

A Systematic Theology for the 21st Century – Vol 8 Soteriology

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Dr. Edward Rice

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# A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Vol 8 Soteriology

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# Preface

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a USAF retired systems engineer turned Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and armed with a staunch belief in the preserved accuracy of the inspired Scriptures, I praise the Lord that he



has provided me the unique opportunity to assemble “A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”

As a systems engineer for thirty years (since 1972), I focused on systems analysis. Systematic theology has intrigued me ever since my first Bible institute course in 1975. I have amassed multiple systematic theology books and never found one that is wholly Biblical. In 2013 my seminary work at Louisiana Baptist Theological Seminary, under Dr. Steven Pettey, assigned me to read and analyze six volumes of “Systematic Theology” by Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder and previous president of Dallas Theological Seminary. Initial critique of this neo-evangelical's voluminous, wordy, often unorganized work, answered the question, “Is there not a cause?” A Systematic Theology for the 21st Century is indeed a valid need. It cried out to be written and it was a work that I was privileged to endeavor.

God says he built man with an inner knowledge of the Creator's eternal power and Godhead. Further, God reveals from heaven, to every man, his wrath against all ungodliness. This true Light “*lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*” The Bible says the righteous God, The LORD of hosts, tries the reins and the heart of every man. The prophet Jeremiah writes of God, “*I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*”

The psalmist says, “*my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.*” With his tugs on the reins of your heart, you have come far in your studies, be sure that you have come to a knowledge and submissive acceptance of God's only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The beloved Apostle John wrote, “*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*”

Every Bible student is encouraged to follow through a list of Bible verses called by some the Romans road to heaven. The believing Bible student is encouraged to memorize them. That quintessential list of verses is John 3:16-19, 36, 5:24, Romans 3:10, 23, 5:8, 12, 18-19, 6:23, and 10:9-13. That last reference is God's formal acceptance policy for your receiving his free gift of salvation and eternal life. Got life? The beloved Apostle John writes, “*He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*” Selah! It is Hebrew for “go-figure”, and it intends that you pause, meditate, and consider what you just read.

A prolegomena for such a work as this is almost as great an undertaking as a work like this. While I add, modify and correct content in the volumes I must add, modify, and correct content in both the prolegomena and epilogue. As I face critique and correction I engage an ongoing struggle to capture in the right wording, to communicate in the right spirit, and to assemble in the proper prose what by intent captures the whole truth. As much as each of us is a work in progress, this prolegomena is a work in progress. The purpose here is to set out the justification and direction of the whole work, but as each of the other eleven volumes is completed this prolegomena should also contain a justification and summary of their individual accomplishments. The processes is spiraling toward a central point.

When I began work on my Ph.D. in 2014 I set a goal to finish this Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in a five year period. When I finished my Ph.D. in 2017, I reestablished the same goal. This year, after publishing at least a draft of all twelve volumes in

2019, the goal remains. My plea for critique and correction also remains the same. I prefer friendly and constructive critique, but have found the hostile ones to be enlightening and beneficial for rounding out a stronger defense of truth. Feel free to engage in this effort, the many inputs I have received have strengthened the cause.

There is a cause. I pray that this fully captures at least that.

## Chapter 1 Soteriology Introduction

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? Heb 2:3-4<sup>1</sup>*

There is no greater theme extending from Genesis to Revelation, in the Holy Bible, than that of so great salvation, or soteriology. “*Soterio*” is the Greek word for “*Salvation*”, and “*ology*” is a most thorough consideration of, a most thorough analysis of, a most thorough communication about a topic. It has been stated and defended in the section on Christology that the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest theme of the Bible. This section will effectively merge the doctrine of Christ and the doctrine of salvation to stand by that previous assertion, and still justify our assertion here that soteriology is the key theme. When one considers the salvation of man as the overspreading theme of the whole Bible, one finds every chapter, every verse and every line somehow interrelated to that theme. Such a task need not be daunting; it needs to be thorough, and it becomes a joyous revelation of God's grandest purpose.

Salvation necessitates three ingredients, a lost estate, a helplessness of, and a helplessness in, restoring that estate, and a savior who can restore the estate. Holy Scripture employs such a salvation on or in three perspectives, the lost estate of corporate mankind, the lost estate of a nation, Israel, and the lost estate of the individual. Consequently, salvation must needs be explored in all three ingredients, in all three perspectives. Thirdly, one must consider that the salvation of an individual, is not always focused on man's lost eternal soul; King David, for example, asked for the

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1 Holy Bible.

salvation of his integrity, the salvation of his peace of mind, and the salvation of his kingdom, et al. An estate lost and in need of salvation, thus, may be a condition, a status, or a rank. It may be one's fortune, one's prosperity, or one's possessions. The word *estate* is often used in relation to an interest or ownership in land or property. Our main focus for salvation will be on man's lost estate with God, but there are other lost estates that need a savior. It behooves the Bible student to keep in focus what estate is in context for each scripture. It is marvelous that there may be many lost estates under consideration, but there is only one Saviour.

There are detractors that pull away from a pure Biblical soteriology. Alas the Apostle Paul twice words God's despise of such detractors in Galatians 1:8-9, "*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*" That is pretty straight forward and powerful, but still it needs to find relevance in what man and Satan have done to this doctrine. The lead detractors then went on to be the lead throughout and it behooves the Bible student to be conscious of their naysaying right up front.

No one words a more clear portrayal of this hallmark of error than does F. W. Grant in his aged book "*The Prophetic History of the Church*"<sup>2</sup>. In Christ's prophetic history of the church, given in Revelation 2 and 3, the church, and ergo the gospel message of salvation, and ergo soteriology, got muddled back into Judaism

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2 Grant, F. W., "*The Prophetic History of the Church*", NEW YORK LOIZEAUX BROTHERS, 1910, First Edition, 1902, Seventh Printing, 1955, Fredrick William Grant (1834 Putney London, 1902 Plainfield New Jersey), available at <http://plymouthbrethren.org/series/6114> and [www.gsbaptistchurch.com/theology/grant\\_prophetic\\_history\\_church.pdf](http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/theology/grant_prophetic_history_church.pdf) and [www.brethrenarchive.org/people/fw-grant/pamphlets/the-prophetic-history-of-the-church/](http://www.brethrenarchive.org/people/fw-grant/pamphlets/the-prophetic-history-of-the-church/). [When Henry Allen Ironside (1876 Toronto Canada, 1951 New Zealand) writes in his 100 year old book, "*Revelation: An Ironside Expository Commentary*", that, "On the seven churches, I especially commend F. Grant's 120 year old book", it behooves one to secure a copy; the full title being, "*The Prophetic History of the Church – Some Evils Which Afflict Christendom and Their Remedy, as Depicted by The Lord's Own Words to the Seven Churches (Rev. ii. and iii.)*." ].

with its works of the law, and its priestcraft and “clerisy”. That is what the Apostle Paul was dealing with in Galatia, that is to be hated and accursed, and that is clarified well by Dr. Grant.

In his first lecture, “Spiritual Decline and the Judaizing of the Church”, Grant skillfully describes this Judaizing of Christianity in a way that clarifies the extreme difference between the dispensation of law and grace, i.e. the distinguishing marks of salvation by works vs salvation by grace. It is well worth examining that clarification given below:

Now, let us mark, there is a difference between the Jewish and the Christian words. The word for the New Testament assembly, "ecclesia," is derived from two words meaning "called out." It is not merely a gathering; it is a gathering of people who are distinctly "called out" from others. On the other hand, "synagogue" is a mere "gathering together." It is no gathering out; and this very precisely distinguishes the Jewish from the Christian gathering.

Now in order to see what that means, let us look briefly at what Judaism was. It was a probationary system, in which God was trying man, to see if He could get anything out of him that He could accept - trying man, to see if, by any assistance He could give him, he could by any possibility make out a righteousness for himself, and stand before Him on the basis of his own doings. In Judaism God gave man the law as the measure of obedience which He required, in order that he might see His face and live. But he never did see God's face, and never could see it, on those terms. The moment you see what the law is, you cannot have any doubt that it must effectually exclude man from God's presence forever. Everybody at once will say: "If I have got to love God with all my heart and mind and strength, and my neighbour as myself, I have not done it, do not do it, and can not do it." Now, if these are the terms upon which man is to stand before God by his own work, then it is absolutely impossible for a man to come into His

presence in that way. He is certainly excluded; and that is exactly what the law was given for. Says the apostle: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. iii. 19). That was not merely the actual effect of it, but it was the designed effect of it. Its sentence says, "There is none righteous; no, not one."

That sentence was the end of the trial - the end of man's probation. It is the end of the trial when sentence is given. The apostle points out to the Jews that sentence had now been given - given by their own law. The trial of man as to this was ended. It is no use for a moment speaking as if the trial were going on, after sentence has been given. "There is none righteous" - Abraham or Moses, for that matter. The trial is over, the sentence is given, and that is the issue of the law - its foreseen and designed issue - every mouth stopped, and man guilty. I know it is very hard for us to receive this, the law being God's holy, good and righteous law. But the truth is, that the very issue of it as a trial lay in this, that God was taking man up on his own ground. If you take all the forms of religion everywhere, you will find, some way or other, they are law-keeping - doing something in order to live. It is the universal principle of what is called "natural religion" - it is the principle of works for acceptance with God; and no wit or wisdom of man has been able to devise another way. That is exactly what Scripture says as to the law. It was the "principles" or "elements of the world." It is what the world everywhere recognizes and acts upon, and rightly as between man and man. Laws are necessary to keep the world in any tolerable condition. We could not live but for them. Now what man finds so necessary in this way he naturally takes up as the principle between God and himself, and even there he is in measure right. The trouble is, he does not know, and would not like to believe, that on that ground he is simply lost, and nothing else; and thus he would bring the measure of what

is required down to what he believes to be the measure of his ability, and thus evade the righteous and inevitable sentence.

The law, then, chimes in with the natural thoughts of man's heart everywhere. But he finds it hard to realize that God gave that law simply for the purpose of condemning; for he does not know the heart of God or the resources of His love; and if the law condemns, he sees nothing beyond. All his effort is therefore to escape judgment; but this he cannot, for God is holy and cannot pare down His law; and, on the other hand, no paring down will suffice to give man assurance before God. If sin be a matter of judgment with God, how can man appear before Him with it? The truth is, he is lost; but he will not face the truth. There was one thing, therefore, characteristic of Judaism, as there is one thing characteristic of Christianity. In Judaism it was characteristic that God was hidden; while the one thing characteristic of Christianity is, that God is revealed. "The Lord has said that He would dwell in thick darkness," says Solomon. "God is in the light," says the apostle. "No man hath seen God at any time: the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." "He that hath seen Me," says the Son Himself, "hath seen the Father." Judaism and Christianity are thus in essential contrast. The unrent veil, the way into the holiest not made manifest, God essentially unknown - that is Judaism; and the very names by which God is called show this: He is the Almighty, the Eternal, (perhaps the nearest interpretation of Jehovah,) the Highest. None of these names tell me His heart. The Almighty! How will He use His power? Eternity, Sovereignty-all these are not Himself. But the Son, His well-beloved, comes into the scene-becomes a Man - to be near to man - and He reveals the Father. There I know Himself.

At the second giving of the law, when, together with law, God spoke of mercy, a gleam of the glory lighted up Moses' face; still it was Jehovah only who appeared. And

while it is true He declares Himself as "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," He has to add, (because it was still law, which the tables of stone, word for word, again contained,) "and that will by no means clear the guilty." But then, what hope for man, who surely is that? Although God could thus say, as to the wicked man, as He does in Ezekiel, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive," still the unrelaxed measure there is still law. Mercy might deal with his past sins and give him a new beginning, but the new leaf he turned over, could he keep it unblotted? Could he ever bring to God the unblotted leaf which He required? Alas, never; he never could save his soul. And the law in its mildest form only made man's deep depravity the more apparent. It was what the apostle calls it, "the ministration of death," and the "ministration of condemnation." And therefore Moses, at the mount, still only saw God's back parts, and not His face. Therefore, also, the unrent veil through all the days of Judaism still showed that "the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest." What was made manifest was but the uselessness of all man's efforts to see God and live.

Now as to the essential characteristic of Christianity.

First. It was not the modification of law: it did not come to make that still milder. On the contrary, the Christian revelation maintains the law in its utmost rigor. It is a Christian apostle who insists that "if a man keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James ii. 10). And it is another apostle who tells us that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them"(Gal. iii. 10).

Christianity maintains, then, not abrogates, the righteous condemnation of all upon that ground - upon the ground of

works of any kind, that is; for every point of man's duty is covered by the law. Sentence has been given; the trial of man is ended. He is "ungodly;" and more, he is "without strength" too. Nothing in the way of goodness or righteousness can be expected from him. What, then, remains? Why, God can show out Himself. He could not do it as long as the trial was going on. Man would naturally have said, I have performed my part of the agreement; I have kept the covenant. Therefore God had to keep His face veiled to man continually. But as soon as there was no doubt at all that man never could make his way in, never could stand before God at all, then, - at the time when man's sin had reached its height, when the Son of God hung dead upon the cross man had given Him, when the carnal mind had shown out thus its enmity against God in the completest way, - God's own hand rent the veil from top to bottom; and by that precious bloodshedding there was a way made to go in to God, and for God, on the other hand, to come out to meet man. Yes, a Man indeed found His way into the presence of God, and sat down there by virtue of His work; but it was the Man, God's fellow (Zech. xiii. 7). And the way by which He entered was henceforth a way of access, consecrated and made safe for sinners by the virtue of His precious blood.

That is what characterizes Christianity. God has come in with His grace in a way independent of man's works altogether. There is no more any mixture allowed or possible. As the apostle says, "If it be of grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. xi. 6). There is nothing more emphatic than that: you cannot mix these two principles. The gospel of Christianity is grace. God is not requiring from man except that he receive what He offers. He is not asking for righteousness; He is "ministering" it. The sinners exposed and condemned by the law are by the gospel welcomed and set at rest. He who by law could not clear the guilty, by the work of His Son justifies the ungodly. It is God that justifieth. Because

"Christ died for the ungodly," He "justifies the ungodly." We are able, then, by the blood of Christ, to go right into God's presence and see Him face to face. And God who was behind the veil and "in thick darkness," is, as the apostle John says, "in the light." And that glory out of which we were once shut, becomes our permanent and peaceful home. But now mark, if that be the case, Christianity at once brings people into a distinct place of acceptance with God and relationship to Him, which Judaism never possibly could give. It brings out, as distinguished from the world, a people reconciled and at peace with God. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He right to become sons of God" (John i. 12, margin).

In Christianity you have thus the "calling out" of those who are able to take their place as children of God. In Judaism there was the mixing up, as people might say now, of the Church and world together. There was no separation, and none possible. In Judaism men were yet being tried, and nobody could take his place as a child of God in the true sense, as born of Him. Nobody could call God in that sense his Father. The apostle tells us in the fourth of Galatians that the true children, though heirs, were in their time of nonage, "under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the Father," and "differing nothing from servants, though lords of all." At school, with the schoolmaster, children say "sir," or "master," and not "father." So also in that condition they would say: "enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. cxliiii. 2).

True, God was a Father to Israel; but Israel was a nation in the flesh - a mingled company of sinners and saints together. There was, there could be, no marking out the one from the other. There was no assembly of saints distinct from sinners. The only calling out was of Israel from the Gentiles, the type only, and in some sense the very contrast, of the calling out of Christians from the world. Thus in Judaism there was complete mingling. In Christianity there

is now the separation of God's children, who are exhorted distinctly to come out and be separate from unbelievers, in order really to enjoy their place as that (2 Cor. VI. 14-18). Judaism was not in this sense a "calling out," but a mere "synagogue - a "gathering together." There, in the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of John, where Caiaphas unconsciously prophesies that Christ should "die for that nation" (Israel), the apostle adds, "and not for that nation only, but also that He might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." That was one purpose of the death of Christ, that He might be able now to gather together in one the children of God scattered, in fact, by Judaism itself. The Church of God is the assembly of those who, no longer on trial, have the place already of God's children, and, as baptized of the Spirit, Christ's members; whose acceptance is ascertained and settled forever - of grace and not of works, nor mingled with them. The bringing in of Judaism again into the Church was the bringing in of distance between man and God. It was putting back the veil which God had rent on the cross - putting God in the darkness again, and man still under trial, to find his way to meet God and stand before Him if he could. It was putting' distance between God and man, of necessity, and covering the blessed face of God which He had revealed in Christ. Call it High Church or what you please, that is what it still is. Of necessity, therefore, it is the remingling of the Church and world together. Because, if they are on trial, nobody knows which is which, you cannot separate saint from sinner, all are together on trial; you cannot, then, separate the children of God from the children of the world.

Now, if you look around, that is what you will find exactly almost everywhere. The results of that awful change from assembly to synagogue are everywhere visible. In the epistle to the Galatians we see what was coming into the Church in the apostle's time; and you know how earnest he is about it: "I would they were even cut

off," he says, and warns them, if any one came and brought a different gospel, (not another, for there were not two,) he was to be "anathema," - accursed.<sup>3</sup>

In Grant's second lecture, "Nicolaitanism; or, The Rise and Growth of Clerisy", Grant skillfully describes Nicolaitanism in a way that again clarifies the extreme difference between the dispensation of law and grace, i.e. the distinguishing marks of salvation by works vs salvation by grace. It is well worth examining that clarification given below:

I was trying to show you last time what the characteristics of Judaism are. It was a probationary system, a system of trial, in which it was to be seen if man could produce a righteousness for God. We know the end of the trial, and that God pronounced "none righteous; no, not one." And only then it was that God could manifest His grace. As long as He was putting man under trial He could not possibly open the way to His own presence and justify the sinner there. He had, as long as this trial went on, to shut him out. For on that ground nobody could see God and live. Now, the very essence of Christianity is that all are welcomed in. There is an open door and ready access, where the blood of Christ entitles every one, however much a sinner, to draw near to God, and to find at His hand justification (of the) ungodly. To see God in Christ is not to die, but live. And what further is the consequence of this? Those who have come thus to Him - those who have found the way of access through the peace - speaking blood into His presence, learned what He is in Christ, and been justified before God - are able to take, and taught to take, a place distinct from all others, as now His - children of the Father, members of Christ, His body. That is the Church, a body called out, separate from the world.

Judaism, on the other hand, necessarily mixed all together. Nobody there can take such a place with God.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Grant, pg 18-25.

Nobody can cry "Abba, Father," really; therefore there could not be any separation. This had been once a necessity, and of God, no doubt. But now, Judaism being set up again, after God had abolished it, it is no use to urge that it was once of Him; its setting up again was the too successful work of the enemy against this gospel and against this Church. He brands these Judaizers as the "synagogue of Satan."

Now you can understand at once, when the Church in its true character was practically lost sight of, when Church members meant people baptized by water instead of by the Holy Ghost, or when the baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost were reckoned one, (and this very early became accepted doctrine,) then, of course, the Jewish synagogue was practically again set up. It became more and more impossible to speak of Christians being at peace with God or saved. They were hoping to be, and sacraments and ordinances became means of grace to ensure, as far as might be, a far-off salvation.

Let us see how far this would help on the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. It is plain that when, and as, the Church sank into the synagogue, the Christian people became practically what of old the Jewish had been. Now, what was that position? As I have said, there was no real drawing near to God at all. Even the high priest, who (as a type of Christ) entered into the holiest once a year, on the day of atonement, had to cover the mercy-seat with a cloud of incense, that he might not die. But the ordinary priests could not enter there at all, but only into the outer holy place; while the people in general could not come in even there. And this was expressly designed as a witness of their condition. It was the result of failure on their part; for God's offer to them, which you may find in the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, was this: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice in deed, and keep my covenant, ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and

a holy nation."

They were thus conditionally offered equal nearness of access to God - they should be all priests. But this was rescinded, for they broke the covenant; and then a special family is put into the place of priests, the rest of the people being put into the background, and only able to draw near to God through these.

Thus a separate and intermediate priesthood characterized Judaism; and, for the same reason, what we should call now missionary work there was none. There was no going out to the world in this way; no provision, no command to preach the law at all. What, in fact, could they say? That God was in the thick darkness? That no one could see Him, and live? It is surely evident there was no "good news" there. Judaism had no true gospel. The absence of the evangelist and the presence of the intermediate priesthood told the same sorrowful story, and were in perfect keeping with each other.

Such was Judaism. How different, then, is Christianity! No sooner had the death of Christ rent the veil and opened a way of access into the presence of God than at once there was a gospel, and the new order is, "Go out into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." God is making Himself known, and "is He the God of the Jews only?" Can you confine the gospel of Christ within the bounds of a nation? No, the fermentation of the new wine would burst the bottles.

The intermediate priesthood has, by the gospel, now been done away; for all Christian people are priests now to God. What was conditionally offered to Israel is now an accomplished fact in Christianity. We are a kingdom of priests; and in the wisdom of God it is Peter - ordained of man the great head of ritualism - who, in his first epistle, announces the two things which destroy ritualism root and branch for those who believe him. First, that we are "born again," not of baptism, but "by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever; . . . and this is the word which by the

gospel is preached unto you." Secondly, instead of a set of priests, he says to all Christians: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (ii. 5). The sacrifices are spiritual - praise and thanksgiving, and our lives and bodies also (Heb. xiii. i2, i6; Rom. xii. i). This is to be with us true priestly work, and thus do our lives get their proper character: they are the thank-offering service of those able to draw nigh to God.

In Judaism, let me repeat, none really drew nigh; but now, the people - the laity (for it is only a Greek word made English) - and that in a better way than the Jewish priest could. The priestly caste, wherever it is found, means the same thing. There is no drawing nigh of the whole body of the people at all. It means distance from God, and darkness - God shut out from the people. Now, THAT is the meaning of "the Clergy." I want you to look at it very carefully. I want you not to think it a mere question of a certain order of Church government - as people are very apt to do. I want you to see the important principles which are involved in this, and how really the Lord has cause, as He must have, to say of Nicolaitanism, "which I also hate." And my aim and object tonight is to try to make you hate it as God hates it. I am not speaking of people - God forbid. I am speaking of a thing. Our unhappiness is, that we are at the end of a long series of departures from God, and as a consequence we grow up in the midst of many things which come down to us as "tradition of the elders," associated with names which we all revere and love, upon whose authority in reality we have accepted them, without ever having looked at them really in the light of God's presence. And there are many thus whom we gladly recognize as truly men of God, and servants of God, in a false position. It is of that position I am speaking. I am speaking of a thing, as the Lord does - "which thing I hate." He does not say, "which people I hate." Although in those days evil of this kind was not an inheritance as now, and the first propagators of it had, of

course, a responsibility peculiarly their own, self-deceived as they may have been; still, in this matter as in all others, we need not be ashamed or afraid to be where the Lord is. Nay, we cannot be with Him in this unless we are. And He says of Nicolaitanism, "which thing I hate."

