted Christ as Savior. Jesus said:

Luke 9:26 "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."

Yet we should be careful when including works within the call to salvation. We are, of our own power, unable to do anything to effect our salvation. Our works prior to salvation are all utterly worthless in God's sight. When we add the work of public profession to the call to salvation we give the impression that our works bring us to salvation. Nothing is farther from the truth. Salvation is a free gift from God, something accepted by *faith alone*.

The root of salvation is our inward faith. If there is a true inward faith to salvation, then there will be a *change in the nature* of the new believer. A new believer does not need to confess his salvation before other people in order to be saved, but he should be willing to do so *after salvation*. Ministers (myself included) often feel that their message was ineffective if people do not come forward or otherwise show some outward sign of change. It makes us feel that we were effective when we have the penitent sinner rise and walk the aisle to the altar. Yet, truth be told, this walk is *not* a necessary part of salvation. If a person accepts Christ as Savior in a deserted woodland he is still just as saved as if he did so in a church of a thousand. Our salvation does not rest on our actions, but on God's actions when we in faith ask.

Does Baptism Save?

"Believe and be baptized". From past years and through today, there have been ministers who felt that salvation demanded the act of water baptism on the part of the believer. Salvation was viewed as a two staged event: believe unto salvation, then be baptized to lock that salvation into place.

Much of the misunderstanding of water baptism's place in salvation has been caused by certain passages in the King James version of the Bible. Before I start, let me assure you that what follows is in no way an attack on the King James Version. If you have studied the materials on this site you'll notice that I use the King James version exclusively. I love the KJV, and was saved 23 years ago under it's preaching. Though I am not of the "King James only" camp, I understand their love for this text, for I love it too.

Even so, the King James text has, in many cases, departed from the original language texts. This was not done deliberately by the KJV translators.

(Encyclopaedia Britannica Micropaedia, volume 5, page 819) ".. an English translation of the Bible published in 1611 under the auspices of James I of England. Forty seven scholars worked individually and in groups, **utilizing**

previous English translations and texts in the original languages .."

The King James Version is *not solely* a direct Hebrew and Greek translation of the original manuscripts. The roots of the KJV stem all the way back to 1530 AD when the Tyndale translation of the original language Biblical manuscripts was made. The Tyndale translation was a good scholarly work, yet as time passed it was felt that there was a need to revise it's text. In 1535 AD the Cloverdale translation was made, then the Cloverdale translation was again revised in 1537 AD into the Matthew translation, which in turn was revised in 1539 AD into the Great Bible translation. The Great Bible translation was revised and updated between 1557 and 1560 AD into the Geneva Bible translation, which was in turn revised into the Bishop translation of 1568. The King James translators, though they used original language manuscripts in the translation, also used these *previous English translations* to guide them as they worked. The translators used the Bishop translated text when they felt it was accurate, and translated directly from the original texts *when they felt this was warranted*. The King James version was the best of eight English language Bibles translated to that date, and **"the new version was more faithful to the original languages of the Bible and more scholarly than any of it's predecessors (Britannica, Macropaedia, volume 2 page 891)"**.

But is it flawless?

Well, no, obviously not. Since 1611 some **5000** original language Biblical manuscripts have been discovered by archeologists making textual criticism of the Scriptures much more accurate. The number of texts the King James translators had to compare for textual accuracy was *very small* in comparison. So is the King James a good translation? Absolutely! Is it flawless? Absolutely not!

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

This passage seems to place *two requirements* on salvation: (1) repent, and (2) be baptized. This misunderstanding is caused by a mistranslation of the word ***and***

following the word **Repent** in the above text. The word rendered **and** is the Greek EIS, which should be rendered **causally** in this context. Properly rendered the text would read: **Repent, and because of this be baptized.**

The following scholars say of this verse:

" .. The metanoesate {repentance} demands the change of ethical disposition as the moral condition of being baptized, which directly and necessarily brings with it faith (Mark 1.15); the Aorist (repentance) denotes the immediate accomplishment (Acts 3.19; 8.22), which is conceived as the work of energetic resolution.. " (Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Acts of the Apostles, pg 66)

" ..the miserable absurdity of rendering metanoesate (repentance) by 'do penance', or understanding it as referring to a course of external rites, is well exposed by this passage - in which the internal change of heart and purpose is insisted on, to be testified by admission into the number of Christ's followers .." (Alford's Greek New Testament)

Matthew 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

Again, the King James renders EIS (translated here as **unto**) as purposive instead of causally, which would be the correct translation. The immediate context bears this out, as John the Baptist **only baptized** people who had **previously repented** (Matthew 3.6). The baptism was only an **outward sign** of what previously occurred (salvation). The passage should read:

"I indeed baptize you with water because of repentance .."

or

"I indeed baptize you with water because of your previous repentance .."