Because, what does it mean? I will tell you in brief what the very idea of a clergy is. It means a spiritual caste, or class; a set of people having officially a right to leadership in spiritual things; a nearness to God derived from official place, not spiritual power: in fact, the revival, under the names and with various modifications, of that very intermediate priesthood which distinguished Judaism, and which Christianity emphatically disclaims. That is what a clergy means; and in contradiction to these the rest of Christians are but the laity, the seculars, necessarily put back into more or less of the old distance, which the cross of Christ has done away.

We see then why it needed that the Church should be Judaized before the deeds of the Nicolaitans could ripen into a "doctrine." The Lord even had authorized obedience to scribes and Pharisees sitting in Moses' seat; and to make this text apply as people apply it now, Moses' seat had, of course, to be set up in the Christian Church: this done, and the mass of Christians degraded from the priesthood Peter spoke of into mere "lay members," the doctrine of the Nicolaitans was at once established.<sup>4</sup>

Such a call by God, that a purveyor of any other gospel be accursed (Gal 1:8-9), needs to be fully explored in a soteriology volume. That is best done by examining the authentic and then contending with those who make so great salvation a works of man thing, a priestcraft thing, or an election of God thing.

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4 Ibid., Grant, pg 32-37.

## **Chapter 2 Soteriology from a Bible Doctrine**

There are many considerations to make a Systematic Theology's volume on Soteriology, the doctrine of So-Great-Salvation, a crucial element of a holistic systematic theology. A Systematic Theology must first have as its foundation a true Bible Doctrine. From that foundation a discourse may systematically analyze the doctrine keeping it pure from its detractors, and evaluating its fit into the larger arena of theology. Detractors from truth are myriad from outside but internal sabotage comes from three major considerations. The Roman Catholic religion has always directly opposed Bible truth; the Protestant Reformers are supposed to have come back to Bible truth, but, subtly, they carry all the Roman error as concealed weapons; and, lastly, internal sabotage of God's salvation message is by the ecumenical Bible correctors who make a pretense of using textual criticism and modern language to "fix" what they say God was unable to preserve. These three are enemies to Bible doctrine, Roman, directly; Reformed, more subliminally; and Ecumenical Bible correctors, very shrewdly. Exposing their pernicious ways is not generally the focus of a Bible Doctrines book, and in a world where Bible doctrine is under constant attack, this type of systematic theology needs be developed. The solid Biblical doctrine that forms the basis for this systematic theology comes from Dr. Cambron.

There is no truer, or more thorough, published, Baptist, and Biblical doctrine than that of Dr. Mark G. Cambron.<sup>5</sup> His teaching on Bible Doctrine at Tennessee Temple Bible School thoroughly lays the foundation for this present work of systematic theology.

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5 Dr. Mark G. Cambron, B.A., M.A., Th.B., Th.M., Th.D., D.D., L.L.D., Litt.D., was one of the foremost theologians of our times. Born in Fayetteville, Tennessee on July 31, 1911. He was born-again in 1919. It was during a Billy Sunday campaign in Chattanooga that he trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. He served for many years at Tennessee Temple College (1948-59) with Dr. Lee Roberson and served as Dean of the College. From <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org> accessed 10/16/2013.

His book, *Bible Doctrines*<sup>6</sup> will, with the permission of the Cambron Institute,<sup>7</sup> be given in block quotes throughout this effort. Cambron's book is readily available through <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org>, and it forms the foundational basis for this Systematic Theology.<sup>8</sup>

Believing in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and believing that every single word is directly chosen by God, is a necessary start for defining and defending the doctrines extracted from Holy Scripture; that is what is presented by Dr. Cambron. Below, in a block quote of his book, is his extensive analysis of Soteriology: [block quote of Dr. Cambron's *Bible Doctrines* page 147-169 (Zondervan 185-210)]

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6 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 60-69.

7 The Cambron Institute, 35890 Maple Grove Road, Willoughby, Oh 44094.

8 It is noted and reproved in the Bibliology section of this work that Dr. Cambron's *Bible Doctrines* book recommends using the R.V., instead of the Holy Bible, 41 times for 54 Bible verses.

## Cambron's Ch VI Soteriology - The Doctrine of Salvation

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SOTERIOLOGY (The Doctrine of Salvation)

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### OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER VI SOTERIOLOGY

<p>I. Repentance.                      A. Citation.                      B. Explanation.                      C. Manifestation.                      D. Condition.                      E. Definition.</p> <p>II. Faith.                      Citation.                      Explanation.                      Donation.                      Centralization                      Production.</p> <p>III. Regeneration.                      A. Citation.                      B. Explanation.                      C. Compulsion.                      D. Condition.</p>	<p>IV. Justification.                      Citation.                      Explanation.                      Condition.                      Illustration.                      Manifestation.</p> <p>V. Sanctification.                      A. Citation.                      B. Explanation.                      C. Condition.                      D. Definition.</p> <p>VI. Adoption.                      A. Citation.                      B. Explanation.                      C. Origination.                      D.                      Consummation.                      E. Manifestation.</p>	<p>VII. Redemption.                      Citation.                      Explanation.</p> <p>VIII. Prayer.                      Affirmation.                      Delineation.                      Explanation.                      Stimulation.                      Illustration.                      Regulation.                      Condition.                      Limitation.                      Mediation.</p>
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Chapter VI SOTERIOLOGY Soteriology is the doctrine of salvation.

### I. Repentance

#### *A. Citation.*

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:1, 2). “Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4: 17). Paul testified “both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance

toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Rev. 3:19). See also Mark 6:12; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 11:18; 26:20; II Peter 3:9.

To those who say that repentance is not to be preached today, and that it is not essential for salvation, we point out that repentance was preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul. Repentance was proclaimed *before* Pentecost, *at* Pentecost, and *after* Pentecost. “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5).

*B. Explanation.*

1. *It Is Not Reformation.* Repentance is wholly an inward act of the mind. To many people it means to turn away from their sins, but if that were so, this would be *reformation*. Repentance is not doing something, as an act, for no man is saved because he gives up something. A man can turn away from his sins and still not be a Christian.

2. *It Is Not Contrition.* By this we mean that repentance is not agony of the soul for sin. Many folk in jail are sorry. Are they sorry for their crime? No. They are sorry because they were caught. We believe, however, that in a genuine case of repentance, the sinner will be sorry for his sin. Just being sorry for sin is not repentance, but it can *lead* to repentance. “Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (II Cor. 7:10).

3. *It Is Not Penance.* Penance is an expression of sorrow (by some act) that is done to pay for sin; it is something like a punishment.

4. *It Is a Change of Mind.* The literal meaning of repentance is “after-thought” or “reconsideration.” By “change of mind” we do not mean a “change of opinion”; a [p151] “change of mind” is the substitution of a new mind for the old. It is new in character.

True repentance is a change of mind which will lead to a change of action, but let us be warned that it is possible to have a change of action without a change of mind. A good example of repentance is found in Mathew 21:28, 29:

“But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he

came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.”

Before anyone can be saved there must be repentance. There must be a change of mind about many things: sin, self, God and Jesus Christ. “The servant of the Lord” must instruct “in meekness . . . those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (II Tim. 2:25).

Making it a little stronger, repentance means not only a change of mind; it is the taking of one’s stand against himself and the placing of himself on the side of God. Thus, repentance is self-judgment.

*C. Manifestation.*

1. *Change in the Intellect.*
2. *Change of Feeling.*
3. *Change of Will.*
4. *Change of Action.*

*D. Condition.*

1. *Through the Goodness of God.* “Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4). See also II Peter 3:9.<sup>9</sup>

2. *Through the Gospel of God.* “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for [because of] the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:37, 38, 41).

3. *Through the Scriptural Teaching.* “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God

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<sup>9</sup> 2 Peter 3:9 *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.*

peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (II Tim. 2:24, 25).

4. *Through the Chastisements of God.* “Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly [p152] and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth” (Rev. 2:16). See also Revelation 2:5; 3:3; Hebrews 12:6-11.

*E. Definition.*

Repentance is the work of God which results in a change of mind in respect to man’s relationship to God. It is neither sorrow nor penance, though penitent sorrow may lead to a change of mind. *Repentance is always an element of saving faith.*

## **II. Faith**

*A. Citation.*

“The gospel of Christ ... is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. ... For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17). “We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. 3:28). See also Matthew 9:22; Acts 26:18; Romans 4:5; II Corinthians 5:7; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:6; James 5:15; I Peter 1:5.

*B. Explanation.*

A good definition of faith is: confidence in others; reliance upon testimony. True faith is composed of the following:

1. *Knowledge.* One must be informed before he can have faith. This is true in the things of man, as it is in Christ. It is impossible to have faith in Christ without the Word.

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Sometimes we may ask for *more* faith, but this is out of order. To increase one’s faith, one has only to read more of the Word of God. Before a person can have faith, he must know it exists.

2. *Belief.* The second element of faith is belief. Everyone knows what belief means, that is, to accept it as the truth. People can know that there is a Saviour by the name of Jesus, and believe that He can save. Yet, this is not *saving faith*. To have faith in a chair, one must know that it exists, and believe that it can hold him

up. Still this is not complete faith in the chair, until the third element is involved, and that is:

3. *Trust*. Trust is essential to faith in anything. It is most essential in saving faith. It is one thing to know that Christ died, and believe it; it is quite another thing to trust Him, the dying and resurrected Saviour, for salvation. Let us take the chair again for example: One can know that a chair exists, and believe that it can hold him up, but faith in that chair is not exercised until he sits in it. Are you completely *trusting* Christ for *your* salvation?

4. *Recumbency*. This means to wholly rely upon Christ. When one lies upon the bed, he fully relaxes upon it and rests. When we put our trust in Him, we should rely upon Him and rest. [p153]

#### *C. Donation.*

1. *By God the Father*. “I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Rom. 12:3).

2. *By God the Son*. Jesus is “the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

3. *By God the Holy Spirit*. “To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom . . . to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit” (I Cor. 12:8, 9).

#### *D. Centralization.*

The object of faith is Christ, and He alone.

#### *E. Production.*

The end of faith is salvation. “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” (Eph. 2:8, 9).

### **III. Regeneration**

#### *A. Citation.*

“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. . . . 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” (John 3:3, 5). We are “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever” (I Peter 1:23). “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” (I John 3:9). See also I John 2:29; 5:4, 18.

*B. Explanation.*

1. *It Is Not Reformation.* Some people think that by turning over a new leaf one becomes a child of God. Some men quit drinking because of a bad heart, not because they know it is sin against God. One could cease from *all* sin; yet this is not regeneration.

2. *It Is Not Conversion.* Many times we speak of regeneration as conversion, but, in reality, “conversion” means to turn around. Saved people can be *converted* (turned around) even after they are saved, as was Peter. He was saved long before the Lord Jesus had declared: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift [p154] you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art *converted* [turned around], strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:31, 32).

3. *It Is Not Confirmation.* Some churches, as they administer a certain ritual of the church, claim that the participants (usually children of twelve or thirteen years of age) receive the Holy Spirit with the anointing of oil. This is a false doctrine. One does not receive the Holy Spirit by any act of man, but upon receiving Christ as Saviour.

4. *It Is Not Water Baptism.* There is no saving faith in all the water of the world.

Someone may ask, then, “Why are we commanded to be baptized?” It is the answer of a good conscience toward God (I Peter 3:21b). It is an ordinance depicting the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and nothing more.

5. *It Is Not Church Membership.* We are told in Hebrews 10:25 not to forsake “the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.” However, this does not bring about change in a sinner’s heart. Remember, the word “church” means “a

called-out company,” or “assembly.” Joining a human assembly cannot bring about salvation. Some people believe that the *Church* saves. Now translate this statement correctly: “The assembly saves.” Is there an assembly on earth which can give salvation? Is there a called-out company which can make a person a child of God? *No!* There is no assembly that we would trust with the saving of our soul.

6. *It Is Not the Taking of the Lord’s Supper.* There is no saving efficacy, or cleansing of sin, in partaking of the elements of the Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper is taken only in remembrance of Christ and His work upon Calvary. We shall do this in remembrance of Him until He comes.

7. *It Is the New Birth.* “If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new” (II Cor. 5:17, R.V.<sup>10</sup>). “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him” (I John 2:29).

*C. Compulsion.*

Ye *must* be born again. It is a necessity declared by the Lord Himself.

1. *As Seen in the Depravity of Man.* “That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). The words, “Ye must be born again,” are better translated, “Ye must be born from above.” Man must have a birth from above if he is to live some day in the heavens above.

2. *As Seen in the Universality of Man.* There is not a man anywhere but who has to be born again. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

3. *As Seen in the Holiness of God.* If one is to be received and made a child of God by a righteous and holy God, a great change must take place to make him holy. “It is written, [p155] Ye shall be holy; for I am holy” (I Peter 1:16, R.V.<sup>11</sup>).

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10 An accurate Bible states this verse, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” The ecumenical translators who Dr. Cambron unwittingly trusted here misrepresented both the “he” who is a new creature, and the “all things” that are become new. Shame on him, and them.

11 The actual Bible states this verse, “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I

*D. Condition.*

1. *The Divine Work.* The process of becoming a child of God is not by natural generation. Man cannot regenerate himself. It is not a matter of the human will, but of God. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12, 13). Practically speaking, we had nothing to do with our first birth, and we can have nothing to do with the second birth.

2. *The Human Element.* While it is God who regenerates the believing sinner, yet there is one part that man plays; he must *believe!* “By grace are ye saved”; yes, but “through faith.” “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Yes, Jesus is the way, but the sinner must *come!* The sinner must *receive* Christ by his own faith. This is the human part. God does the rest.

## **IV. Justification**

*A. Citation.*

We are “justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). “The righteousness of Christ shall be imputed to us, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:24,25). “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). “Such [thieves, covetous, drunkards, and the like] were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:11).

See also Romans 3:26; 5:9; Galatians 2:16, 17; Titus 3:7.<sup>12</sup>

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am holy.” The ecumenical translators completely misrepresented the verse, took it out of the imperative voice, and made it a mere present tense “shall.” Shame on Dr. Cambron for trusting them, and shame on them for twisting God's Words.

12 *Rom. 3:26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.... 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.... Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that*

*B. Explanation.*

To justify is “to reckon, to declare, or to show righteous.” To justify does not mean to make righteous. God declares the believer to be righteous; He does not make him righteous. Justification is a legal term: a good standing.

In the human law courts, the law is over the judge. If the judge is an honest and just judge, he can show no mercy. He must declare the defendant guilty, or not guilty, according to the law. In God’s law court, the believer, a guilty man, is brought before the judgment bar of God and is declared not guilty. God is over His law.

In a human law court, a guilty person may be pardoned, the crime forgiven but not paid.

In God’s law court this is not so. All sins must be paid for, and the sinner punished. Three things are incorporated in God’s justification.

1. *Forgiveness.* “He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness [p156] of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:37-39).

A Christian is not a pardoned criminal; he is a righteous man. God declares him so. He is one who has paid for his sins by another, his substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. God never pardons apart from Christ.

2. *Imputation.* “Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile” (Ps. 32:2). “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. 4:8). “Until the law sin was in the world: but sin is no imputed when there is no law” (Rom. 5:13).

Imputation means to “put something against.” Therefore, the righteousness of Christ is put to the sinner’s account. All of the

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*we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. 17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.... Titus 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

believer's sins were put to Christ's account — He paid them in full. In turn, His righteousness was put to the believer's account, and he stands there, declared to be righteous.

3. *Fellowship*. “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:6). This is the fellowship of God and the believer as Father and Son.

Remember, God is Father only of His children, not of unbelievers.

C. *Condition*.

1. *Negative*.

a. *Not By Works*. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:4, 5). See also Romans 11:6.<sup>13</sup>

b. *Not By the Deeds of the Law*. “That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith” (Gal. 3:11). See also Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16.<sup>14</sup>

2. *Positive*.

a. *By God*. God set forth Christ Jesus “to declare... his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:26). See also Romans 8:33.<sup>15</sup>

b. *By Grace*. “Being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7). See also Romans 3:24.<sup>16</sup>

c. *By Blood*. “Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Rom. 5:9). See also Romans 3:24,

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13 *Rom 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*

14 *Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.... Gal. 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

15 *Rom. 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

16 *Rom. 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

25.<sup>17</sup>

d. *By Faith*. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

e. *By Resurrection*. Faith shall be imputed to us for righteousness “if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:24, 25). [p157]

*D. Illustration.*

1. *Abraham* (Rom. 4:1-5).

2. *David* (Rom. 4:6-8).

3. *Noah* (Heb. 11:7).

*E. Manifestation.*

1. *In Works*. “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (Jas. 2:21-23). The evidence of salvation is gratitude, which is good works. Many times the good works are very, very weak, but God accepts the will that is behind them.

2. *In Experience*. “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. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom. 5:1-5).

## V. Sanctification

This is one phase of salvation which is very much confused today. The Bible student will be surprised at what God has to say about sanctification. Much is said about experience, and we

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<sup>17</sup> Rom 3:25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

believe in experience; but let us be cautious and let the Word of God interpret our experience, rather than our experience interpret the Word of God.

*A. Citation.*

“This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.

. . . For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (I Thess. 4:3, 7). “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: Grace be unto you and peace” (I Cor. 1:2). “Both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Heb. 2:11). “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). See also I Peter 1:2; John 17:17; Exodus 13:2; Jeremiah 2:3; Ephesians 1:1. The words “sanctification, holiness, and saints” all come from the same root. [p158]

*B. Explanation.*

1. *It Is Not a Betterment of the Flesh.* Never does it say in Scripture that the work of the Holy Spirit is to improve the old nature. The natural man cannot understand the Holy Spirit. How could the natural man be improved by the Spirit? This is hard to say, but nevertheless, it is true, that the flesh of the believer is no better than the flesh of the sinner. The Scriptures say, “Mortify the deeds of the flesh.”

2. *It Is Not the Eradication of the Sinful Nature.* There are those who contend that a believer may have a purifying experience that will burn out all carnality, thus rendering him sinless, incapable of committing sin. We do not deny such an experience, but we caution the believer to prove his experience by the Word, rather than trying to prove the Word by his experience. Even though the Old Testament is written in the Hebrew, and the New Testament is written in the Greek, the words “sanctification,” “holy,” and “saint” all have the same root meaning.

To those who hold that sanctification is an experience by which the sinful nature is eradicated, let us turn to the Word and

see how sanctification is used: “Thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt-offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy” (Ex. 40:10). Where is the eradication here? Did the altar have a sinful nature? Here is another example: “Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it” (Ex. 19:23). Did Mount Sinai have a sinful nature? “Let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them” (Ex. 19:22). How could priests eradicate their own sinful natures? “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent unto the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God” (John 10:36). Here Christ Himself is spoken of as being sanctified. There is no sinful nature here! “For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” (John 17:19). Does this mean eradication of the sinful nature? Of course not. “The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy” (I Cor. 7:14). Is it possible that believing wives can eradicate the sinful nature from their unbelieving husbands? If sanctification means eradication from the sinful nature, explain the following: “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (I Peter 3:15). Carnal Christians are sanctified; this does not speak of the eradication of the sinful nature (I Cor. 1:1, 2 with 3:1, 3).

3. *It Is Not Sanctimoniousness.* Sanctification is not an affected, or hypocritical devoutness; neither is it false saintliness. Sanctification is not marked by the wearing of a beard, or black stockings, and the like. You can tell whether saintliness is real or false.

4. *It Is Not a Second Blessing.* In II Corinthians 1:15 Paul speaks of wanting to give the Church a second benefit, not a second blessing. This epistle was written to people who were already sanctified (I Cor. 1:2 and 6:11). [p159]

5. *It Is “To Be Set Apart.”* The root idea always means “to be

set apart,” or “separation.” To sanctify always means to set apart for a purpose, whether in respect to saint or sinner. Unsaved men can separate, or sanctify themselves unto sin. “They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind the tree in the midst, eating swine’s flesh and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD” (Is. 66:17). Jesus sanctified Himself; to say He made Himself sinless is blasphemous. The Sabbath was sanctified, and we know that the Sabbath had no sinful nature.

Again we emphasize that the words “holiness,” “sanctification,” and “saint” all come from the same word meaning “set apart,” “separation.” The word “sanctify” in Exodus 13:2, and the word “holiness” in Psalm 29:2, and the word “saints” of Psalm 34:9 are the same word. The word “sanctify” of John 17:17, and the word “saint” of Philippians 1:1, and the word “holiness” of Hebrews 12:10 are all from the same word.

Sanctification, being set apart, is spoken of in three ways:

a. *Positional*. “Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:11).

We are sanctified the very moment we believe. The above Scripture declares that we are sanctified before we are justified, thus ruling out the second and third works of grace. “We are bound to give thanks alway 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” (II Thess. 2:13). Sanctification is first in order, absolutely. See also I Peter 1:2. God never allows us to work up to a position; He first places us in a position set apart to Him, and tells us to be true to that position. A saint truly is God’s man.

b. *Practical*. “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (II Cor. 7:1). “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen” (II Peter 3:18).

This is our present state of sanctification. A saint never

grows up to sanctification, but grows *in* sanctification. Every believer is a saint; however, some believers do not act like saints. The living Christian still has the flesh in him and obeys it at times. Then God, by Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, metes out chastisement. See John 17:17; I Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 12:10; II Corinthians 3:18.

c. *Final*. Perfect sanctification will occur in the future at Christ's second coming.

“The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints” (I Thess. 3:12, 13).

*C. Condition.*

1. *The Divine Side.*

a. *Through God the Father*. “Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth [p160] the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine” (Ex. 13:2).

b. *Through Jesus Christ the Son*. “Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate” (Heb. 13:12).

c. *Through the Holy Spirit*. “We are bound to give thanks alway 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” (II Thess. 2:13).

2. *The Human Side.*

a. *Faith in the Redemptive Work of Christ*. “Of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (I Cor. 1:30).

b. *Study of and Obedience to the Word of God*. “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3).

c. *Through Yieldedness*. “I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom. 6:19).

d. *Through Chastening.* “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth...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” (Heb. 12:6, 11).

*D. Definition.*

1. Sanctification is the work of Christ for the believer, which sets him apart for God.

2. Sanctification is that work of God in the believer, through the Spirit and the Word, which changes him into the image of Christ progressively.

3. Sanctification is the work of God which perfects the believer in the likeness of Christ by His appearing in glory.

## **VI. Adoption**

*A. Citation.*

“Not only they [the whole creation], but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:23). There are four other places in the New Testament where the word “adoption” is mentioned: Romans 8:15; 9:4; Galatians 4:4, 5; Ephesians 1:5.

*B. Explanation.*

The English word “adoption” has an entirely different meaning than the Greek word or the Oriental custom. The English word means to take a person from another family and [p161] make him legally one’s own son or daughter. The Greek word, however, means “placing as a son.”