Says Dr Mantley (The Causal Use of EIS In The New Testament, Journal of Biblical Literacy, LXX, part 1, 1951):

"Confirmatory of the necessity of repentance *before baptism*, and consequently also of a causal translation for EIS in Matthew 3.11 and elsewhere is the expression found four times in the New Testament (Mark 1.4; Luke 3.3; Acts 13.24; 19.4) 'a baptism of repentance', which implies, since we have a genitive of description here, 'a baptism symbolic or expressive of repentance ..'"

"Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

This translation seems to give firsthand evidence of Baptismal Regeneration. Yet if we read the Book of Acts we know that Paul was *already saved* on the Damascus Road (Acts 9.1-17). This in itself points to the fact that this verse is mistranslated.

The mistranslation stems from the Greek compound word EPIKALESAMENOS, an Aorist Participle translated ***calling on*** in our Acts text. This cannot be a correct translation for the common action of the Aorist normally signifies antecedent action. The word should have been rendered, ***having called on the name of the Lord***. This corrected translation makes sense as Paul's salvation came long before his invitation to water baptism. Water Baptism is merely an outward testament of an inward change (salvation)

1 Peter 3:21 "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ."

.. not an integral key to salvation. A repentant believer accepts water baptism as a testimony to the change he has undergone. But an unrepentant heathen, if baptized, is only a wet unrepentant heathen.

John 3:5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Is the New Birth authored by the Holy Spirit and water baptism, or the Holy Spirit alone? If water baptism is a necessary factor in salvation then why did Jesus only *mention it once* in His talk with Nicodemus? If it is a necessary factor then Jesus would certainly have mentioned it several times to make sure that we understood it's importance. Yet only once?

The problem is, again, a mistranslated word. The word translated ***and*** in the context of ***of water and of the Spirit*** is the Greek conjunction KAI. When used as a connective conjunction it is translated "and", as we see above. But if translated ***ascensively*** it would best be rendered "even". The difference:

" .. Except a man be born of water even of the Spirit .."

The meaning of the text changes drastically when properly translated. Jesus was water as a ***symbolic reference*** to describe the Holy Spirit. This is not the first time the Bible uses a common earth element to describe the Spirit (and His ministry), for we can also read:

Matthew 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and (ascensive KAI = even) with fire:"

Luke 3:16 "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and (ascensive KAI = even) with fire:"

John described the ministry of the Holy Spirit, equating it with ***fire***. If KAI is not rendered ascensively then the verses make ***no sense***, for no believer is baptized with literal fire at the point of salvation. In the same way the ascensive KAI parallels the Holy Spirit (and His ministry) to water. The verse does not teach

water baptism as a necessary element for salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:29 "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

The translation of the Holy Scriptures has contributed to a lot of confusion within the Christian faith. Some denominations and Catholicism faith believe that this verse supports water baptism of a dead body in order that the recently departed soul can enter Heaven. Mormonism also supports this strange custom, based on this verse.

Imagine baptizing a dead body, believing that the departed soul will roam the nether world until this rite is satisfied! The Bible amply teaches that the soul immediately, on departing the body, is either face to face with God in Heaven or in Hell. There is no such thing as wandering between the two waiting for water baptism.

Again, this verse is mistranslated by one little word. The Greek HUPER, translated

baptized for the dead, should have been translated *causally*. If properly translated it would read:

"Else what shall they do which are baptized because of the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized because of the dead?"

Close relatives of dying Christians were, on seeing the demeanor of those about to depart (no fear, only joy at the idea that they would shortly see Jesus), becoming Christians themselves and submitting to water baptism. J. Vernon McGee tells a story that illustrates what Paul was talking about.