In New Testament times, when the boy or girl was a minor, he or she differed little from a slave (Gal. 4:1). Upon the day appointed by the father, at the age from twelve to fourteen, a celebration was held declaring the child of age. Thus the boy or girl was made a son or daughter. A boy or girl was born into the family as a child; upon reaching majority, the boy or girl was declared a son or daughter. The same is true in the case of the believer. He is not adopted into the family of God; he is born into

the family of God. By birth, he is a child of God; by adoption he *shall be* a son of God.

*C. Origination.*

“He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will” (Eph. 1:4, 5).

*D. Consummation.*

We are now only the *children* of God. “Ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26, R.V.<sup>18</sup>). We will become *sons* of God at the day appointed by the Father. At that time He will openly present us as the sons of God. We do not look like sons of God now, but some day the world will be able to recognize us as the sons of God.

This will take place at the second coming of Christ. “Not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23).

*E. Manifestation.*

1. *Delivered From a Slavish Fear of God.* “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Rom. 8:15).

2. *Made Possessors of Sonship.*

3. *Made Subject to Both Privileges and Responsibility of Adult Sonship.*

## VII. Redemption

The Bible is full of redemption. It is God’s character to save. He can destroy, but He loves to save. The theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ. The message of the Word is *redemption*.

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18 The actual Bible renders this verse, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” One would better trust fifty-seven exceptional linguists who took seven years to exactly translate the whole Holy Bible, for determining where “children” should be used for the Greek *uios* and “by” should be used for the Greek *dia*. Do not trust ecumenical translators of 1881, and shame on Dr. Cambren for relying on them here.

*A. Citation.*

“If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of <sup>[p162]</sup>his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold...And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger’s family: after that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him” (Lev. 25:25, 47, 48). “Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness” (Is. 1:27). “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7). See also Nehemiah 5:8; Colossians 1:4; Galatians 3:13; I Corinthians 1:30; Romans 8:23.<sup>19</sup>

*B. Explanation.*

There are four Hebrew words in the Old Testament that pertain to redemption, and all mean “to set free.” The word “goel” is used two ways: first, the One who redeems; second, the act of redeeming. The “goel” was always a near kinsman. While the word “redemption” means “to set free,” it incorporates the meaning “to buy back, to purchase.”

The redemption of the child of God is by his Near Kinsman, the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has the redemptive price — His own precious blood!

*1. Redemption Declared.*

*a. Is Wholly of God (John 3:16).*

*b. Is Through a Person — Christ (I Peter 1:18, 19).*

*c. Is By Blood (Heb. 9:12).*

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<sup>19</sup> *Nehemiah 5:8 And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer.... Colossians 1:4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,... 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:... I Corinthians 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:... Romans 8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*

d. *Is By Power* (I Cor. 1:30).

2. *Redemption Perfected*. The use of the word “redemption” is presented in the following three ways:

a. *To Buy or Purchase in a Slave Market*. The Lord Jesus Christ came down into this slave market of sin and bought us, who were upon the slave block.

b. *To Purchase Out of the Market*. After one purchased a slave, the master took him out of the market. We are looking for our Master to come and take us out of this slave market.

c. *To Loose or Set Free*. The Lord Jesus is not a slave trader; neither is He a slave holder. One day the Lord Jesus shall set us free from the bondage of corruption and sin, and we shall know the perfect liberty of being the *sons* of God.

In Israel a man could not be a slave forever against his will. After becoming a slave, he could be set free by redemption through a near kinsman, or by waiting for the Sabbatical year or the year of Jubilee, when all slaves were set free. Should he love his master, however, and not care to be set free under any circumstances, he could go to his master, who in turn would bore a hole in his ear and make him a bonds slave for life (Ex. 21:6).

Paul said that he was a bonds slave of Jesus Christ - a bonds slave for life. He was *bought* by blood, *bound* by love. The Christian should have his ear bored, figuratively speaking, yea, his hands, his all. He should recognize that he is crucified with Christ.

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## VIII. Prayer

Prayer is the essential element of Christian character which is lacking in most believers today. One reason for this is that prayer is misunderstood. Prayer is mostly thought of as asking and receiving. It is that; however, it is much more. We fail to see the value of prayer as communion with our God (Is. 43:21, 22; 64:6,7

R.V.<sup>20</sup>; Zeph. 1:4-6; Dan. 9:13,14 with Hos.7:13, 14; 8:13, 14).<sup>21</sup>

*A. Affirmation.*

1. *It Is Sin to Neglect Prayer.* “As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way” (I Sam. 12:23).

2. *It Is Appointed by God.* “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”

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20 There is no reason in the world to prefer the ecumenical translators 1881 Revised Version over the actual Bible for these verses from Isaiah. Shame on Dr. Cambron for relying on them, and shame on them for changing God's Words.

21 *Isaiah 43:21 This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. 22 ¶ But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.... 64:6 ¶ But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. 7 And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.... Zeph 1:6 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.... Daniel 9:13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. 14 Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.... Hosea 7:13 Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me: though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me. 14 And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me.... 8:13 They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt. 14 For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.*

(Matt. 7:7-11).

3. *It Is Commanded by God.* “Pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17). “Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2, R.V.<sup>22</sup>).

4. *It Is Necessary to Ask.* “Ye have not, because ye ask not” (Jas. 4:2c).

*B. Delineation.*

1. *Abraham Prays for Sodom* (Gen. 18).

2. *Jacob Prays the First Personal Prayer* (Gen. 32:9-12).

See other personal prayers (Deut. 26:1-16; Ex. 5:22).

3. *Joshua and Judges Cry Unto the Lord* (Josh. 7:6-9; Judg. 10:14).

4. *Samuel Prays As an Intercessor* (I Sam 7:5, 12).

5. *David Prays With Thanksgiving* (II Sam. 7).

6. *Believers Pour Out Their Hearts to God* (Ps. 42:4; 62:8).

*C. Explanation.*

1. *Presbyterian Catechism.* “Prayer is the offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to His will in the name of Christ with confession of our sins and thankful [p164] acknowledgment of his mercy.”

*2. Scriptural Definition.*

a. *As a Child Going to the Father.* “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father” (Rom. 8:15).

b. *As a Child Crying to the Father.* “Lord. what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6).

c. *As a Child Desiring to Be With the Father.* “Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested” (I Chron. 4:10).

d. *As a Child Petitioning the Father.* “When heaven is shut

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22 The actual Bible states this verse as, “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” There is a significant curse attached to the ecumenical translators that added a word to this verse. It is unfortunate that Dr. Cambron trusted them.

up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they should pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: then hear thou in heaven” (I Kings 8:35, 36).

e. *As a Child Asking Intercession of the Father.* “When he had taken the book, the beast and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints” (Rev. 5:8). See also Revelation 8:3-4.<sup>23</sup>

f. *As a Child Waiting in Silence Before God.* “LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear” (Ps. 10:17).

3. *Human Experience.* By this we mean that the saints of God have found these truths through prayer.

a. *It Is a Fervent Mind Settled On God.*

b. *It Is Laborious in Its Task* (Col. 4:12).

c. *It Is a Business.*

D. *Stimulation.*

1. *Abundant Testimony of Christians Proves That God Answers Prayer.*

2. *Universality of Phrases in Scripture: Whosoever, Whatsoever, Whenssoever.*

3. *The Wealth of the Promises by God to Praying Believers.*

4. *The Confidence of Access Through Jesus Christ.* “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:19-22, R.V.<sup>24</sup>).

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23 *Rev 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.*

24 The actual Bible states these verses as, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way,

5. *The Assurance of Help by the Holy Spirit.* “The Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26).

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6. *The Revelation of God by Christ.* “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18).

7. *The Limitless Supply of Grace in Christ.* “My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

8. *The Unlimited Possibility of Faith.* “Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mark 9:23).

9. *The Abundant Ability of God.* “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory” (Eph. 3:20).

*E. Illustration.*

1. *Abraham Interceding for Sodom* (Gen. 18:22, 23; 19:29).

2. *Prayer of Abraham’s Servant* (Gen. 24:12).

3. *Personal Prayer of Jacob* (Gen. 32:9-12).

4. *Moses’ Intercession for Israel* (Ex. 32:11-14, 30-34; Num. 14:11-21).

5. *Samuel Interceding for King and People* (I Sam. 12:6-25).

6. *Elijah Praying for Fire and Water* (I Kings 18:25-41; James 5:17, 18).

7. *Nehemiah’s Prayer for Jerusalem* (Neh. 2:4).

8. *Joshua’s Prayer for Discernment* (Josh. 7:7-9).

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which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” The ecumenical translators failed to distinguish between “the holy place” and the Holy Bible’s “the holiest,” used a lesser verb “dedicated” for the stronger “consecrated,” miss-designated the “new and living way” as a only a path through a veil, miss-designated an OT “high priest” as only a great priest, and ... I need not continue with this perversion. It is unfortunate that Dr. Cambron trusted them.

9. *Samson's Prayer for Renewed Strength* (Judg. 16:28).

10. *Hannah's Prayer for a Child* (I Sam. 1:10, 11).

11. *David's Prayer of Penitence* (Ps. 51).

12. *Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom* (I Kings 3:5-9).

13. *Solomon's Prayer of Dedication* (I Kings 8:25-53).

14. *Jonah's Prayer for Deliverance* (Jonah 2).

15. *Habakkuk's Prayer of Praise* (Hab. 3).

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16. *Paul's Intercession for the Saints* (Eph. 1:15-23; 3:14-21; Col. 1:9-14).

17. *The Malefactor's Prayer for Forgiveness* (Luke 23: 42, 43).

18. *Stephen's Prayer of Submission* (Acts 7:59, 60).

19. *The Lord Jesus' Prayer for Strength* (Matt. 26:27-46).

20. *The Bible's Last Prayer* (Rev. 22:20).

#### *F. Regulation.*

1. *As to the Posture of the Body.* There is much supposition concerning the posture of the body while in prayer. Some contend that prayer is not prayer unless one is on his knees, believing it to be blasphemous to pray while walking, and the like. According to the following Scriptures there is *no* set rule as to the position of the body in prayer:

a. *Christ on His Face.* "He went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

b. *Solomon on His Knees.* "It was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven" (I Kings 8:54).

c. *Peter on the Water.* "Lord, save me" (Matt. 14:30c).

d. *Thief on the Cross.* "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42).

e. *Elijah With Face Between His Knees.* "So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees" (I Kings 18:42).

f. *David on His Bed*. “I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears” (Ps. 6:6).

2. *As to Time*. Many poems have been written suggesting the time to pray. We do know that the Christian should select a time when it is the most convenient for him to be alone with the Lord. Here again there is no regulation stipulated. Notice the following examples:

a. *Daniel: Three Times a Day*. “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God as he did aforetime” (Dan. 6:10).

b. *Christ: Early in the Morning*. “In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35).

c. *Peter and John: Hour of Prayer (3 P.M.)*. “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour” (Acts 3:1).

3. *As to Place*. Where is the place God meets man today? The Lord Jesus said, “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at [p167] Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . 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 him” (John 4:21, 23). Here, too, we see that no definite place is commanded:

a. *Christ in the Garden*: “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and said unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder” (Matt. 26:36).

b. *Christ on the Grass*. “He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude” (Matt. 14:19).

c. *Christ on a Mountain*. “It came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12).

d. *Paul in a Storm on Board Ship (Acts 27)*. Where is the

place the Christian should pray? Christ said, “Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (Matt. 6:6). Where is the closet, and how may one close the door? The closet is any place where the believer may closet himself from the outside world. It may be on a bus, walking on the street, or it may be in a closed room. It is a place where he and God are alone together.

*G. Conditions.*

What will it take to get our prayers answered? The Christian is one who asks to receive.

The following truths guarantee answers to prayer.

1. *Confidence*. “Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb.11:6).

2. *Earnestness*. “I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Luke 11:9). *Ask*: Matthew 7:7; *seek*: James 5:17; *knock*: Acts 12:5.

3. *Definiteness*. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good gifts to them that ask him” (Matt. 7:11).

4. *Persistence*. “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2). See also Luke 18:1-8.

5. *Faith*. “I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24).

6. *Submission*. “This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him” (I John 5:14, 15). When we ask according to His will, then *two* have agreed, thus assuring that prayer will be [p168] answered. “Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 18:19).

*H. Limitation.*

1. *Through Spiritual Profanation.* This is well illustrated in the life of Esau. Paul bids us to look diligently “lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance though he sought it carefully with tears” (Heb. 12:16, 17). Esau gave away the blessings that went with the birthright. That which he sold was gone forever. In the Christian life lost days and lost opportunities are gone. Yesterday is gone forever.

2. *Through Judicial Penalties.* “Speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols” (Ezek. 14:4).

See also Deuteronomy 3:25-27; Jeremiah 15:1.

3. *Through Lack of Action.* “The LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they *go forward*” (Ex. 14:15). To be sure there is a time to “stand still and see the salvation of the LORD,” but there is also the time to go forward.

4. *Through Insincerity.* “When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogue and in the corner of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward” (Matt. 6:5).

5. *Through Carnal Motives.* “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lust” (Jas. 4:3).

6. *Through Unbelief.* “Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord” (Jas. 1:6, 7).

7. *Through Cherished Sin.* “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Ps. 66:18).

8. *Through Failure to Ask.* “Ye have not, because ye ask not”

(Jas. 4:2c). Some find a conflict with the above verse and Matthew 6:8: “Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.” They reason that if the Father knows what we have need of, why then should they pray? This has hurt the prayer life of many Christians. It should not. It is true that our Father knows everything we have need of; if He didn’t He would not be God. His knowledge, however, is not a guarantee that we shall have the needed things: “Ye have not, because ye ask not.” Yes, the Father knows what we need, but we have to pray for it. We are warned, nevertheless, that we cannot fool God and ask for things we do not need.

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#### I. Mediation.

“There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (ITim. 2:5). “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him” (Eph. 3:12). See also John 16:24-26, “Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (Eph. 2:18). This is the Scriptural formula for the presentation of prayers: To the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit.

Prayers should contain the following:

1. Adoration.
2. Thanksgiving.
3. Confession.
4. Supplication.
5. Intercession. [p170]<sup>25</sup>

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25 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 185-210

## **Chapter 3 Ecumenical Bibles Change Soteriology**

It is no surprise that for a bible to be accepted by multiple denominations with striking differences about what salvation is, there will be compromises made for the ecumenical cause. This expose' of how modernist translators altered two cardinal scriptures to accommodate errant doctrine about salvation is shocking, and are addresses here because of their direct attack on the doctrine of salvation. The drive to sell copyright ecumenical bibles to everyone is the ultimate in diabolical subtleness for propagating Satan's line "Yea hath God said?"

A young Christian had heard in Sunday School that the world and the Devil so hated God's word that they would confiscate and destroy every copy. "It would happen in his life time!" he was told. He took and hid his Sunday School award Bible up in his attic and said, "They will never take away my Holy Bible!"

When he was all grown and a junior in seminary he became troubled when an old Baptist preacher gave him a flier that said:

All modernists ecumenical Bibles completely leave out 20 verses that have always been in the Holy Bible. They say that Matt 17:21 is not supposed to be in the Bible. They take their pen knife and cut it out! Then they take their knife and cut out Matt 18:11, 23:14, Mark 7:16, 9:44 & 46, 11:26, 15:28, Luke 17:36, 23:17, John 5:4, Acts 8:37, 15:34, 24:7, 28:29, Rom 16:24, and 1 John 5:7, then they take Col 1:14 and cut out the clause "Through His Blood" because they think God did not mean to say that. For over nineteen hundred years believers have considered these 20 verses to be inspired, inerrant, infallible Scripture. **Modernist ecumenical scholars contend that no Bible in existence today is inspired.** Baptists will never agree with such folly. We use the ONLY complete English Bible with these verses still intact,

the Authorized King James Bible.

There are 64,000 other reasons detailed in this short study. Many are misinformed about this crucial issue. Many partake in the modernist's diabolical attack against the KJB.<sup>26</sup>

The copyright New International Version New Testament has 64,000 fewer words than the King James Bible's New Testament! Words that are certainly in the Greek New Testament have been completely eliminated. Baptists will not use the NIV<sup>27</sup> or ESV<sup>28</sup>, holding instead to the complete and accurate authorized King James Bible.

Baptists, above all others, base all their faith and practice on only the words of the Holy Scriptures. When critical modernists mess with the words they are messing with our faith and practice. It is better to learn that 'thee' is the 2nd person singular of 'you' and 'thou' is its subjective case than to have a sinister textual critic mess with your faith and practice.

When he looked, he found that those verses were not in his Bible. The Bible student scoured through his whole seminary looking for a King James Authorized Bible to see what they said and found none on the premises. He took a bus to his father's old house, climbed up into the attic, and retrieved his old Sunday School award Bible, and there were all twenty of those verses. He made this profound observation, “The Devil never did come and confiscate our Bibles, Christians just forsook them and turned them over for new modernist versions that do not reflect the infallible,

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26 See “The Defense of Twenty” by Pastor Ed Rice, Good Samaritan Baptist Church, 54 Main St., Dresden NY 14441

[www.gsbaptistchurch.com/seminary/landmark/content/defense\\_twenty.pdf](http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/seminary/landmark/content/defense_twenty.pdf)

27 NIV is a registered trademark of the New York Bible Society International, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, standing for “New International Version” and their ecumenical modernist copyright, all rights reserved, 1973 bible.

28 ESV is a registered trademark of the Crossway – Good News Publishers, Wheaton Illinois, standing for “English Standard Version” and their ecumenical, modernist, copyright, all rights reserved, 2001 bible.

inerrant, verbally inspired Words of God.”

The truth in that scenario is already substantiated in the Prolegomena and Bibliology sections of this Systematic Theology, but rehearse here the subtle power of this diabolical deception. Ecumenical bibles do indeed change doctrine.

A case in point, the catholic church, from its roots, has works embedded in its salvation process. It might be Roman, Orthodox, or Episcopalian penance, Presbyterian infant baptism, Methodist methods or Pentecostal baptismal regeneration, there is always something added to belief before salvation is secured. John 3:36 states, “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*” Herein, as throughout the Holy Bible, Salvation is solely based on faith (4102 πιστις *pistis* as a noun) i.e. what we believe (4100 πιστευω *pisteuo* exact same Greek word as a verb) and not based on works that we might do or obedience that we might render.

There are times when the fifty-seven highly skilled linguists, employed and paid by King James from 1603 through 1611, divided into six companies which met in cities of Cambridge, Westminster, and Oxford, as they, under the unction of the Holy Spirit of God, took seven years to translate God's inerrant, infallible, verbally inspired Old Testament and New Testament books into an authorized Holy Bible which answered only to the original Hebrew and Greek, well there were times when the context of the text and the doctrine of the whole Bible determined how a word might be translated. Such is the case with the phrase “believeth not” in John 3:36. The Greek word used, (544 απειθεω *apeitheo*) literally means “not to allow one's self to be perused” and could thus be translated disobedient. The highly skilled linguists translating the Authorized Version knew in the context of salvation to translate it “believeth not” as they did eight other times (Acts 14:2, 17:5, 19:9, Rom 11:31, 15:31, Heb 3:18, 11, 31). These expert linguists only translated this Greek word “disobey” when the context called for it in four verses not dealing with soul-salvation (Rom 10:21, 1Pet 2:7,8, 3:20). Modernist ecumenical translators did not take this care.

How do ecumenical modernist bibles translate the “*believeth not*” phrase in their ecumenical friendly copyright versions?

Perhaps Jesus said, “*he who disobeys* the Son shall not see life”? As copyright by James A.R. Moffatt D.D., D.LITT., in his 1950 "The Bible – A New Translation". All rights in this book are reserved. No part of the text may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission.

Or was it “*he who does not obey* the Son shall not see life”? As copyright by The Lockman Foundation in California, in their 1960 NASB (NASB is a registered trademark of the same, standing for the New American Standard Version).

Or was it, “*he who disobeys* the Son shall not see that life”? As copyright by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press in their 1961 NEB (NEB is a registered trademark of the same, standing for the New English Bible).

Or was it “*he who does not obey* the Son shall not see life”? As copyright by the World Publishing Company in their 1962 RSV (RSV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for Revised Standard Version).

Or was it “*whoever disobeys* the Son, will not have life”? As copyright by the American Bible Society in their 1966 Good News Bible- Todays English Version.

Or was it “he who does not believe the Son shall not see life”? As copyright by the Oxford University Press, Inc. in their 1967 NKJ (NKJ is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New King James). [Oxford University agreed not to change any underlying Greek in their New Testament translation, only to strip away all second person singular indicators (and make them all plural, you and your) and to remove all verb case indicators (believeth ... hath vs Oxford's believes ... has). However, these changes could not secure a copyright on their New Testament. They got their copyright with all their “significant deviations” found in the Old Testament.]

Or was it “*whoever disobeys* the Son shall not see life”? As copyright by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in Washington D.C., in their 1970 NAB (NAB is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New American Bible).

Or was it “**whoever rejects** the Son will not see life”? As copyright by the New York Bible Society International, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in their 1973 NIV (NIV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New International Version).

Or was it “**he that disobeys** the Son will not see life”? As copyright by the Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society of Pennsylvania and International Bible Students Association in their 1984 NWT (NWT is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New World Translation). [It is curious that the Watch Tower Society, that does not believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ nor the trinity of the Godhead, predominately change, with brazen boldness, what offends their faulty doctrines.]

Or was it “**no one who rejects** him will ever share in that life”? As copyright by the American Bible Society in their 1995 CEV (CEV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for Contemporary English Version).

Or was it “**whoever does not obey** the Son shall not see life”? As copyright by Crossway – Good News Publishers, Wheaton Illinois, All rights reserved, in their 2001 ESV (ESV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for English Standard Version).

These translations of the Greek may not be technically in error, but in the context of receiving “so great salvation” by faith and faith alone, when that is the context, they are grossly in error. In the Bible he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the son shall not see life. In 8 of 11 of these ecumenical modernist bibles it is not unbelief, but disobedience that sends a soul to hell and in 2 of the 11 it is not unbelief but rejection. Shame on those dollar driven, bible societies and more so shame on the Christians who gave up their Bibles without a fight.

Modernist ecumenical translators also use a corrupted Greek text as seen in the next case in point.

The catholic church, from its roots, has made salvation a process that is tied to works and growth. You cannot be sure of your salvation as an instantaneous “born-again” completed event wherein one day you were headed to hell and the next you were headed to heaven. Consequently, what will be the leaning of the

ecumenical modernist bibles on this new-birth concept? First Peter 2:2 states “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*” but modernists, via their corrupted Vaticanus and Sinaiticus Greek manuscripts from Alexandria Egypt, add to the Word of God to deny the instantaneous new birth, and make salvation a growing thing. Look what their corrupted Greek text added to their ecumenical translations.