I'll See You Tomorrow! By – J. Vernon McGee

Years ago, a man with a large family lay dying. His children had been called

from the four corners of this country. All of them were Christians except the youngest boy. As they all gathered around the bedside, the father tried again to bring the youngest boy to Christ – but he would not come. The others had received Christ and were living creditable Christian lives in other communities.

Finally the father began with the oldest, and as he came by, he shook hands with him and said to him, “I’ll see you soon.” And he shook hands with the next one, a daughter, and said to her, “I’ll see you tomorrow.” Finally at the end of the line the youngest boy came to him. The father looked at him for a moment and tears came into his eyes as he said, “Son, good-bye.”

The boy asked, “Dad why do you say good-bye to me?” He replied, “Son I’ll never see you again. If you continue to reject Jesus Christ as you’ve been rejecting Him, you are spiritually dead, a separation from God.”

The boy broke down, knelt at his father's bedside, and received Christ as his Saviour.

This boy was baptized *because of* the dead, because of the demeanor of his dying father. This is all that Paul was saying: Many were coming to Christ when they saw their loved ones depart this life in joy.

Mark 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The verse alone, as translated, gives an indication that it is mistranslated. In the first part of the verse it seems to be saying that belief PLUS water baptism leads to salvation, and in the second part of the verse ONLY unbelief leads to damnation. If water baptism (or the lack of it) was a necessary element in salvation then the last part of the verse should have read "he that believeth not and is not baptized shall be damned".

The whole problem of poor uniformity in this verse is solved when we look at the

Greek EIS, translated ***believeth and is baptized***. EIS should have been translated ***causally***, which would correctly read as:

"He that believeth and because of this is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Salvation is a work entirely of God, needing none of our efforts to make it secure. The self righteous like to add to God's program, in pride putting it out of the reach of the common man. Yet God's Plan of Salvation, unlike our misconceptions, is pure. A free gift of Eternal Life to ***whosoever will*** accept it. Have You?

Return to the Systematic Theology [Table of Contents](#)
Continue to [Part 2](#) Of This Study

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Return to the beginning of this study!



Return to DIDASKALOS MAIN MENU

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Systematic Theology

ADDENDUM

Why Should I Study The Scriptures Systematically?

Romans 6:17 "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

Systematic Theology is the *human side* of Biblical interpretation. It is a system of *rightly dividing* the Scriptures to determine their truths, then to apply these truths to our lives. Or as the great theologian Charles Hodge defines it:

"The exhibition of the fact of Scripture in proper order and relation with the principle or general clues involved in the facts themselves, which pervade and harmonize the whole."

The idea behind Systematic Theology is to study the Bible in such a way that the believer can know God, know himself, and put this knowledge of God and self into constructive practice. You are *not* what you eat, but you *are* what you believe. Every Christian has a series of beliefs that he structures his Christian walk after. If these foundational beliefs are false then the Christian is patterning his life after a lie, not after the Word. The major reason Christianity often seems so crippled in America today is because so many Christians have become satisfied with the easy lie rather than the hard truth. We are content to chase ecstasies, to laugh and faint in the Spirit, to speak gibberish while the world looks on in dismay at the fools we seem to be. We chase apparitions, look for statues that sweat blood, look for manifestations of the virgin Mary, and wonder why our

Churches have become so ineffectual in the world today.

Harsh words? Perhaps, but true. A hundred years ago America would not have given the nod to mass abortion of the children, nor would its Churches have tolerated same sex marriages and other "alternate" lifestyles. Men have always been sinners, but when the Church forgets the Word and modifies its stance to become acceptable to the world, then the sin becomes more pronounced in society.

It is true that the Christian is saved, washed by the sacrifice of the Cross. But God expects more of us. He wants us to understand Him, to know and apply the truths that He has set out for us in His Word. Correctly studying God's Word is therefore imperative for the believer, not an option to be discarded when it ruffles our feathers.

Systematic Study of God's Word is imperative, yet how can we, as finite beings, hope to understand this Book which has filled libraries with its teaching? We are fallible, prone to sin. How can we study without error creeping in? Jesus provided what we need:

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

God the Son, Jesus Christ, sent the Holy Spirit to indwell each and every one of us who believe. This ***Spirit of truth*** came, not to help us have emotional ecstasies in Church, but to help guide us as we ***study God's Word***. Who can reveal the truths of God's Word better than God Himself?