Perhaps, they suppose, Peter said, “Like newly born children, thirst for the pure, spiritual milk to make you **grow up into salvation**”? As copyright by James A.R. Moffatt D.D., D.LITT., in his 1950 "The Bible – A New Translation". All rights in this book are reserved. No part of the text may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission.

Or was it “long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may **grow in respect to salvation**”? As copyright by The Lockman Foundation in California, in their 1960 NASB (NASB is a registered trademark of the same, standing for the New American Standard Version).

Or was it, “Like the newborn infants you are, you must crave for pure milk (spiritual milk, I mean), so that you may thrive upon it to your soul's health”? As copyright by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press in their 1961 NEB (NEB is a registered trademark of the same, standing for the New English Bible).

Or was it “that by it you may **grow up to salvation**”? As copyright by the World Publishing Company in their 1962 RSV (RSV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for Revised Standard Version).

Or was it “Be like newborn babies, always thirsty for the pure spiritual milk, so that by drinking it you may **grow up and be saved**”? As copyright by the American Bible Society in their 1966 Good News Bible- Today's English Version.

Or was it “*as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*”? As copyright by the Oxford University Press, Inc. in their 1967 NKJ (NKJ is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New King James). [Oxford University agreed not to change any underlying Greek in their New

Testament translation, only to strip away all second person singular indicators (and make them all plural, you and your) and to remove all verb case indicators (believeth ... hath vs Oxford's believes ... has). However, these changes could not secure a copyright on their New Testament. They got their copyright with all their “significant deviations” found in the Old Testament.]

Or was it “Be as eager for milk as newborn babies – pure milk of the spirit to make you **grow unto salvation**”? As copyright by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in Washington D.C. in their 1970 NAB (NAB is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New American Bible).

Or was it “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may **grow up in your salvation**”? As copyright by the New York Bible Society International, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in their 1973 NIV (NIV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New International Version).

Or was it “as newborn infants, form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may **grow to salvation**”? As copyright by the Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society of Pennsylvania and International Bible Students Association in their 1984 NWT (NWT is a registered trademark of the same, standing for New World Translation). [It is curious that the Watch Tower Society, that does not believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ nor the trinity of the Godhead, predominately change, with brazen boldness, what offends their faulty doctrines.]

Or was it “Be like newborn babies who are thirsty for the pure spiritual milk that will help you **grow and be saved**”? As copyright by the American Bible Society in their 1995 CEV (CEV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for Contemporary English Version).

Or was it “that by it you may **grow up into salvation**”? As copyright by Crossway in their 2001 ESV (ESV is a registered trademark of the same, standing for English Standard Version).

The Holy Bible never intimates that one can “grow to salvation.” It is a new birth, a conversion, a quickening that God does, not a process that man does. In Holy Bible salvation a soul is instantaneously converted, quickened, justified, indwelt, and

baptized into Christ. That is not something one can “grow” or “grow up” to. In the ecumenical movement it is, but in the Holy Bible it is not. Their ecumenical modernist bibles are errant and dangerous.

Many will read all these copyright renditions and repeat Hillary Rodham Clinton's line “What possible difference could it make anyhow!” Three important observations on these multiple renditions. First, words are important. Many of the words added by these translators are not represented at all in the Greek New Testament<sup>29</sup>. Secondly Manuscripts from Alexandria Egypt, where Holy Roman Catholic Saint Origen became the Father of Bible criticism, and the Father of the Roman Catholic's allegorical method, should not determine what is in or not in our Bible; we do not need an ecumenically acceptable bible we need an accurate and authorized Holy Bible. It is our sole authority, it is our final authority.

Thirdly, when there are multiple version which must, by copyright law, have significant deviations from all other versions there is no final authority. Christians wandering from this version to that, none knowing exactly what the Holy Bible says about anything, makes the whole lump, even the soiled evangelicals absolutely apostate, i.e they have abandoned and left what was once believed. The local church needs an absolute authority, found, for English speaking peoples, in the Authorized King James Bible.

These two changes in modernist ecumenical bibles are highlighted here because they directly effect ones understanding of soteriology, but they are only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. The phrase “his mercy endureth for ever” is in my Holy Bible forty-one times, and is the most direct succinct translation of the Hebrew, but in every instance, to gain their copyright's significant

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29 The corrupted Westcott and Hort Greek text, based on the corrupted Alexandrian Egypt manuscripts, copyright 1966, by The United Bible Societies of the USA, inserted two Greek words “εις σωτηριαν” “unto salvation” in 2Peter 2:2. The Greek Received Text (The Textus Receptus) and the Holy Bible does not include them.

deviation requirements, the ESV<sup>30</sup> changed God's mercy to “steadfast love.” The ESVs total elimination of God's mercy (02617 חַסֵּד *cheded kheh' sed*) from the Old Testament Scripture was so disturbing in my investigation, that I would not go on touching such a polluted thing to investigate every one of the two-hundred-and-forty-eight (248) uses in God's word. The ESV does not give us God's Words nor God's Word. Despite its widespread use in Evangelical circles, it is strongly recommended here that you touch not the unclean thing.

## Chapter 4 Bible Truth on Calvinism

There is much to be said about John Calvin's doctrine that individual souls are elect for heaven or hell before the foundation of the world, none of it is good. By far the best exposé of Calvin's error is Evangelist Gerald Fielder's book “*Bible Truth on Calvinism*”.<sup>31</sup> It is short, direct, hard hitting and to the point. Dr. Fielder has graciously allowed his work, in its entirety, to be included in this systematic theology effort. John Calvin's source of error was his Covenant Theology and Replacement Theology, wherein he supposed that Israelites were no longer elect and those in the Catholic Church were the new elect, individually chosen before the foundation of the world. Shame on his presumptuousness. Please thoroughly explore Calvin's error through Dr. Fielder's exceptional book “*Bible Truth on Calvinism*” reprinted in its entirety below.

# ***BIBLE TRUTH***

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30 ESV is a registered trademark of the Crossway – Good News Publishers, Wheaton Illinois, standing for “English Standard Version” and their ecumenical, modernist, copyright, all rights reserved, 2001 bible.

31 Fielder, Gerald, “*BIBLE TRUTH on CALVINISM*”, Bethel Baptist Church, 4212 Campbell Street N. London Ontario, Canada N6P-1A6, 2018.

*A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

*on*

# ***CALVINISM***

***DR. GERALD FIELDER***

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## PREFACE

Because of the resurgence of the theological system called Calvinism in our day and the fact that so many churches are being infected, affected and afflicted by it, I have felt for some time that I should do a Scriptural work on the subject that would be practical and easy to comprehend.

I have been in local church evangelism since 1983 and have preached in probably more than 400 churches in the United States, Canada, the Islands of the Caribbean, the Philippines and Mexico. In all these years I have never encountered as much of this false teaching as I am in these days. Many good churches have been seduced and led into this unscriptural philosophy. I contend that this is happening mainly because many seminaries and Bible colleges are graduating preachers who have been seduced into it. Although I do not have statistics on this, I believe it is safe to say that many training institutions for preachers are infested with professors who no longer hide their Calvinistic leanings but openly teach the heretical doctrines of John Calvin. I read that a recent poll taken among Southern Baptist Seminary graduates revealed that 35% are coming out as Calvinists. According to a recent poll conducted by Southern Baptist affiliated LifeWay Research, at least 30% of Southern Baptist Pastors consider their churches to be Calvinistic. This trend is also affecting unaffiliated Baptist Churches as well. I am consistently made aware that this false teaching knows no boundaries, but has infiltrated many different groups of Baptists. This is not only a disturbing matter, but it is very serious considering the fact that it is of eternal significance.

I believe there is a Scriptural reason for this. The Bible teaches very clearly that in the latter days there would be many false prophets and many would be deceived. *“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”* (Matthew 24:11) *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”* (II Peter 2:1)

These passages certainly have an application in our day.

Doesn't it make sense that these false prophets (emissaries of Satan) would go after Bible believing churches first? Baptist beware!

The Bible also teaches us that these teachers would come in under false pretenses. Both Paul and Jude warned us about this in the following passages: “*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that **ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.***” (Jude 3-4) “*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*” (II Timothy 3:13) “*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*” (Ephesians 4:14)

These passages are especially relevant because in our day many ministers are what we would call closet Calvinists. They will accept a call from a Bible believing Baptist Church pretending to be true Baptists and as soon as they feel safe in doing so will begin to seduce the people into accepting the false teachings of John Calvin. This story could be told many times.

Also, I should emphasize that the Word of God warns us of the power of error. A statement that you might put to memory for future use is; *error has power.* “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to **seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;***” (I Timothy 4:1)

The truth is there are seducing spirits that accompany false teaching (*doctrines of devils*) and they is not only real, but are powerful. Perhaps this is the reason we are warned in the Scriptures not to allow these teachers (*this would also include Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and others*) into our house. “*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:*” (II John 10) Because we live in a day of apostasy like we have never seen

before we must take the above passages more seriously than ever.

One other thing must be said at this point about this false teaching. Loraine Boettner a prominent Calvinist speaker and writer has emphatically stated in his book, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, "*prove any one point of Calvinism true and all of the others will follow as logical and necessary parts of the system. Prove any one of them false and the whole system must be abandoned.*" I plan to let the Word of God prove them all false by using simple passages of Scripture as they are **without modifying them.**

## INTRODUCTION

My observation has taught me that the vast majority of the books dealing with Calvinism are written to promote it rather than refute it. Practically all the religious book companies offer for sale a wide variety of titles written in many cases by prominent personalities whose names lend credibility to and help to promote the books. I do not enjoy admitting this, but most of these books are large volumes where most of the books (*with some exception*) refuting this heretical teaching have been smaller books.

This trend began to change a few years ago and because of this, there are several good books available that expose this false teaching for what it is, doctrines of devils. I recommend books such as *What Love Is This*, by Dave Hunt, and *The Other Side of Calvinism*, by Lawrence Vance.

I would like this book to be considered as one that would also in a practical way expose the false teachings of John Calvin. In dealing with this subject, I plan to use the Word of God as it is without modifying Scripture in order to make my point. This has not been the practice of those promoting this teaching. My philosophy has always been, if you must modify Scripture to build a doctrine that doctrine cannot have a solid Scriptural foundation and should be considered false. Consider the following quote from a great preacher of yesteryear who claimed himself to be a Calvinist, but often contradicted Calvinist doctrine as in the following quote:

*“My love of consistency with my own doctrinal views is not great enough to allow me knowingly to alter a single text of Scripture”.* Charles Spurgeon.

This man of God would not have any part in the matter of altering or modifying the Word of God in order to validate a doctrine.

It is not my intention to write on this subject in order to compete with other books that are already available, or to bring new truth to light that no one else has found or thought of, nor is it

my intention to purposely offend those who have been ensnared by this false teaching. I am aware that there are many sincere men and women who have been seduced into this philosophy. If I could I would want to help them see the truth from the Word of God. Having said this, it is my intention to deal with this doctrine in a practical way so that the person who reads it will know and understand what I have said once they read it. I say this because there have been times when I have read from a commentary that I must go back over it numerous times in order to understand what the commentator was actually saying. I will do my best to make sure this is not the case with this volume.

I should emphasize that there are several quotes by Charles Spurgeon in this book. He claimed to be a Calvinist, but quite often he would make comments that made it clear that he did not buy into all of John Calvin's weird philosophy, but obviously contradicted it. I use his un-Calvinistic quotes to enforce my argument against Calvinism.

Also, I should tell you that this book is not an extensive treatment of Calvinism, but intentionally short and to the point. Because most people today are very busy and have very little time to devote to extra reading I have tried to make this a one sitting read. I trust it will embolden you the reader against this unscriptural teaching, which falls into the category of *doctrines of devils*.

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## **John Calvin**

John Calvin was born in Noyon, Picardy, France on May 27, 1509 and died July 10, 1564 at the rather young age of 55. His parents were staunchly Roman Catholic and he was very zealous in his devotion to that Church until he fell under the influence of Protestantism and later became a Protestant in 1537 at the age of 28. According to my research on the matter he considered himself a Christian from the moment of his infant baptism in the Roman Catholic Church and he never changed his mind on this. I suppose it must make the typical Calvinist somewhat uncomfortable to have to admit that He is reputed to have left no testimony of being born again even though Jesus made it clear that this was a prerequisite for heaven. I understand some prominent Calvinist of today do not claim to have been born again. Perhaps it is because they mistakenly consider themselves to be among the elect and have always belonged to God.

In the process of time he moved to Geneva Switzerland where for several years his ministry suffered many setbacks. However, because of his persistence, in the process of time he eventually became a prominent teacher, writer and pastor in that city. His influence continued to grow until he was the dominant religious figure in Geneva and eventually became a tyrant ruling with an iron hand.

Even though there are many things about this man that could enter the picture at this point, in the following paragraphs I will limit myself to only a few of what I feel are pertinent ones. I will do this by raising several questions and then answering them based on the facts that I have gathered by my own research.

### **What was John Calvin's relationship to the Roman Catholic Church?**

As stated above he was born into a Catholic Family and was devoted to that church until he came under the influence of several Protestants. Their influence caused him to become disillusioned with his church and eventually he became a

Protestant and remained one for the remainder of his life. Even though he was not the founder of the Protestant movement, he came to be a great influence in it. One interesting thing to note here is that any Roman Catholic who decides to make a serious study of Scripture will become disillusioned with his church. He is to be commended for abandoning this church. Many times these same people are vulnerable to other false teachings and end up in some cult like Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormonism. In Calvin's case he fell victim to Augustine and his false teachings about election and predestination. One commentator said that *Calvin never had one original thought in his life*, but that he adopted all his philosophy from Augustine who is reputed to be the architect of the Roman Catholic Church in the fourth and fifth centuries. Calvin confirmed this by his own testimony and obviously, considered him a stand-alone theologian even though he was a Roman Catholic. Just to confirm the contention that Calvin adopted Augustine's philosophy, consider the following statement made by Dave Hunt: *Calvin quoted Augustine more than four hundred times in his institutes without any reservation as "the best and most faithful witness of all antiquity" and called him by such titles as "holy man" and "holy father". Calvinist R. C. Sproul said "Augustinianism is presently called Calvinism or Reformed Theology"*.

### **Was John Calvin ever a Baptist?**

Although he was considered a Pedobaptist because he believed in and practiced baptizing infants, I have not found in my research that he identified himself as such. He could never have claimed to be a true Baptist because of his weird doctrinal beliefs of which I will get into later. I should say that there are many Calvinist leaning Baptists in our day, who feel more comfortable insisting that he was. Although Calvin was not a Baptist, there are many Baptist Churches in our day that identify as Calvinists and this is one reason for this book. Be it understood that you couldn't be a true Baptist and be a Calvinist at the same time.

It is a matter of historical fact that he was a Protestant. **The**

**people who are called Baptist today (even though they were not always called Baptists) are not Protestants and never have been. Baptists in their doctrinal beliefs existed outside the mainstream of religion and extend all the way back to the days of the Apostles.** Although society considers everyone who is not Catholic or Muslim to be a Protestant, Baptists have never had any connection to the Roman Catholic Church or to the Protestant movement or any other religious group. Baptists have always been persecuted by Protestants, Muslims, and Catholics, but have never been the persecutors.

### **What did John Calvin believe?**

The essence of his belief was that God in the morning of eternity arbitrarily predestined the eternal destiny of every soul that should ever be born. His philosophy is best delineated and set forth by the acronym TULIP.

I will deal with this more extensively later, but essentially **he took the sovereignty of God beyond the perimeters of Scripture.** He in affect taught that *man is a robot and God in eternity before at His own pleasure not only decided the destiny of souls, but willed every thought, action and event that should ever occur.* His philosophy not only makes man a mere automaton, but makes God the author of sin and a tyrant over men. If God willed everything that should ever occur, then it follows that He is responsible for all man's actions. If there should be any doubt as to what the Calvinist believes about this, consider the words of John Calvin himself on God and his sovereignty:

*God foreordains everything which comes to pass. His sovereign rule extends throughout the entire Universe and is over every creature, God initiates all things, and regulates all things.*

*No person since Adam has ever had a free will, every unsaved person is free to go in only one direction, free to go down.*

Consider how bazaar his commentary is on Adam and Eve and the fall of man in the garden:

*God forbade them to eat of the tree of knowledge, but ordained them to do just that, then punished them for doing what He ordained them to do.*

Consider the contention of another prominent Calvinist James White:

*God in His sovereignty has willed every thought and action that man could ever have or do.*

To put the sovereignty of God in right Biblical perspective, the following paragraph is the best commentary that I have ever read on the Sovereignty of God:

*God in His sovereignty has given man the genuine power of choice. Thus God's sincere and loving desire for all mankind to be saved is not contradicted by His justice but is rejected by the free will of many. The only way, however, to defend God's integrity, love, and compassion in a world filled with sin and suffering is to acknowledge that He has granted to man the power to choose for himself. Dave Hunt*

I was personally impressed when I read that seventh century King James (*who authorized our beloved Bible*) also rejected the weird teachings of the Calvinist. This is even more impressive considering the fact that King James was not considered to be a Christian.

If the things John Calvin taught about the Sovereignty of God were true it would make God not only the author, but also the perpetrator of every sin and heartache that man has ever experienced since Adam. We must remind ourselves that God is

sinless and perfect and that He doesn't sin or tempt man to sin. *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."* (James 1:13-14) Just for illustration, suppose a husband or wife should decide to leave his or her family and plunge off into sin, does this mean that this was God's will and that He is responsible for their wickedness? Was it God's will that David take the wife of a valiant soldier and commit adultery with her and then to cover his sin have her husband killed? It is obvious that David sinned against God and that God allowed consequences to follow David the rest of his life because of his sin. Why would God punish David for his sin, if God instigated the whole thing? Calvinist James White tried to explain this away by submitting the following foolish argument:

***God's decreeing sin does not make Him the author of sin.***

**This is double-talk** and is neither, rational, logical, or theological, end of discussion. As we will see later in this study, man does have a will and the Word of God makes this plain in scores of passages.

In addition to his weird beliefs concerning the sovereignty of God, when he left the Catholic Church, (*like Luther and others of that era*) and joined the protestant movement, he brought several unscriptural traditions of that church with him. Let it be understood that we believe in the sovereignty of God as the Bible teaches it, even though the word *sovereignty* is not found in the Bible. However, we do not believe the Calvinist interpretation of it. In the following paragraphs I will emphasize some of the more prominent and unscriptural things this man believed. These things serve to identify for us who the man John Calvin really was.

1) He believed the baptism of infants cleansed them of original sin. Following is a quote made by him in defense of his being a Christian:

*At whatever time we are baptized, we are washed and purified once for the whole of life, we must recall our baptism, so as to feel certain and secure of the remission of sins, it wipes and washes away all our defilements.*

He trusted in his infant baptism as proof that he was one of the elect and persecuted and denounced all who differed with him. It should be noted that one of the charges against Servitus that led to his being tortured and burned at the stake was that he rejected infant baptism. According to the record, Calvin as an adult never submitted to baptism, even though Jesus commanded all believers to do so

2) He believed the infants born to the elect were also elect.

3) He believed the Catholic Eucharist insured eternal life as well as insuring the immortality of the body.

4) He believed that only Protestants could be saved and go to heaven. With respect to the protestant movement he adopted the same mindset as the Pope. The Pope believed there was no salvation outside the Catholic Church and Calvin believed there was no salvation outside the Protestant Church.

5) He also adopted the philosophy of Augustine and put into practice the same principles of punishment and death that was practiced by the Roman Catholic Church in the fourth and fifth centuries. These not only included theological things like so-called heresies, but also, moral things like fornication and adultery. In addition many rules and regulations were initiated to punish the citizens for things such as; lack of church attendance, flashy jewelry, suggestive clothing, inappropriate hairstyles, to many dishes in the house and numerous other trivial things. Also, no one was permitted to believe, practice or print anything that was not approved by Calvin. It was considered a crime to speak disrespectfully of Calvin or any of the clergy. In Geneva Punishments included floggings, exile, imprisonments,

banishments, beheadings burning at the stake and drowning's. John Calvin is reputed to have presided over the executions of more than 50 so-called heretics including Servetus. A heretic was someone who among other things did not embrace Calvin's Institutes.

Concerning those who were converted and abandoned the Catholic Church, He as a Roman Catholic is reputed to have made the following statement:

*“One should not be content with simply killing such people, but should burn them cruelly.”*

Unfortunately he carried this same harsh attitude with him when he became a protestant.

One of Calvin's contemporary's told Calvin that if Jesus Christ had lived in Calvin's day, he would have had him executed. In case you are wondering, the man who made this statement to Calvin ended up being burned at the stake. Knowing what I know about the man John Calvin, even if I believed his teachings I would still be ashamed to identify myself with him by calling myself a Calvinist. I must add at this point that I have found no evidence outside the Catholic Church and Augustine that the teachings we call Calvinism even existed until the sixteenth century when John Calvin revived them. Even though I have only mentioned a few of the weird beliefs held by this man, I plan to focus on many of them in the following pages.

## Observations

**1) No one becomes a Calvinist by reading the Scriptures.** I have been a Christian since 1958 and I have never known anyone to become a Calvinist by reading the Bible. This is not only true of Calvinists, but it is also true of the cults. I have never known of anyone becoming a Jehovah's Witness or Mormon that did not first allow them into his or her home to present their teachings. You could read the Bible 10 hours a day for 100 years and these false doctrines would never occur to you because they are not in the Bible. The reason people fall into them is because they are introduced to them by someone who is already infected by them. They must come from outside the realm of Scripture because they are not true Bible doctrines. Perhaps this is the reason we are warned in the Word of God to not let perpetrators of false teachings into our house. *“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”* (II John 10-11)

Before Jesus ascended into heaven He informed us that one of the roles of the Holy Spirit would be to guide us into all truth. He was very clear in His instruction on this and for good reason. *“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.”* (John 14:26) *“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.”* (John 16:13) *“**If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.**”* (John 7:17) In simpler terms, this means that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you every cardinal doctrine in the Bible if you are reading for the right purpose and you are trusting the Holy Spirit to teach you. All I am saying in the above paragraphs is that you are safe reading the Bible. It is not likely that you would ever be drawn away into false teaching.

Sincere Bible believing Christians are warned not to be carried away with doctrines that are foreign to the Word of God. God knew we would be somewhat susceptible to this and gave us this warning: ***“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace;...”*** (Hebrews 13:9a)

**2) Calvinism in many cases destroys the zeal of individuals and Churches to be evangelistic.** The logic is that if Calvinism is true and every soul that God has ordained to eternal life cannot resist his grace in conversion, then why spend all the money, time, and energy to try to convince them to come to Christ. In the Calvinist philosophy *if God wills it, it will happen*. According to the proponents of this teaching irresistible grace will bring them in without our assistance. R. C. Sproul has well stated the position of the Calvinist on the matter of Evangelism:

*Those whom [the Father] regenerates come to Christ. Without regeneration no one will ever come to Christ. With regeneration no one will ever reject him.*

Some Calvinists’ such as Boettner try to show that evangelism has some place in their weird teaching by making such senseless statements as the following:

*Every preacher should pray for them [to whom he presents the gospel] that they may each be among the elect.*

This statement contradicts the Calvinist doctrine of Unconditional Election, which makes it clear that those who are elected cannot resist coming to Christ, and those who are not elected cannot come to Christ. In their mind prayer could have no affect on those who hear the gospel. Their destiny has already been set even before they were born. It would be foolish for the preacher to pray that his audience would be among the elect if God has already made that decision in eternity past. Also, it would be foolish for the sinner to pray that he might be among the elect if God has already decided the matter and his destiny is sealed.