Deuteronomy 29:29 "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Systematic Theology is the human side in Bible study, whereas the Holy Spirit guiding us (theologically called "Illumination") is the Divine side in our search for the truth. The Spirit enlightens the mind of the believer, ***teach(ing) you all things***, so that we can understand and apply what we study. This work of the Spirit's Illumination goes hand in hand with our study of the Word. If either element is missing, then the truth of the Word is in jeopardy.

To learn about God does not require a ***theological degree***, but does require that each and every one of us ***submit*** ourselves to the Spirit as we ***faithfully study*** the Word. If you want to grow in God, to reach the spiritual heights that God has planned for your life, you must be consistent in studying His Word and in heeding the Spirit. Nothing else will do. Nothing else ***can*** do.

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

If you want to be ***perfect***, TELEIOO, ***mature*** in service to God, then you must submit to studying the Bible and the leading of the Spirit. No other option is left open to us who believe.

Return to the Systematic Theology [Table of Contents](#)

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Return to the beginning of this study!



Return to DIDASKALOS MAIN MENU



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- [Doctrinal Statement](#)
- [Contributors](#)

[Resume](#)

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Deacons are to be men of character that others look up to and admire. They are to men of their word, and someone you can count on to accomplish the tasks that are put before them. They are to be Spirit control men who love the Lord more than they love the world and the things in this world. They believe God's Word is true when it says, "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). They are called Christians, because that is the word which best describes their character. They are not perfect men, but men who are running the Christian life to win regardless of the obstacles that they encounter. If they stumble, they get up and resume the race. When they see a need, they help without being asked to. They are more than just servants of the

[Eastview Baptist Church](#)

church, they are servants of the King.

[Other Works by Pastor Willmouthe](#)

... from Doctor Joseph "Mike" Willmouthe's Sermon: ["The High Calling of Deacons"](#)

July 25

This Gospel of Christ is the same Gospel I preach, that any Christian minister preaches. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Christ was buried in a tomb, and on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures. He was seen by Peter, then of all the Apostles, and then of five hundred brethren in the Lord. Then He was seen of James, then of all the Apostles (this being the eleven faithful disciples, minus Judas – who killed himself).

This is the Gospel. This is the “good news” that Jesus Christ saves. Yet, even having acknowledged the truth that Jesus Christ died, and rose again, and that by believing on Him I have eternal life – do I truly understand what it means when I say “Jesus saves”? What did the work of Christ accomplish, exactly accomplish, when I believed on Him? Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the past President of Dallas Theological Seminary, stated:

In turning to the Scriptures to discover what it has pleased God to reveal of His saving work in the individual at the instant he believes, it will be found that there are at least thirty-three distinct positions into which such an one is instantly brought by the sufficient operation of the infinite God. All of these transformations are superhuman, and, taken together, form that part of salvation which is already the portion of every one who has believed.

Why do we study these things? Because, Beloved, if a person fails to understand what Christ has done for him – what was accomplished by our Savior – then that person has no capacity for life. Today many Christians walk in this life as if they are no better endowed than the unbeliever in their pathway. This is not true. Christians are well endowed from the moment of their salvation to accomplish that which Christ has commissioned them to do. It is a sad fact that many Christians have wandered away from the life of God in Christ because they have failed to understand their position in our Father's Kingdom.

[Excerpt from Pastor David's "The Benefits of Salvation, Part 1"](#)

[Other Works by Pastor David](#)

August 13

This was God's expressed judgment on the lack of fire in one of the Seven Churches, and it is His indictment against individual Christians for the fatal want of sacred zeal. In prayer, fire is the motive power. Religious principles which do not emerge in flame, have neither force nor effect. Flame is the wing on which faith ascends; fervency is the soul of prayer. It was the "fervent, effectual prayer" which availed much. Love is kindled in a flame, and ardency is its life. Flame is the air which true Christian experience breathes. It feeds on fire; it can withstand anything, rather than a feeble flame; and it dies, chilled and starved to its vitals, when the surrounding atmosphere is frigid or lukewarm.

True prayer, must be aflame. Christian life and character need to be all on fire. Lack of spiritual heat creates more infidelity than lack of faith. Not to be consumingly interested about the things of heaven, is not to be interested in them at all. The fiery souls are those who conquer in the day of battle, from whom the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and who take it by force. The citadel of God is taken only by those, who storm it in dreadful earnestness, who besiege it, with fiery, unabated zeal.