Every Calvinist church that has a missions program is

contradicting what it professes to believe. William Carey, (*who was regarded as the father of modern missions*) was rebuked when he submitted a question to prominent church leaders of his day as to whether the great commission verses in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts compelled men to carry the gospel to the heathen. Just as a reminder those are the great commission passages given to us personally by Jesus himself. A certain Dr. Ryland replied, *young man, when God choses to convert the heathen he will do it without your help or mine.* This, of course, would be consistent with Calvinist doctrine.

**3) There is a pride factor that accompanies many of those who profess to be Calvinists.** With many Calvinists it is as though they feel sorry for you because you have not yet attained their level of intellectuality. It is not uncommon when reading after Calvinist writers and commentators to find a statement like this:

*It requires special preparation for anyone to become qualified to examine the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism in light of the Bible.*

This statement reveals the prideful posture of many of the followers of John Calvin.

We must keep in mind that God has several derogatory things to say about pride. The truth is adopting and professing the doctrines of John Calvin is nothing to be prideful about. It might be appropriate at this point to consider what Paul said to the Corinthians. *“And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.”* (I Corinthians 8:2) What the proud Calvinist may not realize is that those who have rejected Calvinism are wiser than those who fall victim to it. You might say they are wise enough to see how unscriptural the teachings of John Calvin are. Rejecting Calvinism is simply a matter of taking the Word of God as it is and not trying to make it say what it doesn't. I will let the reader decide who is the wiser.

Also, I would point out that God has some very serious things to say about pride: *“Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.”* (Proverbs 13:10) *“Pride goeth before*

*destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18)  
“A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the  
humble in spirit.” (Proverbs 29:23)*

I have observed over the years of my ministry that once a person has been ensnared by a false doctrine or an erroneous version of the Bible, often their pride will not let them acknowledge their error even when the facts are presented to them.

**4) There are some passages that seem to support the Calvinist philosophy.** There will always be a difference of opinion on these passages, but **the rule is that you interpret questionable ones in the light of those that are not questionable that deal with the same subject.** My advice has always been, when you find a passage that seems to contradict clear and easy to understand Bible doctrines you must first determine **what this passage does not mean.** You do this by contrasting the difficult passage with many easy to understand passages that teach the truth about the subject. **You might not know what it does mean, but it is a step in the right direction to determine what it does not mean.** With enough study perhaps over time you will discover the true meaning of the difficult passage. Don't be shaken by what appear to be controversial passages. Research them and study them, but don't allow them to create doubt in your mind concerning established Bible doctrines. The following passage should help you with this: *“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.” (II Peter 1:20-21)* Although it is dangerous, it is possible to isolate a single passage of the Word of God from its context and create a false doctrine and have what appears to be a Scriptural basis for it. A good example is the interpretation that Mormons give to the following passage: *“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?” (I Corinthians 15:29)* If you do not consider the context of this passage it appears to teach the legitimacy of baptizing for the deceased in order to make them just before God. Based on their private interpretation of this passage they baptize for their deceased loved ones. This interpretation is a

contradiction to scores of simple passages that teach that baptism does not make us just before God, nor can we do anything that will justify deceased souls who died in sin and unbelief before God. The problem is context. Baptism actually pictures a death burial and resurrection. In this case the passage is in a chapter that argues strongly for the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the saints because of His resurrection. The implication of the passages is: *if Christ be not raised from the dead*, (I Corinthians 15:17) why are we at His command baptizing our converts for a dead Christ. This ends the discussion.

Also, Paul admonished a young pastor by the name of Timothy to rightly divide the Scriptures: “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” (II Timothy 2:15)

The bottom line is that if you allow yourself to fall under the influence of false teaching from outside the Scriptures, you could easily end up believing your doubts and doubting your beliefs.

**5) Many Calvinists will only read the Bible through Calvinist lenses.** Therefore, everything they read seems to support their philosophy. If they would remove these lenses and sit down with their Bible and read it as it is without modifying it or reading doctrines into it, the Holy Spirit would reveal to them the truth of the Word of God. The result of this would be that they would abandon the false teachings of Calvin. It is unwise for any Christian to read into the Word of God pre-conceived doctrines. While *exegesis* is the research of a passage in order to get to its truth, *eiseges* is the process of reading into a text a preconceived opinion and making it mean something other than what it is teaching. We must read the Word of God with an open mind in order for the Holy Spirit to teach us truth.

**6) Calvinism’s idea of predestination and freewill cannot co-exist.** Stated another way: if the Calvinist idea of predestination is true, then freewill isn’t. They obviously contradict each other. They are not as some have said, two tracks running side by side in the same direction. These two doctrines are far removed one from the other and cannot both be true. If freewill is true then the Calvinist interpretation of predestination cannot be true.

Conversely, if predestination by their definition is true, then freewill cannot be true.

**7) Calvinists cannot prove their argument without modifying Scripture.** There are many instances of this but one dramatic example would be how Calvinist Arthur Pink in his book *The Sovereignty of God* mutilates the following passage: “*For God so loved the world, (elect) that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” (John 3:16)

You will notice Mr. Pink replaces the word *world* with the word **(elect)**. He does this many times in the New Testament. The contention of the Calvinist is that the word *world* in this passage and several others is a reference to *the elect*. Who authorized a man to do this and what Scriptures enable the Bible student to come to this conclusion? There is no Bible basis on which to conclude that *world* in this case means *elect*. It is only opinion.

Since the word *world* is translated from the Greek word *kosmos* in all the following passages, let us consider how absurd and silly it would be to replace this word with *elect* in these passages: “*The world (elect) cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.*” (John 7:7) “*Since the world (elect) began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.*” (John 9:32) “*Now is the judgment of this world (elect) now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*” (John 12:31) “*Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world (elect) cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*” (John 14:17) “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world (elect) giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*” (John 14:27) “*If the world (elect) hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*” (John 15:18) “*If ye were of the world, (elect) the world (elect) would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, (elect) but I have chosen you out of the world, (elect) therefore the world (elect) hateth you.*” (John 15:19) “*Of judgment, because the prince of this world (elect) is judged.*” (John 16:11) Of the 80 times “world” occurs in John’s gospel, not once does it mean *elect*.

That meaning has to be read into the text.

This is proof that Calvin's philosophy is not only opinion but that it clashes with the clear expression of Scripture.

This is a confirmation of what I have previously said, that if you were to read John 3:16 every day for 100 years without modifying it you would always conclude that **God's love is collective, not selective**, as the Calvinist would insist.

True Bible believers do not need to modify the text in order to confirm their doctrinal beliefs. The typical Calvinist must modify many Scriptures in order to make his argument. Consider what God said about this in the following passage: ***"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."*** (Deuteronomy 4:2)

**8) Calvinism puts God on a lower moral level than sinful man.** Most people possess enough character that they could not send billions of people to hell just out of their own pleasure. Yet Calvinism proudly places God on a lower level than sinful man. This philosophy is a serious and obvious contradiction to the following inspired statement from the Word of God: *For God so loved the world. It is blasphemy in the highest degree to place the God of heaven on a lower moral level than sinful man.*

**9) There is obvious inconsistency in interpretation.** This obvious inconsistency shows up in their taking certain passages that form the argument for the Tulip at face value, but modifying and refusing to take at face value passages that refute their teaching. This is not honest and is known as intellectual dishonesty.

**10) There are several passages that are prominent to the Calvinist that appear to contradict established Bible doctrines.** Many great men of God have had a problem with these controversial passages. Keep in mind that in the final analysis there are no contradictions in the Word of God.

How do I deal with these? I interpret them in the light of the scores of passages that I do understand that deal with the same subject. Again, sometimes it is necessary to **determine what a passage does not mean** and learn later what it does mean. Does

that make sense? If every Bible student would apply this principle to every passage that appears to contradict the cardinal doctrines of the Word of God, it would prevent a great deal of confusion and disillusionment.

**11) Calvinism is responsible for many church splits.** It is not uncommon for a church to call in a new pastor under the assumption that he is of sound doctrine only discover later that he is steeped in Calvinism. This is happening in our day more than ever. Often by the time it becomes obvious that he holds the so-called *doctrines of grace* several impressionable members will have been deceived into believing these false teachings. My recommendation to a pulpit committee, is that they press a candidate on the matter of whether he is Calvinistic or not, and also on whether he believes our Kings James Bible. Normally if they are not sound on these they will not reveal it up front.

## What is The TULIP?

The *tulip* is an acronym that represents the five points of Calvinism. Some people call these the five doctrines of grace. My contention is that they have no relationship whatsoever to grace.

I must interject at this point that the phrases, *Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints*, do not appear in Scripture.

Before getting into a Scriptural study of these five points I will first submit an abbreviated version of them.

**The T, representing total depravity**, means that *man within himself is totally depraved and spiritually dead and cannot repent or believe. Because of this God first supernaturally regenerates the man and only then can he exercise faith and become a believer.*

**The U, representing unconditional election**, means that *the elect are predestined to heaven while all the non-elect are predestined to hell.*

**The L, representing limited atonement**, means that *God has provide atonement only to the elect and that He does not love nor has He made atonement available to the non-elect.*

**The I, representing irresistible grace**, means that *no one who is among the elect can resist the grace of God in conversion and every pre-destined for heaven soul will come to Christ.*

**The P, representing the perseverance of the Saints**, means that *those who are truly regenerated will persevere and will never fall away and that this perseverance confirms that they are among the elect.*

Although these are abbreviated definitions of the five points of Calvinism, I will deal with these much more extensively in the following pages.

## **“T” The Doctrine of Total Depravity**

In order to have the right perspective of the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity it will be necessary to contrast it with the true Scriptural doctrine of depravity.

An accurate and Scriptural definition of this doctrine would be as follows; *the belief that all human beings are sinful because they are born with an inherited sin-nature and that because of this nature they are powerless within themselves to change their condition.* This definition is in my opinion confirmed by volumes of Scripture including the following passages, just to submit few: “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Psalm 51:5) “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” (Romans 5:12) “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Romans 5:19)

Bible believers have no problem with the above definition of man’s depravity. According to these passages, we do not sin to become sinners we sin because we are sinners.

According to the Word of God man was initially created perfect and had no sin nature prior to the incident in the garden with Eve and Adam. “So God created man **in his own image**, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27) “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.” (Genesis 2:7) “Lo, this only have I found, that **God hath made man upright**; but they have sought out many inventions.” (Ecclesiastes 7:29) According to Genesis chapter one, in the process of creating the world and all things therein God said *it was good* at least six times, but when he finished making man in his own image He said, *it was very good.*

It was obviously a perfect world, but this was about to change. According to the Word of God (for lack of a better expression) sin entered the bloodstream of mankind when our first parents were deceived into disobeying their creator and eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. As someone has said; *the problem*

*was not the apple on the tree, but the pair on the ground. You can read the factual account of this in the following passage: “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1-5)*

Then in the next verse, Eve and Adam, having been deceived took of the fruit of the forbidden tree and sin entered the bloodstream of mankind: *“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.” (Genesis 3:6)*

The sad fact is that this sin not only affected Eve and Adam, but it has continued to plague the entire human race ever since. Having dealt with the **definition** of human depravity above, lets consider several passages that reveal the **bible doctrine of human depravity**.

Although many passages could be considered for the purpose of discussion, only three are required at this point to confirm this doctrine. *“Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Romans 5:18-19)* *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)* *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6)*

We, who take the Word of God at face value, have no problem

with the fact that prior to our faith in Christ and the salvation and regeneration that followed we were dead in sin. In no uncertain terms this truth is confirmed in the following passage: “*And you hath he quickened, **who were dead in trespasses and sins;***” (Ephesians 2:1) We truly were at the mercy of the world, the flesh, and the devil prior to Christ coming into our lives.

Because of the above passages and numerous others, mankind’s sin nature is established as a fact. Of course, if you want to get some idea of just how depraved human nature is, you could consider what God said about it in this passage: “*The heart is **deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?***” (Jeremiah 17:9) You probably noticed the little *phrase who can know it?* This means none of us know how wicked the human heart really is and can be. Not even the psychiatrist, the psychologist, or anyone else.

This passage is consistent with what God saw when he looked down from heaven and made this observation: “*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.***” (Genesis 6:5) This was not an incidental statement in the Bible. Just to comment further on this truth, it must be acknowledged that God is the only person in the universe who truly knows the depths of depravity of the human heart. Consider the context of God’s statement on the wickedness of the human heart: “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? **I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.***” (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

We can get some idea of just how depraved the human heart can be by considering men like Hitler of Germany, Stalin of Russia and Mao of China, who were responsible for the deaths of multiplied millions of innocent people. We can also include the murderers of babies (abortionist) here in America who have killed at least ten times as many of our most innocent ones as did Adolph Hitler.

For further confirmation of the inherent sinful nature of man consider the following passages: “*For there is not a just man*

*upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*” (Ecclesiastes 7:20) “*Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*” (Proverbs 20:9) “*As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*” (Romans 3:10-11) “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*” (Romans 3:23)

These passages leave no doubt that man has inherited a depraved nature.

Now that we have considered what the Bible says about depravity or the sinful nature of man, let's look at what the Calvinist says about it. After doing some research on the matter I learned that Calvin, as it appears below, adopted word for word what Augustine of Hippo, (*the architect of the Roman Catholic Church*) taught about this subject.

*Total depravity is a theological doctrine derived from the Augustinian concept of original sin. It is the teaching that, as a consequence of the fall of man, every person born into the world is enslaved to the service of sin as a result of their fallen nature and, apart from the efficacious or prevenient grace of God, is utterly unable to choose to follow God, refrain from evil, or accept the gift of salvation as it is offered.*

To put some interpretation on this, part of Calvin's statement on man's depravity is correct. We did inherit a sin nature at birth and we are powerless in our own ability to change this. The truth is that even though we are born again and have Christ living within in the person of the Holy Spirit, we are still sinners saved by grace and battling our old nature in our flesh. Paul expressed this well in the following statements: “*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*” (Romans 7:18) “*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*” (Romans 7:21) “*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*” (I Corinthians 9:27) The only hope we have with regard to the sin nature of the flesh is that one day

we will have a new body fashioned like unto the Son of God.

The problem with Calvin's philosophy on depravity is that **he takes it beyond the perimeters of Scripture**. I say this because of the following assertion taken from Calvin's own words in the statement above on human depravity.

*(apart from the efficacious or prevenient grace of God, is utterly unable to choose to follow God, refrain from evil, or accept the gift of salvation)*

The obvious contention according to Calvin is that man in his fallen state is utterly unable to respond to God's call to repentance and faith in Christ and that God in His grace must regenerate the man so that he can believe. Lest there be any doubt as to the Calvinist position and interpretation on the above statement, consider the following quotes from Calvinist R. C. Sproul:

*The reformed (Calvinist) view is that before a person can choose Christ, he must be born again.*

*The reformed view of predestination teaches that before a person can choose Christ, he must be regenerated or born again. One does not first believe, then become reborn. Regeneration precedes faith.* R. C. Sproul

Calvinist James White in slightly different terminology states the same thing:

*The reformed assertion is that man cannot understand and embrace the gospel nor respond in faith and repentance toward Christ without God first freeing him from sin and giving him spiritual life.* James White

It is not necessary to include the statements of other prominent voices for Calvinism because they all hold the same opinion as Mr. White and Mr. Sproul.

Getting back to man's depravity lets let the Bible speak for

itself. “*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*” (Ephesians 2:1-3)

Even though this passage makes it abundantly clear that man is depraved, it does not in any way suggest that he cannot respond to God’s call to repentance and faith. He is dead spiritually, but very much alive physically.

Calvinism wrongly interprets this passage to mean that man is not only depraved (*meaning dead*), he is depraved to the extent that he is afflicted with total inability. This means (*using their terminology*) *that man is so dead in sin that he cannot repent, he cannot exercise faith, he can do nothing because dead men are totally powerless.* That statement might sound acceptable in the normal order of things. However, in this case it is not true. The Calvinist uses the illustration of a man being dead and powerless to respond to anything, but this is not a good illustration. The reason being this: even though a man is dead spiritually, he is still very much alive and conscious and can make decisions. The God of the Bible looks at it this way and holds man responsible for his decisions and his actions. The following passage makes even clearer what I have just stated: “*But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.*” (I Timothy 5:6)

This passage clearly teaches that even though she is dead, she is alive and has a will and because she is alive and has a will has made the decision to live in pleasure. According to the Scriptures God commands men who are dead in sin **to repent and believe in order to be saved.** This is a matter of fact and is beyond debate unless you want to argue with God. The logical objection to Calvin’s definition of depravity is that if a man is dead so that he cannot receive Christ, **he also is so dead he cannot reject Christ.** Yet the Word of God is clear that **sinners are condemned because they will not receive Christ, not because they cannot receive**

**Christ.** This truth is born out in numerous passages: “*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.*” (John 3:18) “*And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*” (John 5:40) “*I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*” (John 8:24) If there were no other passages in the Bible to confirm the fact that sinners are condemned because they refuse to believe in Christ these would be sufficient.

Another interesting observation would be that if he is as dead as they say, not only could he not believe, **he couldn't even sin.** One verse would be enough, but I will include several easy to understand passages that reveal that God commands spiritually dead sinners to repent: “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” (Luke 13:3) “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” (Luke 13:5) “*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*” (Luke 24:47)

How could Jesus in good conscience say *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish* to one who is elected and chosen to heaven? If as the Calvinist says, a man is foreordained and elected to go heaven then he could not be included in those who are in danger of perishing, because he is in no danger of perishing. To take this passage further, how could Jesus in good conscience say to those predestined to hell *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish* when He knows full well that they cannot repent because (in the Calvinist philosophy) He Himself has predestined them to hell?

The question that insists on being answered is: Why would God command us to win souls, if the elect are going to be regenerated prior to faith in Christ and the non-elect could never be won to Christ? Yet He did command us in no uncertain terms to try to win unsaved people to Christ. “*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.*” (Proverbs 11:30) “*And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*” (Daniel 12:3) “*And he saith unto them, Follow*

*me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19) “Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” (James 5:20) “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psalm 126:5-6)*

In the Bible Andrew is famous for being a soulwinner. You might remember that it was he who brought Peter to Christ: *“He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. (John 1:41-42a)* The obvious truth in this passage is that Peter came to Christ upon hearing about the Messiah. This is the way every Christian comes to Christ.

How could we win someone to Christ who is of the non-elect if it is impossible for him to believe and become part of the elect? Why would we try to win the elect if they are going to be regenerated without even hearing the gospel? Isn't it becoming clear by now just how ridiculous and inconsistent the Calvinist argument is? The Calvinist argument is not even logical, let alone theological. Another question that begs to be addressed is: how would you win a dead man to Christ, if in fact *dead men can do nothing*, and the only way the elect can have life is when a Sovereign God regenerates (*raises them from the dead*)? There is no debate about whether God commands and expects us to win the lost to Christ as the above passages tell us.

Getting back to repentance, notice that Paul preached repentance to the Athenians: *“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now **commandeth all men every where to repent:**” (Acts 17:30)* According to the text some of the Athenians did repent and believe: *“And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.” (Acts 17:32-34)* Isn't it plain that these converts came to Christ because they heard the gospel and not because of a

sovereign act of God?

The ones who did not repent and believe are included in the number of those condemned already because they did not believe, not because they were not elected. *“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.”* (John 3:18)

Peter preached this same truth on the day of Pentecost. *“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.”* (Acts 2:38) It could be helpful at this point if we would understand what repentance is; The best definition I could give is that repentance is not an action, but rather an attitude of heart. *Repentance is seeing yourself as God sees you, seeing sin as your greatest problem and seeing Christ as the only solution.* This is something every sinner must do before he could even see a need for salvation in his life. This happens when the sinner hears the gospel of Christ and is convicted of his sinful condition. By this definition repentance must precede faith in Christ.

To continue the discussion it is important to understand that contrary to what Calvinism teaches there is a divine order or sequence of events involved in a sinner coming to know Jesus Christ. Keep in mind as you consider the following paragraphs that the Calvinist teaching on this is that *God must first regenerate the sinner without his permission or knowledge of what is happening and even without his seeking it. This is because, in their opinion, it is only after divine regeneration that the sinner can exercise faith in Christ.* It would be helpful at this point to reintroduce a statement by a strong Calvinist to this effect:

*The reformed (Calvinist) view is that before a person can choose Christ, he must be born again.*

*The reformed view of predestination teaches that before a person can choose Christ, he must be regenerated or born again. One does not first believe, then become reborn. Regeneration*

*precedes faith.* R. C. Sproul

Now let us consider the sequence involved in a sinner coming to know Christ as it is set forth in the Word of God.

### **1) The sinner hears the gospel.**

Consider the following questions that the Holy Spirit of God sets forth in the Scriptures that the Calvinist cannot explain away:

***“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?***

***and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?***

***and how shall they hear without a preacher?”*** (Romans 10:14)

***“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*** (Romans 10:17) ***“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,”*** (Ephesians 1:13) ***“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”*** (I Corinthians 1:21)

Read the above passages carefully, and you will see that there is only one conclusion to come to. These passages make it abundantly clear that the sinner must hear before he can repent and place his faith in Christ. There is no regeneration before faith in these passages or anywhere else in the Bible. To put it in different terminology; it did not say, *by the foolishness of predestination*, but rather, *by the foolishness of preaching*.

If the Calvinist concept of how a man is brought to Christ is true, then why must missionaries be sent to the heathen in order for them to realize their need of Christ. Are there no elect among the

heathen that God can regenerate? Why is it that in many remote areas of the world where the gospel has never been preached there are no conversions for hundreds of years, but when the missionary shows up and preaches the gospel suddenly there are many? The only answer is that the sinner must hear the gospel in order to realize his need of salvation and then he must respond to it in order to be saved. This is precisely the reason Jesus instructed Christians to go into all the world and preach the gospel. *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:”* (Matthew 28:19) *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”* (Mark 16:15) *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”* (Luke 24:47) *“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”* (John 20:21) *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8) *“Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.”* (I Corinthians 15:34)

I am sure that every Christian reading this can go back to a place in his or her life where they heard the good news of the gospel of Christ and either then or sometime later trusted Christ as Saviour as a result. The truth is that no one has ever been saved before hearing the gospel of Christ and no one ever will be. This is the reason it is so important and urgent that we carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.

## **2) The sinner is convicted (*convinced*) of his sin and his need of Christ.**

*“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”* (Acts 2:36-37) Obviously, these

hearers became convinced of their need of salvation upon hearing Peter's message and were open to further instruction on how to acquire it. Peter instructs them in the following passage: "*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.*" (Acts 2:38) Incidentally, if there is any question about the matter of baptism in this passage, I would clear it up by pointing out that the word **for** comes from the Greek word **eis**, and means **because of**, not **in order to**. **For** is not incorrect in this passage, it is just that we do not normally understand what it means in a context like this. Consider this illustration: If a man is standing before a judge and is sentenced **for** his crime, sentencing him does not make him a criminal, because he was a criminal before being brought before the judge. He is sentenced **for** or **because of** his crime.

Paul the apostle prior to his conversion to Christ was known as Saul the persecutor. According to the Scriptures he was on his way to Damascus to arrest and punish the followers of Christ when God struck him down. When you read the context it becomes obvious that he was struggling with the conviction in his heart that was there because he had heard a gospel message by the martyr Stephen.

While he lay on the ground the Lord made the following statement to him: "*And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: **it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.***" (Acts 9:5) Saul surrendered to Christ that day and not only became a great Christian, but a great preacher of the gospel. This is just another example from the Word of God that the sinner must hear and become convinced of his need of Christ in order to repent and place faith in Christ.

### **3) The sinner personally trusts Jesus Christ as his saviour and is saved.**

Let us consider the case of the eunuch of Acts 8. According to the Scriptural account he was traveling in his chariot and reading from Isaiah 53. The Holy Spirit told Phillip to join the man in his

chariot. The eunuch had no idea what this chapter was about or who it was about so he asked Phillip to explain it to him. Phillip took the same passage and preached Christ to him. **Notice the order of his conversion** and how it came about in the following passage: *“And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. (Acts 8:30-38)*

**The order is obvious; he hears the gospel and believes, then makes his profession of faith followed by baptism.**

I would challenge anyone to show me one passage that teaches that God first regenerates the sinner so that he can repent, believe, and be born again. The Calvinists get themselves into such a corner on this matter that they come out with a totally absurd and unscriptural scenario like this: **“In order for the dead man to be saved and made alive in Christ, God must first regenerate him and then he can repent and believe.** The problem with this is that there is no Scripture to support it.

I need to include several logical questions at this point, questions that the Calvinist would have to answer.

- 1) If God regenerates a man before he even hears the gospel,

why preach the gospel to him? A regenerated man is saved. Consider the following quote by Charles Spurgeon as he once again refutes this the Calvinist:

*If I am to preach faith in Christ to a man who is regenerated, then the man, being regenerated, is saved already, and it is an unnecessary and ridiculous thing for me to preach Christ to him, and bid him to believe in order to be saved when he is saved already, being regenerate. Am I only to preach faith to those who have it? Absurd, indeed! Is not this waiting till the man is cured and then bringing him the medicine? This is preaching Christ to the righteous and not to sinners.* Charles Spurgeon

2) Does Jesus command us to preach the gospel to those who have already been regenerated? When do you preach the gospel before regeneration or after?

3) What does the gospel accomplish if the sinner has already been regenerated? Why even preach the gospel if as they say God regenerates the sinner before he hears.

4) Why would a regenerated child of God want or need to be saved since regeneration and salvation are the same?

This false teaching as I understand it is based on the absurd interpretation of the following passage: “*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*” (Ephesians 2:1) It reveals once again the practice of the Calvinist of reading into a text a pre-conceived opinion.

Notice again as I have already demonstrated and will again that the Calvinist idea of how salvation occurs is **exactly reverse to the order of the salvation experience as God gives it to us in the Scriptures**. Following is another clear example of the order in which salvation is experienced as Paul sets it forth in his epistle to the believers at Ephesus: “*In whom ye also trusted, **after that ye heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also **after that ye believed, ye were sealed** with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* (Ephesians 1:13-14) “*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

*But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (John 20:30-31)*

According to the divine order set forth in the above passages, a man hears the Written Word, then trusts the Living Word (*Christ*) and in the process is sealed with the Holy Spirit. Did you notice that the Ephesians trusted Christ ..... **after** ..... **they heard the Word of Truth?** This is always the order of the salvation experience. Consider the example of Cornelius and his family coming to Christ in Acts 10. Note the order in which it occurred. Cornelius was obviously concerned about his lack of a relationship with God and was praying about it and God sent an angel to advise him on what he should do: *“There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: **he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.**” (Acts 10:1-6)*

It is obvious that Cornelius would need to hear the gospel in order to place his trust in Christ. You noticed that instead of God regenerating this man as the Calvinist would suggest, he tells him to send for the preacher who would tell him what he needed to do. This impressive story confirms the fact that there are three things involved in the conversion of every sinner. There is the man of God, The Word of God, and The Spirit of God. Even if you were saved as a result of reading a tract, some man had to prepare the tract. Man is involved.

Even though I have already commented on these passages at least once, it is important that we look at them again with regard to Cornelius’s experience of salvation. In them you will notice once more three rhetorical questions that relate to his need: *“How then*

*shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”* (Romans 10:14) Then in the following passages Paul confirms that the seeking sinner must hear the gospel in order to believe and place faith in Christ. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”* (Romans 1:16) *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* (Romans 10:17) *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* (Hebrews 4:12)

Cornelius needed to hear the gospel and the following passage reveals what happened after Cornelius heard. *“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name **whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.** While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”* (Acts 10:43-44) The next few verses reveal that Cornelius and his household received Christ and were baptized. *“And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter; because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter; Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?”* (Acts 10:45-47)

According to this passage, it is hearing the Word first, then faith in Christ, and remission of sins as a result. There are two questions the Calvinist needs to answer relative to Cornelius:

**First, if Cornelius is spiritually dead, why is he seeking a relationship with God?** According to Calvinist philosophy dead men can do nothing and certainly could not have desire to know God. According to the Calvinist interpretation of Romans 3:11, no man ever had a desire to know God.

Second, if Cornelius is among the elect why did he need to hear a preacher to reveal to him the gospel of Christ?

The Philippian jailor in Acts 16 is another example that

reveals the order of salvation. “Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**” (Acts 16:29-31) Obviously, with the jailor it was believe first, and salvation as a result.

Also confirming the Scriptural order of salvation are verses such as these: “**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:**” (John 1:12) “**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**” (John 5:24) “**And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.**” (John 20:30-31) “**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:**” (John 1:12) “**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**” (John 6:47) “**Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:**” (John 11:25) “**But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.**” (John 20:31) “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**” (Romans 1:16) “**That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**” (Romans 10:9)

Note again the order, **the sinner hears, then believes and is saved as a result.** In all the 31,000 verses in our Bible there is not one instance where God regenerated a man before he heard the gospel, before he repented, and before he trusted Christ as his saviour.

Consider one other example that clearly reveals that it is faith

in Christ and then the new birth as a result. “*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That **whosoever believeth** in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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.*” (John 3:14-16)

Paul confirmed the order in which men are saved in the following passage directed to the Galatians: “*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*” (Galatians 3:26)  
**Obviously, their faith is the factor that made them children of God.**

Notice it is hearing first, faith second and then forgiveness of sin as a result.

Also, Jesus clearly indicated that the sinner must hear the gospel of Christ and then respond to it in order to be saved. “*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*” (John 12:32) “*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.***” (John 6:40)

Clearly you have eternal life because you believed, not so that you could believe. The above verses and many others make it very clear that the new birth is the **result of faith in Christ and not the cause of it.**

There is a sinister purpose in this false teaching. We can never forget that Satan, being very wise realizes that if you are right on salvation, you are going to heaven when you die, even if you are wrong on some other doctrinal issues. He also knows that if you are wrong on the matter of salvation, you could conceivably be right on every other issue and you would still miss heaven and end up in hell. The Satanic purpose of confusing salvation is to send people to hell. Paul was very clear on this matter when he reproved the Galatians: “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and **would pervert the gospel of Christ.** But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I*

*now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*" (Galatians 1:6-9)

This is not all this apostle had to say about false teachers, consider the following passages: "*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*" (Ephesians 4:14) "*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*" (I Timothy 4:1) "*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*" (II Timothy 3:13)

The main reason this is so serious is that Calvinism, even though it is not considered a cult, nevertheless perverts the gospel of Christ as do the cults. In relation to salvation this puts them in the same category with all the major cults in that they are distorting the truth of God's simple plan of salvation. I could add that Satan is also working in the area of newer Bible versions to accomplish his diabolical purpose. Every new English version of the Bible that hits the market these days is in a deceitful way (*and some not so deceitful*) taking apart the gospel of Christ.

It might be objected that God has commanded us to make sure of our calling and election. Lets consider this passage. "*Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*" (II Peter 1:10) There are two real problems for the Calvinist if he cites this passage as proof of his argument.

1) According to his argument, man has absolutely nothing to do with God calling him. After all, in their opinion *dead men can do nothing*. It is altogether the sovereignty of God that made this happen. The question remains, then, what could a man do to insure his calling? The answer is nothing!

2) If this verse were to be used to confirm the predestination argument, according to Calvinist philosophy election would have to come first.

The truth is that God calls all men to come to Christ and only those who do can fulfil God's election plan that they conform to the image of Christ as stated in Roman 8:28-29.

In summary I need to state that Calvin's doctrine of total depravity does not survive Scriptural scrutiny. It contradicts many easy to understand passages of Scripture and confuses many poor souls who are anxious about their relationship with God. No doubt there are poor confused sinners in the Calvinist camp who are waiting for God to regenerate them so that they can profess Christ as Saviour and sadly this will never happen.

Let it be understood that the sinner is dead in sins and helpless to change his condition, but there are no passages in the Bible that even suggest that he cannot respond to the gospel and be changed by the power of God. God does not regenerate sinners against their will. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”* (Romans 1:16) *“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.”* (John 7:37) *“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”* (Luke 18:13)

The gospel is the power of God that changes the life of the sinner who through repentance and faith trusts Christ as Saviour. God only saves those who believe.

## **“U” Unconditional Election**

The teaching of Calvinism concerning unconditional election is that God in His sovereignty and **at His pleasure** chose to save certain members of the human race while at the same time **at His pleasure** chose not to save others. According to the Calvinist His decision was not based on foreknowledge, nor was it based on the merits of the individual. Again it was **at His pleasure** and nothing else. Unconditional means *no conditions*.

To be even more clear on this point consider the following quotes on this subject that come from John Calvin himself:

*“Calvin emphasized the role God plays in the process of salvation. He theorized that believers (elect) were predestined to salvation. This means that before God had even created the world, he chose which people would be beneficiaries of his gift of salvation. Calvin affirmed a strict understanding of God's sovereignty. He believed that God was in complete control over humanity's actions and that nothing happens unless God wills it, including the salvation of sinners”*

Lest there be any misunderstanding on the above notice Calvin's statement below:

*“We say then that Scripture clearly proves this much, that God by his eternal and immutable counsel determined once for all those whom it was his pleasure one day to admit to salvation and those whom, on the other hand, it was his pleasure to doom to destruction.”*

Before I began to refute the claims of the Calvinist, I want to include a few quotes from James White who is currently one of the prominent proponents of this false teaching.

*Before the world was made, God's eternal, immutable purpose, which originated in the secret counsel and **good pleasure of His will**, moved Him to choose (or to elect), in Christ, certain of mankind to everlasting glory. Out of His mere free grace and love*

*He predestinated these chosen ones to life, although there was nothing in them to cause Him to choose them. He chooses to exercise mercy and grace toward undeserving creatures solely on the basis of “**the good pleasure of His will.**” There is nothing in the creature that merits, earns, or attracts His favor, **His election is unconditional in that it is based solely on His purpose and His pleasure** and not in anything whatsoever in the creature. We note that God begets His children freely and without reference to accomplishment or worthiness or even “foreseen faith.” Every possible aspect of human action is denied a place in bringing about the new birth, including the will of man. James White*

As absurd as it is, I would like to thank Mr. White for so clearly stating the Calvinist position of unconditional election. I include the above quotes so that the reader will know that they are not just my opinion. Further, let me say that if Calvinism is true don't you think there would be at least one verse in the entire Bible that supports the idea that God's love and grace are limited to a select group? To answer that question, there is not one verse in the Word of God that clearly states that God has limited His love and grace to a limited select group. Granted, like all false religions there are some passages that are misinterpreted to supposedly support such unscriptural notions.

Listed below are several obvious refutations from the Word of God of this false doctrine.

### **The Character of God refutes this false teaching.**

How could the God described in our Bible, in the morning of eternity look down through His telescope of time **and at His pleasure** decide to predestinate some to heaven while essentially dooming others to eternal damnation? The Calvinist says that God does not base his decision on works or merit of any kind. They affirm as stated above that **it is at His pleasure he determines the destiny of souls.** One of the passages that is used to make this point is as follows: *“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according **to the good pleasure***

*of his will,”* (Ephesians 1:5)

You will notice that **predestination in this passage has nothing to do with the new birth, but with adoption as sons as a result of the new birth.** I could also include the following passage to confirm that predestination applies to born again sinners and not to the unsaved: *“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. **For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.**”* (Romans 8:28-29)

You will notice that predestination in this passage has to do with conforming to the image of Christ. It is synonymous with the following statement Paul made to the Galatians: *“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,”* (Galatians 4:19)

He was not speaking of the new birth, because these Galatians were already born again, he was referring to the matter of growing into the image of Christ.

I have included some quotes below that express what the Word of God teaches on the matter of election and predestination:

*Predestination is always unto specific blessings that accompany salvation, but not to salvation itself.*

*It seems that God predestined certain blessings for those He foreknew would believe the gospel and be saved.*

*Never does election or predestination refer to salvation, but always and only to particular benefits.*

The Calvinist must believe that *foreknowledge* and *foreordination* are synonymous or admit that their philosophy is faulty. Calvinist John MacArthur says;

*God’s foreknowledge is not a reference to His omniscient foresight, but to His foreordination.*

Anyone with a grade school education would see that Mr. MacArthur's statement is contradictory. On the following page I will give the definitions of these two terms and they are not synonymous.

Incidentally, my information on Mr. MacArthur is that he like Calvin never claims to have been born again. I understand this to mean that since he regards himself as one of the elect, he never needed the new birth.

Maybe this is because one of their spokesmen declared that *God probably regenerates the elect in infancy*. How far out is this? Where is the Scripture for such a far out claim as this?

They must believe and advocate that foreknowledge and foreordination are the same or their doctrines collapse. Any open minded individual knows that foreknowledge and foreordination are not the same. Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines *foreknowledge* as follows: "*knowledge of a thing before it happens*" By contrast *foreordination* is defined as: "*previous ordination or appointment, predetermination, predestination.*" The dictionary blows the Calvinist argument away for the intellectually honest Bible student.

At this point I want to enlarge on a passage that is used by the Calvinist to supposedly settle their argument on predestination: "*And when the Gentiles **heard this**, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*" (Acts 13:48) Since it is necessary for a sinner to hear the Word of God in order to be saved, it is important to notice that in keeping with Bible Truth, they did in fact hear. "*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*" (Romans 10:14)

The key word in Acts 13:48 is the word *Ordained*. The true interpretation of this passage is dependent on this word. What does it mean? The Greek word from which this word comes, spelled in English is *tasso*. Strong's Greek Dictionary defines it as follows; *addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set*. Considering the fact that a key word in the Bible can have several dictionary definitions it is necessary to determine which definition is right for the context. In

this case it must be the word *determine*, ordain must mean *determine*. This word suits the context perfectly and it is the word used in other passages such as the following: “*When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they **determined** that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.*” (Acts 15:2) When you integrate this definition into Acts 13:48 it is easy to see that it is consistent with many other passages that reveal the truth on the matter of predestination. For instance; “*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained (determined) to eternal life believed.*” (Acts 13:48) Please understand that I am not changing the Scripture but only helping to clear up a serious misunderstanding of what the word *ordained* really means in this context.

Therefore we must conclude that God desires that all men be saved. “*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.***” (II Peter 3:9) This passage cannot apply to the elect, because according to the Calvinist the elect **cannot resist** the grace of God and **are not in danger of perishing because they are of the elect**. Of course, in their mind it cannot apply to the non-elect, because **God is willing that they should perish** and has determined this. The correct interpretation of this passage is that God desires that all men repent and believe so that they can be saved.

The god of Calvinism would have the same cold unmerciful attitude, as did John Calvin. Their god condemned multitudes to hell before they were born, before they had any opportunity to reject free salvation through Jesus Christ. According to their god, he had pleasure in dooming these souls. Yet the Bible clearly says the God of heaven has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. “*Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?*” (Ezekiel 18:23) “*Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil*

ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezekiel 33:11) Obviously, election is not in the picture in the above passages as God offers life to the wicked.

Just for thought, consider the following passage: “*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*” (Proverbs 22:6) The only way the Calvinist can embrace this passage is to modify it and add the phrase ... “**if he is of the elect**”

There are two things listed below that characterize the God we know who is the God of the Bible.

**1) The God of heaven is a God of Love.** In fact He is a God of love beyond our ability to describe or comprehend.

The Word of God declares this to be true: “*He that loveth not knoweth not God; **for God is love.***” (I John 4:8) “*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.***” (I John 4:16) “*And to know the love of Christ, **which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.***” (Ephesians 3:19)

Although I haven’t read them myself, I understand Calvin’s Institutes (*which are his writings*) consist of many hundreds of pages that speak repetitiously of God’s sovereignty, but have **not one mention of the fact that God is a God of love and that God loves sinners.** Why did he fail to mention this since the Word of God is replete with references to the fact that God does indeed love sinners? The reason for his failure to mention this is because he did not believe that God loved sinners, especially all sinners.

In the following passages you will see that God loved us unsaved sinners before we loved Him: “*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*” (I John 4:10) “***We love him, because he first loved us.***” (I John 4:19) “*For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. **But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.***” (Romans 5:6-8) Paul demonstrated God’s love for sinners as the

following passage implies: “*I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:*” (Romans 9:1-3)

In order to make my point on this matter I will call your attention to five things that emphasize this great love.

**a. God’s love defies description.** There are no words in our vocabulary that truly describe the love of God for fallen man. Consider what I think is the most elementary passage in our Bible, especially on this subject: “*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.*” (John 3:16) **So loved does not tell us how much.**

**b. God’s love defies comprehension.** Notice the impressive and astonishing statement concerning His love in the following passage: “*And to know the love of Christ, which **passeth knowledge**, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*” (Ephesians 3:19)

*Passeth knowledge* means it is past finding out by finite minds like ours. Equally impressive and just as uncomprehendable are the words of Paul in his letter to the Ephesians: “*But God, who is rich in mercy, for his **great love** wherewith he loved us,*” (Ephesians 2:4)

His love is described as a great love. We know that the word *great* is the highest adjective in our vocabulary. It is the adjective we use when we do not have an adequate adjective. All the dictionary definitions describe it as being superior, but never tell us the measure of its superiority etc. The word *great* in the New Testament usually comes from the Greek word *meGas*, from which we get our awesome technology terms like *megabyte* and *megaton*. It is fitting that God would use this awesome Greek word to give us some idea of the magnitude of His love for us. It exceeds our ability to define. Then we must consider the fact that God loved us so much that He made provision for us to become His sons.

*“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world*

*knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*” (I John 3:1)

**c. God’s love is unmerited.** In case someone would not know what unmerited means, in different terms it means no one could ever deserve His love. He loves all men alike. **With God there is no respect of persons.**

Three things should be understood about God and respect of persons.

**First, The god of Calvinism is a respecter of persons.** I say this, not because they actually say it, but because their description of their god makes him a respecter of persons. It is showing respect of persons to arbitrarily at his pleasure choose some to eternal life and others to eternal damnation.

**Second, Respect of persons is in the sight of God a sin.** James administers a harsh reproof for showing respect of persons: *“My brethren, have **not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.** For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: **Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?**”* (James 2:1-4) *“But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.”* (James 2:9)

It goes without being said that the God of heaven would not conduct Himself inconsistent to His own word. It is He that said in the following passage that it is not good to show respect of persons. *“These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.”* (Proverbs 24:23) I believe the Bible indicates that the character of the person who is a respecter of persons is not good: *“To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress.”*

**Third, the God of the Bible is not a respecter of persons.** Consider the following passages that confirm this: *“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons:**”* (Acts 10:34) *“**For there is no respect of persons with God.**”* (Romans 2:11) *“But he that doeth*

*wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and **there is no respect of persons.***” (Colossians 3:25) “*And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing **that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.***” (Ephesians 6:9) “*And if ye call on the Father, **who without respect of persons judgeth** according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:” (I Peter 1:17)*

I could submit many passages that make it clear that the ground is level at the foot of the cross, but at the risk of sounding repetitious I will only include three: “*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*” (I John 4:10) “*We love him, because he first loved us.*” (1 John 4:19) “*For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*” (Romans 5:6-8)

**d. God's love is impartial.** Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, how could anyone reason that the God we know could love some and not love others? Yet the Calvinist would have us believe that God doesn't love all sinners. The word *world* is found 80 times in the Gospel of John alone. When Jesus used this term in this context He was referring to the world **collectively and not selectively**, as the proponents of Calvinism would have us believe. Isn't this what the following passage teaches? “*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.*” (John 3:16)

This truth is demonstrated when Jesus met a certain leper: “*And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.*” (Mark 1:40-42)

It was also illustrated in the story of the woman taken in the

act of adultery. *“When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”* (John 8:10-11)

According to the law this woman deserved to die, but Jesus loved this adulterous woman as only God can and pardoned her of her sin.

**e. God’s love is eternal.** We can also take comfort in the fact that the love of God is not temporary. Also, that it does not vary in intensity. It is constant and changes not because God changes not. *“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with **an everlasting love**: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”* (Jeremiah 31:3)

The great preacher of yesteryear Charles Spurgeon was visiting a parishioner on his farm once when he noticed a weathervane on the top of the barn that had an inscription on it that said *God loves me*. At first he failed to get the right perception as he noticed that it was pointing different directions as the wind changed.

*Do you mean God’s love is wishy washy, pointing one way then another he said to the parishioner? Oh no, he replied, it means regardless of which way the wind blows, He still loves me.*

Isn’t it clear when considering passages like these that the argument made by the Calvinist has no merit?

**f. God’s love is universal.** This means it is not selective but collective and is extended to the whole world. The following passages confirm that not only does God love the sinners of the world He is also ready to forgive and pardon all who come to Him in faith. *“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.”* (John 3:16) *“And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to*

*pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.*” (Nehemiah 9:17) *“But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”* (Psalm 86:15)

Until men like Augustine and later Calvin came into the picture, it was understood by practically every Bible student across the earth and across the ages, that the love of Christ for sinners and the gospel invitation was universal. This means it applied to every individual. When you consider the plain statements of Scripture above it is only natural that you would come to this conclusion.