Nothing short of being red hot for God, can keep the glow of heaven in our hearts, these chilly days. The early Methodists had no heating apparatus in their churches. They declared that the flame in the pew and the fire in the pulpit must suffice to keep them warm. And we, of this hour, have need to have the live coal from God's altar and the consuming flame from heaven glowing in our hearts. This flame is not mental vehemence nor fleshy energy. It is Divine fire in the soul, intense, dross-consuming -- the very essence of the Spirit of God.

[Excerpt from E.M. Bound's "The Necessity of Prayer"](#)

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July 27

from [Matter of FAX](#)

by **Dr. Joe McKeever**

First Baptist Church of Kenner, Louisiana

A young minister asked a veteran pastor, " Was there ever a time in your ministry when you just wanted to quit?" The old-timer leaned back and thought for a moment and said, "Well, how many Mondays are there in forty years?"

This morning---Monday, as I write---I do not want to think about how to solve the Iraqi situation, how to deal with the energy problems of the Northeast, what to do about the West Virginia copycat killer, whether gays should have the right to marry, the Southern Decadence festival and attendant debaucheries that went on in our French Quarter this weekend, or college coaches who funnel money to their players then tell them to lie about it. I'll solve all of these issues tomorrow. Monday is for other things.

On Mondays, I need to rest my spirit. That surprises some people.

A relative of ours once told my mother (who has two preacher sons), "I wish my boys had become pastors so they would have good salaries and not have to work hard." Mom just listened and smiled. When she told me, I said, "You know, I grew up on the farm. I cleaned out stables and built fences and

August 20

plowed. In college, I worked at the train station, and after college, I worked in a cast iron pipe plant. But I have worked far harder as a pastor than I ever did in those jobs. You may quote me on this."

"There's someone out in The shed!" Mary nudged her husband awake. Todd swung himself out of bed, threw open The curtains and peered into The darkness outside The window. Then as his view became clearer, he could make out The flitting beams of light through The windows of his back yard storage shed. Burglars! He reached for The bedside phone and called The police.

"There's someone breaking into my storage shed!" He told The dispatcher as he gave his address. "I've got some valuable tools and equipment in there!"

"Is there anyone in The shed?" The dispatcher asked.

"No, we're all in The house but you've got to send an officer out there!"

"We're shorthanded at The moment and I don't have anyone available. sir," The dispatcher told him. "Just lock your doors and stay in The house and I'll send someone as soon as I can."

Todd hung up and thought a minute, growing more frustrated and angry by The moment. Obviously, The police had different priorities than he did! Then he got an idea, and called again.

"I just called a minute ago about burglars in my storage shed and you said you couldn't send anyone because you didn't have anyone available." He told The dispatcher. "Well, you don't have to worry about sending anyone since I've taken care of The situation myself. I shot them."

He hung up and within a few seconds... " (from "The Right Call")

Excerpt From
Anne Adams new
[DUFFS](#) and
[Encounters With
God](#)

[Other Works
by Anne Adams](#)

July 9

I recently read a book that bears the title of my sermon, titled: Living Above Your Circumstances, by *Bob George*. Upon completion of the book, as I always do I record the date, and add my initials just inside the cover page. Sometimes I will add a comment along with the date and my initials. In this book, I wrote, *“Read on 5/22/03, while going through difficult circumstances at church. I thank the Holy Spirit for leading me to read this book.”*

This book, along-side the Word of God, with much prayer, has helped me through difficult days and although I have not yet fully arrived to the place I want to be, I am learning that one can live above one's circumstances.

In this message, based on Habbakuk 3:17-19, I will share with you three basic principles that have sustained me through difficult circumstances, and I believe that they will help you as well if you will make application of them to your life..

**Excerpt From Dr.
Benny Wood's
sermon:
Living Above Our
Circumstances**

[Other Works
by Pastor Woods](#)

August 1

Important Announcements

If you would like to post a link to this ministry - I would be more than honored! If you like, you can use the following image:

The logo for bibleteacher.org, featuring the text "bibleteacher.org" in a stylized, blue, 3D-effect font with a white outline and a drop shadow.

The image is under 10 kb in size. Merely right click on the image and save it to your system. God Bless!