**2) The God of heaven is a God of mercy.** I understand the word *mercy* when defined means: *“pity, or compassion toward someone in distress”*. Stated differently we could define it as, *“not getting what we deserve”*. The word is found 276 times in our Bible and cannot be construed as an incidental term in the Scriptures.

It is true that we are sinners and should we get what we deserve we would all be abandoned by God and condemned to the darkness of hell and the lake of fire forever. The truth of our sinful condition is stated repetitiously in the Word of God. *“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.”* (Ecclesiastes 7:20) *“Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?”* (Proverbs 20:9) *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”* (Romans 3:23) *“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23)

The point is easily made that we are sinners and do not deserve the opportunity to be saved and know the Holy God of heaven. However, **because of the mercy of God** we can avoid what we deserve and be born again to become new creatures in Christ. *“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;”* (Titus 3:5) *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10) *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for*

ever.” (I Peter 1:23)

How can this be? It is because we do not follow the god of Calvinism whose mercy is selective, but we follow the God of heaven whose mercy is collective. Several pages would be required to include the many passages that assure us of the mercy of God, but let us look at just a few of the most pertinent ones. *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of **thy tender mercies** blot out my transgressions.”* (Psalm 51:1) *“For **thy mercy is great** unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.”* (Psalm 57:10) *“**Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.**”* (Psalm 85:7) *“**Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**”* (Psalm 85:10) *“For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and **plenteous in mercy** unto all them that call upon thee.”* (Psalm 86:5) *“**For great is thy mercy** toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.”* (Psalm 86:13) *“For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, **that he might have mercy upon all.**”* (Romans 11:32)

### **The *whosoever’s* in the Bible refute this false teaching**

Calvinism is also refuted by the, *whosoever’s* in the Bible. They leave no doubt that God desires to save any and all sinners. Jesus died so that men could be saved. It doesn’t mean that all men will be saved, but that all men can be saved. Mr. Spurgeon agreed with this and made the following statement as he began a sermon on the following passage:

*“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;”* (I Timothy 2:4-5)

*It is quite certain that when we read that God will have all men to be saved **it does not mean that he wills it with the force of a decree** or a divine purpose, for, if he did, then all men would be saved. He willed the world and the world was made: he does not so will the salvation of all men, for we know that all men will not be saved”. Charles Spurgeon*

The word *whosoever* is found no less than 183 times in our Bible. It is defined in Webster's 1828 Dictionary as, "*anyone, any person whatever*". The definition leaves no room for debate or argument. Every time you find the word *whosoever* in the Bible, it is God acknowledging that man has a will and is responsible to make decisions based on it. Taking the following passages at face value no honest Bible student can misunderstand them: "*That **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*" (John 3:15) "*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.*" (John 3:16) "*But **whosoever** drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*" (John 4:14) "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name **whosoever** believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" (Acts 10:43) "*For **whosoever** shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" (Romans 10:13) "***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.*" (I John 5:1) "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever will**, let him take the water of life freely.*" (Revelation 22:17) I cannot understand how anyone could continue to argue against the convincing power of the above passages taken from the Word of God. The only way the Calvinist can accept these passages is to modify them. Let me emphasize once again that it is not necessary to modify Scripture in order to build a doctrine or teaching.

### **The great commission passages refute this false teaching**

It isn't logical or theological nor is it in the character of God to insist that we carry the gospel to every creature if (in the philosophy of Calvinism) He has already purposed that most of them cannot receive it. This would also be a contradiction to one of the tenets of Calvinism that insists that no man ever wanted to be

saved and that God searches out the elect and regenerates them even in their rebellious and ungodly condition, implying very clearly that preaching the gospel to every creature is totally irrelevant.

When you consider the following passages it is abundantly clear that God commands us to carry the gospel to all men because they must hear in order to be saved. *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”* (Matthew 28:19-20) *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* (Mark 16:15-16) *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”* (Luke 24:47) *“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”* (John 20:21) *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8)

The obvious thought that exists in every great commission passage is that the gospel should be preached to every individual on earth. This is a good thing. The implication is that potentially every unsaved person who hears could repent and trust Christ as Saviour. The problem here is that in the Calvinist philosophy most of the people who hear cannot be saved because they are not among the elect. If this is true then there is a problem with the integrity of God because He is offering salvation to every hearer implying that they could believe when they could not because He Himself has chosen them to destruction. Consider again the following passages that make it clear that to reject this gospel means damnation in hell and the lake of fire. *“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.”* (John 3:18)

Notice the reason they are condemned. It is not because they are non-elect, as the Calvinist would say, **but it is because they do not believe**. This means they could but wouldn't, not that they didn't because they couldn't. The same is true in the next three passages: "*And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*" (John 5:40) "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*" (Matthew 23:37) "*I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*" (John 8:24)

Jesus makes it very clear that they could have received Him, but refused to do so. The question here is why would Jesus condemn them to damnation, as unbelievers if He had already decided before the foundation of the world that they could never be believers. To put this a different way, **why would the Bible say they are condemned for unbelief if they could never have been believers because they supposedly were not among the elect?** Any honest Bible student can see through the contentions of Calvin on this matter. If the Calvinist contention is correct it is a serious reflection on the integrity of the God of heaven who has clearly implied that they could and would not, when in fact according to the Calvinist they could not.

In order to keep this in right perspective it is necessary that I comment on the Bible doctrine of *foreknowledge*. Our God is not only omnipotent, and omnipresent, He is also omniscient. This means He knows the end from the beginning: "*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:*" (Isaiah 46:9-10) The following quote will help us to always keep the correct perspective on this subject:

*"In the Bible God's election and predestination are always dependent on His foreknowledge"* Copied

Relative to the subject of salvation, and just to be more specific, He knows who will believe and who will not. This does not in any way mean that He plans who will and who will not believe. Consider the following passages. “*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: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*” (Ephesians 1:4-5) “*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.*” (I Peter 1:2) **It must be understood that getting saved is not in the picture**, that Paul is writing to Christians about the “*spiritual blessings*” to which God predestined believers.

While wearing their Calvinist lenses these verses are used to prove that all the, *whosoever verses* in our Bible do not mean whosoever after all. What they fail to see or refuse to see is that God simply predestined that those who believe would be adopted as sons and conformed to the image of Christ. This is made clear in the following passage. “*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. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*” (Romans 8:28-29)

Couple this passage with the above statement: “***that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:***” and it becomes obvious that those whom He foreknew He predestined that they should be conformed to the image of Christ. The word, *foreknow*, simply means that God knew beforehand, it does not mean *fore-planned or foreordained*. It is important to note that the word *foreordained* only occurs once in our Bible and it has to do with Christ and never us. “*Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,*” (I Peter 1:20)

Again, to make this even clearer, God predestinated that believers be adopted as sons, and that believers would be

conformed to the image of His son. He did not predestinate those still in their unbelieving state to be adopted as sons and be conformed to His image.

According to the above passages, if in fact God did predestinate us to salvation as the Calvinist says, **it would necessarily have to be based on foreknowledge and not just at His good pleasure.** And let me remind you that even the Calvinist insists that predestination is not based on foreknowledge. The only predestination mentioned in our Bible is based on God's foreknowledge. **It is never predestination and foreknowledge, but foreknowledge and predestination.**

Please allow me to mention once again that when you find passages that seem (I said seem) to support the false teachings of John Calvin, you must interpret them in the light of scores of easy to understand passages that refute his teaching.

## “L” Limited Atonement

Defining once again the matter of limited atonement, it means that in the Calvinist philosophy **God does not love every sinner, and that Jesus did not die for every sinner, that His atonement was limited to a select few while excluding all others.**

Before getting into this aspect of Calvinism I really feel it would be appropriate to include the comments of a famous preacher, who also, from time to time would identify himself as a Calvinist, but often radically disagreed with the Calvinist as in the following quote:

*I cannot imagine a more ready instrument in the hands of Satan for the ruin of souls than a minister who tells sinners that it is not their duty to repent of their sins or to believe in Christ, and who has the arrogance to call himself a gospel minister, while he teaches that God hates some men infinitely and unchangeably for no reason whatever but simply because he chooses to do so.*

Charles Spurgeon

This false doctrine has given Satan the opportunity he needs to convince many unsaved people that they are not among the elect and that there is no need for them to pursue the matter of soul salvation. The Calvinist insists that Jesus died only for the elect and that His atonement was limited only to them. In order to accept this philosophy, as we shall see, many passages of Scripture must be modified or ignored.

I have personally talked with men who, because of this teaching are convinced they cannot be saved. This means these people go through life knowing they have no hope, that they are going to hell and nothing can change their destiny. This is a cruel trick that Satan has used to be sure these poor souls end up in hell. This puts those who teach this false teaching in company with the god of this world: *“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”* (II Corinthians 4:4)

The proponents of this teaching have their own argument,

which they base on certain passages of Scripture, as do the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Adventists and others. We all know that you can teach false doctrine using Scriptures if you use them out of context or isolate them in order to build a doctrine on them. However we are clearly warned in the Word of God not to give a private interpretation to a passage of Scripture. "*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.*" (II Peter 1:20-21)

Some of the passages that are used to make the argument for limited atonement would be as follows: "*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.*" (John 3:16)

The only way this passage can be used is to interpret the word *world* as the *world of the elect*. The problem is this is not what the passage says. This is another example of modifying Scripture to build a doctrine. Bible believers do not modify Scripture in order to construct a doctrine. Consider again the following quote:

*My love of consistency with my own doctrinal views is not great enough to allow me knowingly to alter a single text of Scripture.* Charles Spurgeon

It is sinful to alter the clear Words of God! Consider another example: "*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*" (Matthew 1:21)

It is falsely claimed that this passage refers to the elect, calling them *His people*. I have never read or known of anyone that gave this interpretation to this passage. This is obviously a reference to the Jews since Jesus was a Jew and came first to the house of Israel. "*These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" (Matthew 10:5-6)

We do not find Jesus referring to unregenerated people as His people except when He refers to the Jews as a nation. Paul did this in the following passage: *“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:”* (Romans 9:1-3) Paul was not referring to them as the elect, but as his Jewish brethren who are lost and without Christ.

When it comes to the new birth, not one Jew or Gentile can be referred to as His people until they are born again. The new birth makes the repentant sinner a child of God, but he cannot be one without it. In the following passage the apostle Paul made it clear that the wall or partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down: *“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; **And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:**”* (Ephesians 2:14-16)

Following is another passage used to promote this false teaching: *“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.”* (Acts 20:28) The Calvinist interpretation of this passage reveals how desperate they are to make their point. Following is a clear example of reading into a passage something that is foreign to it. Instead of *exegesis*, which means reading the Scripture to learn what it teaches, it is called *eisegesis*, which is reading a preconceived doctrine into the Scriptures making it mean what you want it to mean. Perhaps it would be better stated in the following quote:

*While exegesis is the process of drawing out the meaning from a text in accordance with the context and discoverable meaning of its author, eisegesis occurs when a reader imposes his or her*

*interpretation into and onto the text.*

The Calvinist insists the above passage (Acts 20:28) limits the scope of salvation to the elect which they interpret here as the church. Of course Jesus purchased the church by His blood, but this in no way contradicts the many passages of Scripture that make it clear that He shed His blood for the world collectively not selectively. Redemption is in the picture, not predestination. Keep in mind that the church consists of people who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and have been purchased by His blood. There is not one verse in the Bible that teaches that the elect are the church waiting to be regenerated. Following are some other passages that have nothing whatsoever to do with Calvinist philosophy: *“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.”* (John 6:40) I can see absolutely no connection between this passage and limited atonement.

The Calvinist contends that the sheep in the following passages are the elect. *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* (Isaiah 53:6) *“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”* (John 10:11) This is still yet another example of reading something into a text that is opinion and not doctrine.

Once again, keep in mind that there are some passages that you might not totally understand that seem to support the Calvinist argument. But, again, you must interpret these in the light of the many clear and understandable ones that refute this false teaching.

In the following paragraphs I will include many irrefutable Scriptures that contradict the false doctrines of John Calvin. **These will help you to know what the supposed supporting verses used by the Calvinist do not mean.** Need I say again that I must admit that there are certain passages in the Word of God that I do not clearly understand, **but I am sure of what they do not mean.**

There are three doctrines that are made clear in the Word of God that sufficiently refute the unscriptural philosophy of limited

atonement. These doctrines are clear enough for a grade school child to understand. Please don't think I am trying to insult your intelligence when I submit them.

### **Jesus died for the sins of the entire world**

Even though I have given some emphasis to this in previous paragraphs, I want to press the point further.

**It is strongly contended by the Calvinist that Jesus did not die for the whole world.** They must believe this in order to embrace the false teaching of *limited atonement*, which I will deal with later. I contend that you could read your Bible 10 hours a day for 100 years and you would **never adopt the false idea that Jesus died only for a select few and not for all**, unless someone introduced that idea to you from outside the realm of Scripture. This again goes back to what I have said many times: I have never known of anyone becoming a Calvinist, Jehovah's Witness, or Mormon who did not first fall under the influence of a proponent of these teachings. The reason is very simple; these teachings are not in the Word of God and would never occur to the Bible student unless introduced to them by someone who is ensnared by them. This just confirms the fact that *error has power* and once again this truth is made obvious in the following passage: "*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*" (I Timothy 4:1) I personally know a pastor who was trained in a good Bible College, and worked as an assistant pastor in a good sound church for several years before becoming ensnared by the false teaching of John Calvin. The problem came when he fell under the influence of a rabid Calvinist. He has never recovered. His story can be repeated many times. I have asked numerous pastors this question: have you ever known of anyone becoming a Calvinist by reading the Bible? Invariably their answer has always been no.

In the following pages I plan to labor you with easy to understand passages that clearly teach that Jesus died for the sins

of the whole world. John testified of this in the following passage: *“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, **which taketh away the sin of the world.**”* (John 1:29)

Consistent with many other passages on this subject this verse means that the sin debt has been paid for all who will take advantage of it. When a repentant sinner places faith in Jesus Christ **his sins are taken away because Jesus paid the sin debt.**

Paul expressed this well while preaching on Mars Hill in Athens Greece. Keep in mind that even though he was preaching to the great thinkers of his day he did not trim his message, but preached to them the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Before completing his message he made sure his congregation understood that salvation through Jesus Christ was available to every man. *“And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:”* (Acts 17:26-27)

Continuing the discussion notice the following passages clearly reveal that the scope of God’s plan of salvation extends to the entire world. *“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God **should taste death for every man.**”* (Hebrews 2:9) *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also **for the sins of the whole world.**”* (I John 2:1-2) *“**Who will have all men to be saved,** and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* (I Timothy 2:4) *“**Who gave himself a ransom for all,** to be testified in due time.”* (I Timothy 2:6) *“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.**”* (II Peter 3:9) *“Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.”* (Matthew 18:14) *“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.**” (John 4:42) “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which **I will give for the life of the world.**” (John 6:51) “And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, **but to save the world.**” (John 12:47) “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**” (John 17:21) “**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.**” (II Corinthians 5:19) “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, **that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.**” (I Timothy 1:15) “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the **Saviour of the world.**” (I John 4:14) “And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, **but to save the world.**” (John 12:47) “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath **laid on him the iniquity of us all.**” (Isaiah 53:6) “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is **the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.**” (I Timothy 4:10) “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**” (John 8:12) “And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which **shall be to all people.**” (Luke 2:10) “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” (John 12:32)

How can any honest Bible student read the above passages and interpret them any other way than what they clearly say. The only way the Calvinist can reconcile the above passages with his philosophy is to modify them to mean *the world of the elect*, by changing the word *world* to *elect*. However, this is not what these verses are saying.

One question that needs to be raised and answered at this point

is why would the Holy Spirit be charged with the responsibility of reproving the world if the world consists of non-elect people who could not trust Christ if they wanted to? Another important, but unanswered question is why would the Holy Spirit reprove the world of the elect, if they are going to be regenerated anyway? It needs to be understood (*according the Calvinist*) that the same message of *repentance and faith* is to be preached to the entire world, elect and non-elect.

The following passage insists that the entire world could be saved or God would not have the Holy Spirit trying to convince them to believe on Christ. *“And when he (Holy Spirit) is come, **he will reprove the world** of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me;”* (John 16:8-9) The word *reprove* in the above passage means to *convince*. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to convince sinners of their need of Christ.

To put this in different words, how could the world be considered guilty before God if they are non-elect? **How could they be condemned for rejecting Christ if God made sure they could never have received Christ?** Doesn't this impugn the integrity of God? *“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, **and all the world may become guilty before God.**”* (Romans 3:19)

Even though the Word of God makes it clear that the unsaved are already under condemnation, the Bible also makes it clear that they are facing a final and official condemnation at the Great White Throne Judgment. It will be a horrible event as is literally described in the following passage: *“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man*

*according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

(Revelation 20:11-15) However, the Believer in Christ will not face this condemnation. Jesus has made sure of this. As the following passage makes clear this is the reason we are chastened for our disobedience: *“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* (I Corinthians 11:31-32) Just to give added clarification to this, I mentioned above that the unbelieving world is now under condemnation, but it is not because they are non-elect, it is because they have not received Christ. *“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.”* (John 3:18) It is not because he is among the non-elect.

According to the following passage Jesus paid the sin debt (*bought them*) even for those who rejected Him and taught false doctrines: *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”* (II Peter 2:1)

The Calvinist tries to explain their dilemma in light of the above verses by using terms that are foreign to the Word of God. Terms like *general call* and *effectual call*. Does this mean that God teases the unsaved with a general call when He has no intention of saving them? Quoting the Calvinist on this matter, consider the following unintelligent doctrinal statement:

*God issues a general call to all mankind to repent, but He issues an effectual call that is extended only to the elect, and they are the ones predestined to salvation.*

Supposedly, the *effectual call* is the one that cannot be resisted. When Jesus made the following statements, He did not make a distinction as to whether it was general or effectual: *“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”* (John

12:32) *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Matthew 11:28) *“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”* (Isaiah 45:22) *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”* (Revelation 22:17)

To say the least, the above quote by the Calvinist reflects on the integrity of our God. I must defend my God here and argue that He is not dishonest in making a so-called general call to sinners that He has no intention of saving and an effectual call to the elect that cannot resist being saved. His sincere call is to every sinner. *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Matthew 11:28) *“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.”* (John 7:37)

Some Calvinists try to explain the above with the theory of the two wills of God. Meaning that God wills that every sinner be saved, but is not willing to make it possible for them to be saved. This statement reveals the double standard the Calvinist applies to God. According to the Calvinist *if God wills something it must and does happen*. If this is their philosophy, then how could God will that all sinners be saved and not make it happen? Of course we know that all sinners will not be saved and that by their own choice.

It is also described as His perfect will and His permissive will. This is foolish double talk!

His invitation to sinners is addressed to all and He takes all comers. *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Matthew 11:28)

### **Jesus loves the whole world**

A man who is considered to be a Bible Scholar of great stature stated once that there is not one verse in the Bible that states that God loves sinners. My first thought was, how does a man get this far from elementary Bible truth?

If there were only one verse in the Bible that states that God loves sinners it would be sufficient, but there are numerous passages that clearly indicate that He does. The following passages are a clear contradiction of the Calvinist contention that God does not love all sinners. **“For God so loved the world, (this is collective not selective) that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”** (John 3:16-17) **“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”** (Romans 5:6-8) **“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”** (Ephesians 2:4-5) **“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,”** (Titus 3:4) **“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”** (I John 4:10) **“We love him, because he first loved us.”** (I John 4:19)

For a specific example of the love of Christ for sinners consider the following passage concerning the rich young ruler: **“Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.”** (Mark 10:21)

It is obvious by the context that this young man was unsaved, but had a desire to be saved. He came to the right person, he came for the right purpose, and he came with the right attitude. He is described as a young man of manners, morals, and money. However, he left unsaved. It was not that he couldn't have been saved, but rather his riches that kept him from being saved. **“And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!”** (Mark 10:24)

The fact still remains that Jesus loved him and would have

saved him.

Not only does the Word of God declare that God loves all sinners, it was demonstrated by Jesus when He wept over the city of Jerusalem as recorded in the following passages; *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”* (Matthew 23:37) *“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”* (Luke 19:41-44)

It is a matter of fact made plain in the word of God that God loves all sinners and desires that they would be saved. How could anyone refute this truth stated so clearly in the following passage? *“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* (I Timothy 2:4) Yet the Calvinist grabs at straws and tries to explain away this obvious and clearly stated truth by insisting that *all men* in this case means *all kinds of men*. This is another case of reading into a text something that it does not teach in order to prop up the Calvinist idea that God only saves certain people called the elect.

At this point I will summons a great voice from the past who has some timely words on this subject. They are especially important when you consider that he himself had some Calvinist leanings. Of Course what he said in the following quotes is doctrinally correct even though no Calvinist would agree with him:

*I was reading just now the exposition of one who explains the text so as to explain it away as if it read Who will not have all men to be saved, in fact, the passage should run thus, whose wish it is that all men should be saved, as it is my wish, so it is God's wish that all men should be saved; for, assuredly, He is not less*

*benevolent that we are.*” Charles Spurgeon

*What then? Shall we try to put another meaning into the text than that which it fairly bears? I trow not.... You must, most of you, be acquainted with the general method in which our older Calvinistic friends deal with this text. “All men” say they “that is, “some men”: as if the Holy Ghost could not have said “some men” if He meant some men. “All men,” say they: “that is, some of all sorts of men”: as if the Lord could not have said, “All sorts of men” if He had meant that. The Holy Ghost by the apostle has written, “All men,” and unquestionably he means all men.... My love of consistency with my own doctrinal views is not great enough to allow me knowingly to alter a single text of Scripture.*  
Charles Spurgeon

Why do people not take God and His word as it is and accept it as truth? In this book I am launching a mighty argument for truth and all I have to fight with is the Word of God. Fortunately, this is all I need.

### **Salvation is offered to the whole world.**

My question at this point on this matter is why would God command that the gospel be preached to the entire world if He has no plans to save the world? Why would He command us to preach whosoever will, leaving the impression that anyone can be saved when He has made impossible for the supposed non-elect to be saved contradicting *whosoever will*?

I know that the Calvinist argument is that we do not know who the elect are, therefore we preach to all men and the elect respond. But if, according to the Calvinist *irresistible grace* is a Bible doctrine, why preach to them at all? They are going to be regenerated by Christ eventually without our help. Also, if as the Calvinist contends, God actually regenerates the unsaved elect before they can believe, why worry about communicating the gospel to them. In relation to this thinking consider the following

quote in which Mr. Spurgeon exposed the foolish teaching of Calvin:

*If I am to preach faith in Christ to a man who is already regenerated, then the man, being regenerated, is saved already, and it is an unnecessary and ridiculous thing for me to preach Christ to him.* Charles Spurgeon

The truth is that the gospel is to be offered to the whole world because there are some who will believe. This is to be done primarily through preaching. Paul made this point numerous times in his epistles: *“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, **I am ready to preach the gospel** to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”* (Romans 1:14-16) *“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, **woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!**”* (I Corinthians 9:16) *“But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.”* (I Thessalonians 2:4)

In staying with my point consider the following passages that emphasize the fact that the gospel is to be preached to *all the world*. *“Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”* (Matthew 28:19-20) *“And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world**, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* (Mark 16:15-16) *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among **all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem.”* (Luke 24:47) *“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”* (John 20:21) *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto*

*me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8) “*The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.*” (John 1:7) “*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*” (Isaiah 45:22)

You noticed phrases like, *all nations, all the world, every creature, Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria*, as well as *uttermost part of the earth*, are not idle statements in the great commission.

I must say once again that the reason the gospel is to be preached to the entire world is that no one can be saved without hearing it. Notice the following passages that confirm this: “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” (Romans 10:17) One additional point to make here is that **faith is not a gift as the Calvinist claims and is never spoken of as a gift**. Eternal life is a gift. “*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Romans 6:23) “*Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*” (II Corinthians 9:15) “*Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*” (Romans 5:18)

There is not one verse in all our Bible that teaches that faith is a special gift reserved only for the elect as the Calvinist says. Rather, as the above passage reads, **faith cometh by hearing**. The Word of God makes it clear that faith is necessary even to approach God. “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” (Hebrews 11:6) A poor woman who washed Jesus feet with tears was commended because she came to Jesus by faith. Look what happened to her: “*And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.*” (Luke 7:48) “*And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.*” (Luke 7:50) “*But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*” (Galatians 3:22)

## **“I” Irresistible Grace**

This is the fourth point of the five points of Calvinism and is known as *irresistible grace*. It would be very important at this point to determine the definition of this term *irresistible*. It means *impossible to successfully resist*. The Calvinists teach that those who have been elected to salvation cannot resist the grace of God. This is the reason it is called irresistible grace. To cite another popular quote from Calvinism:

*If God wills something, He makes it happen.*

This statement is not rational, logical or theological. The Calvinist in his zeal to protect the sovereignty of God makes Him the cause of every thought, word, deed or event. This in effect makes Him the author of sin. This cannot be true! This would mean that God was responsible for Amnon, David's son, raping his sister Tamar. This would mean that God was responsible for Absalom killing his brother Amnon. This would mean that God was responsible for David stealing the wife of another man and committing adultery with her. How absurd this would be, yet this is exactly what the Calvinist would have you believe about the God of heaven!

Consider the Ten Commandments. God gave them and it was unquestionably His will that they be obeyed, but we all know the entire human race has consistently lived in disobedience of them. The truth is Jesus is the only man who ever lived on earth who did keep them.

In holding the position of irresistible grace the Calvinist is saying that there is no such thing as man's free will. They hold this position with great tenacity. The following quotes from current Calvinists confirm without any doubt their philosophy on this matter.

*If there is one thing that five-point Calvinists hold with vigorous tenacity it is the belief that there can be no human freewill at all. Zane Hodges*

*The basic principle of Calvinism is the sovereignty of God. He creates the very thoughts and intents of the soul. In other words, the wickedest sins men commit are conceived, predestined, and caused by God! Calvinist Lavonne Boettner.*

*We hold that the counsels and wills of men move exactly in the course which God has destined. Augustine everywhere teaches that there cannot be a greater absurdity than to hold that anything is done without God's ordination. No cause must be sought for but the will of God. All events are produced by the will of God. John Calvin*

*Those who speak of man's 'free will,' and insist upon his inherent power to either accept or reject the Saviour, do but voice their ignorance of the real condition of Adam's fallen children. John Calvin*

Let it be understood that the above quotes are all about one thing. In the mind of the Calvinist, **man has no free will.**

If the Calvinist teachings were true then it follows that they who are among the elect have no free will and will with no exception be regenerated and be converted. Conversely, it means that those who are among the non-elect have no free will and could never under any circumstances be converted.

This reasoning as we shall see is contrary to the Word of God.

Just for what it is worth the word *irresistible* is not in the Bible. Of the five points of the *tulip* this doctrine would probably be the most difficult to defend for the Calvinist. The reason being that there are so many Scriptures and illustrations that contradict it. Charles Spurgeon knew more about Calvinism than most anyone in today's world, he even at times claimed to be one. He obviously was sincere in his conviction that the Word of God should not be altered. Because of this, he often contradicted Calvinist teaching. Note what he said in the following statement:

*But without free choice man would not be a morally responsible being nor could he love God, know God's love, receive*

*the gift of salvation or have meaningful communion with God or worship Him.*

Here is Spurgeon again in another of his un-Calvinistic statements as he charged his theology students to go soulwinning:

*Go out and win all the elect to Christ, and then elect some more.*

He did not sound at all like the ones we know today.

Even though I have made this argument elsewhere in this book, I am going to include again a few of the scores of passages that make it clear that salvation is in fact offered to whosoever will. Keep in mind that the word *whosoever* by definition means, *anyone, any person etc.* “*That **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*” (John 3:15) “*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.*” (John 3:16) “*But **whosoever** drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*” (John 4:14) “*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name **whosoever** believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*” (Acts 10:43) “*For **whosoever** shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” (Romans 10:13) “***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.*” (I John 5:1) “*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever** will, let him take the water of life freely.*” (Revelation 22:17)

In connection with this same argument that man has no free will of his own, the Calvinist also insists that every human thought, action, and event was willed and predestined by God. This would include all the evil and wicked things that have happened in our world since God placed man on planet earth. Obviously, this makes God the author of all the sin and heartache that the entire human race has experienced beginning with Adam and Eve. If in fact

Calvin is right about this, God is responsible for all the sin He Himself condemns. To be more specific, He is responsible even for every murder, every rape, every molestation of a little girl or boy, every robbery, every act of adultery, every act of fornication, every act of sodomy and even every sin.

One Calvinist commentator made the following confusing statement:

*God ordains sin, and man is to blame, sin is foreordained by God.*

Getting back to the point, does man have a will? Is that will free? These are questions that need to be answered at this point. Without a will man is reduced to being nothing but a robot. Let's let the Bible speak to this subject. The words *will* and *willing* are found more than 3800 times in Scripture. Of course, they do not always refer to man's will, but without doing the research one could assume there would be scores, perhaps hundreds of times when they would. Lets look at some passages that make it clear that man does have a will and that it is free. Passages that emphasize that God in fact does give man a choice. *“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, **choose you this day** whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”* (Joshua 24:15) *“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long **halt ye between two opinions?** if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.”* (I Kings 18:21) *“Then said Jesus unto the twelve, **Will ye also go away?** Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God”.* (John 6:67-69) These are just a few of the scores of passages that acknowledge that man indeed does have a will. For a more in depth study on the will of man, refer to Strong's Concordance<sup>32</sup> and follow up on the word *will*.

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32 James Strong, “The Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible”, Mao Donald

Concerning Old Testament offerings the word *freewill* comes up many times. For an example consider the following passage: *“Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a **freewill** offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.”* (Leviticus 22:23) Why would God instruct them to give their offerings on a freewill basis if man has no will? Other passages that reveal that man has a will are as follows: *“He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were **willing** for a season to rejoice in his light.”* (John 5:35) *“But the centurion, **willing** to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:”* (Acts 27:43) *“For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were **willing** of themselves;”* (II Corinthians 8:3) *“For if there be first a **willing mind**, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”* (II Corinthians 8:12) *“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but **willingly**; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”* (I Peter 5:2)

Before continuing with the argument against irresistible grace, I must defend our God against such ignorant and blasphemous contentions as those espoused by the Calvinist that the God of heaven is the author of all sin. Not only do they make Him the author of all sin, but to make it more absurd, they teach that God then blames man for sin. I could believe that some men are capable of this, but not the God of heaven. While I am on the subject of how sin came into the world lets consider some pertinent passages that settle the argument. *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”* (Romans 5:12) *“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”* (Romans 5:19) Thus it becomes very clear that God didn't initiate sin on earth, but the creature that He loved above all His creation did. According to the above passages Adam and Eve were responsible for infecting the human race with sin.

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Publishing Company, 1890, Public Domain [James Strong 1822-1894].

Our God is holy beyond our ability to comprehend. Consider the following passages: “*Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, **the stars are not pure in his sight.***” (Job 25:5) “*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and **canst not look on iniquity:***” (Habakkuk 1:13a) “*And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.***” (Isaiah 6:3-4) “*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: **for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:***” (Jas 1:13) These verses make it perfectly clear that God is holy and sinless and does not create sin.

The reason God sent the flood upon the earth was because of Man’s sin. **If God ordained every evil thought and action, how could he punish the world for what He ordained and caused?** The following passages obviously contradict the accusations against God that are made by the Calvinist. “*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it **grieved him at his heart.***” (Genesis 6:5-6) Two things are obvious about this passage. The first being this, that God saw the wickedness of man, and second, that He was very grieved because of it. The logical question here is, why would God be grieved over man’s wickedness if He Himself created that wickedness, and why would He punish man for it if man did not initiate it? What kind of ignorant and foolish thinking is this? I could not end this paragraph without making reference to the Calvinist contention that man cannot resist or limit God in any way. The Word of God refutes this many times, but never more clearly than in the following passage: “*Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and **limited the Holy One of Israel.***” (Psalm 78:41)

Getting back to irresistible grace I must insist that the Word of God is replete with examples of, and references of men resisting the grace of God. One of the most glaring illustrations of this would be a passage from Psalm 81, where God makes it plain that He would have done great things for Israel had they not resisted

His commandments and been disobedient to Him: *“I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. **But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!**”* (Psalm 81:10-13)

### **Example 1, The entire human race**

Noah preached 120 years with no converts other than those of his own household. The implication of the context dealing with this is that they could have responded but did not. Why would God have Noah preaching to the anti-duluvian world if they are all non-elect? According to the context the Spirit of God was striving with them all the while Noah was preaching to them and they were steadfastly resisting Him. *“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.”* (Genesis 6:3) Why would the Spirit of God strive with unelected souls when God had pre-determined that they could not respond to His call? Another practical question would be this: Is it reasonable that there would be no elect souls among the millions that inhabited the earth in those days? Of course (according to Calvin) if they were elected to salvation they would have been saved, but none were other than Noah and his family.

### **Example 2, Israel resisting the Prophets**

The history of Israel in the Old Testament is replete with references to their resistance to Jehovah God. They not only resisted God, they killed the prophets He sent to warn them about their resistance. Jesus clearly made reference to this in the following passage: *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often*

*would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and **ye would not!***” (Matthew 23:37)

Confirmation of Israel resisting the prophets and in effect resisting God is found in more passages than I could include in this article, but I will include more than enough to make my point: *“For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, **Obey my voice.**”* (Jeremiah 11:7) *“Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: **yet would they not give ear:** therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.”*

(Nehemiah 9:30) *“Because I have called, and **ye refused;** I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;”* (Proverbs 1:24)

The Word of God says that God was grieved with the generation before the flood because of their resistance to Him. *“And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and **it grieved him at his heart.**”* (Genesis 6:6)

Israel also grieved God forty years after coming out of Egypt even though they witnessed first hand the dramatic miracles He performed in their behalf. *“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:”* (Psalm 95:10)

Following are several passages that help us to realize how the heart of Almighty God was moved by the resistance and rebellion of Israel. *“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”* (Deuteronomy 5:29) *“Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!”* (Psalm 81:13) *“What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?”* (Isaiah 5:4) *“Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.”* (Jeremiah 3:20)

In addition to these many examples of Israel’s disobedience to God we have to add that the Nation’s of Israel and Judah

eventually went into Babylonian captivity because of their resistance and rebellion.

The Calvinist might argue, yes but that is in an Old Testament. The truth is, it doesn't matter which Testament or dispensation it was in, it is still resistance to God and His grace. This argument is irrelevant because Israel rebelled in the New Testament as well.

With regard to dispensational limitations of certain things in the Word of God, it needs to be understood that many Bible Truths rise up and transcend dispensational divisions and are true in any dispensation.

### **Example 3, Israel resisting Christ**

Isn't it true, that the Jews constantly resisted Jesus Christ and His message?

If grace came by Jesus Christ, and it did, then to resist Christ is to resist His grace. *“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. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”* (John 1:14-17)

Consider these prominent examples of their resistance: *“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”* (John 1:10-11) *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”* (Matthew 23:37)

Not only did they resist his teachings but, they were the ones who insisted on His being crucified. Pilate would have let Him go free were it not for the religious leaders of his day. *“Therefore*

*when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?” (Matthew 27:17. “But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.” (Matthew 27:20) “Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.” (Matthew 27:22)*

Notice this happened even after they saw the miracles performed at His command and the love He declared and demonstrated. Nicodemus alluded to this: *“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.” (John 3:1-2)*

#### **Example 4, Israel resisting Stephen’s Sermon**

Stephen encountered their resistance to the grace of God after his powerful sermon in Acts 7. *“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:” Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.” (Acts 7:51-53)*

His message cut deep into their hearts so much so that they stoned him to death. *“When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,” (Acts 7:54-55) “And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul.” (Acts 7:58)*

If this was not a case of resisting the grace of God, someone please show me one!

### **Example 5, Israel resisting Paul's preaching**

Paul, who was first known as Saul, was a persecutor of Christians. *“And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.”* (Acts 8:1)

Paul himself acknowledged how he persecuted Christians even unto death. *“And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.”* (Acts 22:4) *“And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.”* (Acts 26:11) But according to Acts 9, he was converted on the road to Damascus and became a great preacher of the gospel. I should mention that Saul (as he was known then) was in the process of resisting the grace of God while on the road to Damascus when God struck him down. No doubt it was Stephen's powerful message that brought him under deep conviction of his need of Christ that motivated him to make that trip. The Lord got his attention and he was saved as a result and became the prominent preacher of the New Testament. Even though he was called to be a light to the Gentiles, if you follow his ministry, his custom was to go first to the lost of the house of Israel. The Book of Acts confirms this with many illustrations.

I said earlier that Israel resisted the gospel of Christ preached by Paul. You will notice in the following passages that Paul minces no words in his indictment of them for rejecting Christ even though nationally speaking they are God's elect nation:

*“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: **but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.**”* (Acts 13:46) *“For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and **their eyes have they closed**; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”* (Acts

28:27)

Keep in mind that these are just a few of the scores of times that the grace of God has been resisted.

**Example 6, Christian's resisting  
Holy Spirit**

Even though it has nothing to do with salvation, the Apostle Paul gave us an admonition once that clearly implies that we the followers of Christ can in a sense resist the grace of God, at least that is the opinion of some. Consider the following passages: “*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*” (Ephesians 4:30) “*Quench not the Spirit.*” (I Thessalonians 5:19)

The Calvinist doctrine of, *irresistible grace*, cannot be defended by the Word of God. It is foolish and unscriptural and as I have shown is easily disproved by many simple unmodified passages from the Word of God.

## **“P” Perseverance of The Saints**

I will begin this article by including a quote that defines the Calvinist doctrine of perseverance of the Saints. It is given by a Calvinist and to my knowledge every Calvinist agrees with it.

*They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, **but upon the immutability of the decree of election.***

There are three things that need to be noted in the above quote.

**a. Obviously, the Calvinist is looking forward to being saved at last.** You noticed the phrase; *and be eternally saved*. I do not think this was a misquote on their part because even the most prominent of Calvinist by their own testimony do not know for sure that they have everlasting life because they cannot know for sure that they are among the elect. I am glad Bible believers can know this because they take the Word of God as it is. *“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.**”* (I John 5:11-13)

**b. Their assurance is based on election.** Their assurance of heaven and everlasting life according the above quote is not based on Scripture, but on their belief that they are among the elect. The following Calvinist quote confirms this:

*The only evidence of our election...[and] perseverance, is a patient continuance in well-doing.* Charles Hodge

*Those whose faith is genuine will prove their salvation is secure by persevering to the end in the way of righteousness.* John

MacArthur

The sad fact for the Calvinist is that he lives in uncertainty of his destination because he does not accept the Word of God that gives us assurance of salvation and eternal life. This includes prominent Calvinists such as Hodge, Sproul, Warfield, Dabney, Piper, Boettner, Calvin, Packer and Pink.

Just for the record, the Bible believer's assurance is not based on perseverance and works, but on the solid promises of God.

**c. Obviously, they believe that if you fall away you were not among the elect after all.** It is no wonder that John Calvin encouraged his followers to cling to their baptism when facing death. I suppose in many cases this is all they had.

If *perseverance of the saints* in this context is interpreted as persevering **by** the saints then this is not a Scriptural teaching. I believe John Piper, who is a prominent Calvinist pastor has confirmed that it is in fact perseverance by the saints that saves.

*No Christian can be sure he is a true believer; hence there is an ongoing need to be dedicated to the Lord and deny ourselves so that we might make it. We must endure to the end in faith if we are to be saved. John Piper*

We understand that Bible believers are exhorted to persevere in the faith, not in order to be saved or to stay saved, but because they are saved. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that we did not save ourselves nor are we keeping ourselves saved. God has committed himself to do this. This truth is clearly stated in the following passages: *“For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; **they are preserved for ever**: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.”* (Psalm 37:28) *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**”* (John 5:24) *“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.*” (John 10:28-29) “*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*” (Philippians 1:6) “*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.*” (I Peter 1:4-5) “*Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:*” (Jude 1) “*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*” (Jude 24) “*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*” (I John 3:14) “*For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*” (II Timothy 1:12)

Again, I must agree with Charles Spurgeon in another of his un-Calvinistic statements:

*It is not your hold of Christ that is so important, but His hold on you.*

## Final Questions for the Calvinist

These questions are posed on the assumption that the doctrines of John Calvin and those who identify with him are true (*even though we know they are not*). They are questions that cannot be answered by the Calvinist without modifying Scripture.

Even though the subjects dealt with in this final chapter have been directly and indirectly discussed in this book, I thought it might be helpful to bring them together once more so that they might fix themselves in the mind of the reader once and for all.

### Why would God strive with the non-elect?

If the non-elect do not want to be saved, can never be saved and are doomed to destruction by their creator before they were born, why would God strive with them and show them mercy for 120 years while the Ark was being prepared. We have to conclude based on Calvinist dogma that there were no elect souls among the millions that died in the flood, because had there been, they would have been regenerated and saved. According to the following passage there is no question that God did strive with them. *“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.”* (Genesis 6:3) *“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; **Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.**”* (I Peter 3:18-20)

The point is that it would have been hypocritical for God to strive with them when supposedly: He knew they would not and could not repent because they were of the non-elect.

The implication is clear in the above passage that God would have saved them had they responded to His striving. However, when it became clear that they would not repent the

decision was made to send the great flood that destroyed them all. *“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.”* (Genesis 6:5-6)

The entire Old Testament is replete with examples of God striving with rebellious Israel.

### **What is the purpose of praying?**

If according to Calvinist philosophy God has already determined every thought, every word, every event, and every action that would ever occur, what is the purpose of prayer? If everything is ordained of God, and fixed, how could it be changed? Just to press the point further, three things may be considered.

**First, there are the admonitions to pray.** Any Bible reader knows that from Genesis to Revelation, directly and indirectly God has admonished the Saints of God to pray. Consider just a few passages where we are very clearly admonished to pray. *“Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”* (Psalm 55:22) *“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;”* (Luke 18:1) *“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”* (Jas 5:16) *“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”* (Ephesians 6:18) *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”* (Philippians 4:6) *“Pray without ceasing.”* (I Thessalonians 5:17) The point here is that if God had foreordained all things, he would not command us to pray about all things. What purpose would prayer have?

### **Second, there are the examples of prayer.**

It might be news to some that our Saviour was a man of prayer. If it was all settled in the morning of eternity, why would He spend the night in prayer. *“And in the morning, rising up a*

*great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” (Mark 1:35) “And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” (Luke 6:12)*

Even while He was hanging on the cross He could have prayed for twelve legions of angels, which would and could have delivered him from the terrible death He was to die. *“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53)* Jesus clearly implied that the Father in heaven would have answered this prayer. Unless I have misunderstood this passage, even Calvary could have been changed by the power of prayer.

The truth is, every prophet, every preacher, and every apostle, as well as millions of Christians across the earth and across the ages have been people of prayer that saw changes because of prayer.

**Third, there are the answers to prayer.**

The Word of God contains many dramatic answers to prayer. I will include just a few that really impressed me. *“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 18:19) “Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” (Jeremiah 33:3) “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:” (Matthew 7:7) “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.” (James 5:17)*

Obviously, the point is made. Even though God can see the future, He has not predetermined it to such a degree that it cannot be changed by the power of prayer. This alone disproves one of the main contentions of the Calvinist that everything is foreordained and fixed. The truth is that Moses, the man of God, changed God’s mind several times just by prayer and petition in Israel’s behalf. Because of Moses’ prayers, we have statements like the following: *“And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.” (Exodus 32:14) “And Samuel came no more to see*

*Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.” (I Samuel 15:35) “And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.” (Judges 2:18)*

The reason I include the above passages is that when you find the words *it repented the Lord*, it means that God changed His mind about His course of action. Repent in the Word of God means a change of mind. Usually, if not in every case it was because of the cries of a prophet or of the people. The point being, prayer changes things and God has not fixed everything to the extent that it cannot be changed. This is another refutation of Calvinist doctrine.

### **Why evangelize?**

This question is posed because of the fourth point of the Calvinist tulip. It is called *Irresistible Grace*, which being defined means; *the elect cannot resist the grace of God and therefore will be saved regardless*. According to the Calvinist every last one of the elect will be saved and not one of the non-elect will or can be saved. I made reference to this earlier in this book, but it would be timely to mention it again since it helps to make my point. When the great missionary William Carey submitted a question concerning the great commission passages and the responsibility of the church to carry the gospel to the heathen, he was rebuked by a certain Dr. Ryland, who said, *sit down Mr. Carey, when God choses to convert the heathen, He will do it without our help*.

If what Dr. Ryland said is true, why would anyone want to spend their time and money trying to persuade them to be saved. Although, many advocates of this false teaching would not go this far, Dr. Ryland’s answer was perfectly consistent with Calvinist doctrine.

The truth is we are commanded in the Word of God to carry the gospel to every creature. The following passages need no

discussion or debate: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19-20) “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Just to summarize this thought, God uses human instrumentality to get the gospel to the heathen. Paul in the following passage makes this very clear: “**But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.**” (I Thessalonians 2:4) “Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.” (I Corinthians 15:34)

You and I would not be saved had there not been missionaries who carried the gospel to Europe and other parts of the World and eventually to the Western Hemisphere where we live.

### **Why warn men to repent?**

This question is raised because of the second point of the Calvinist tulip. It is called *unconditional election*.

According to the Calvinist, the essence of this point is that God in the morning of eternity chose at His pleasure to save the elect and reject the non-elect. It has nothing to do with merit or works. **This decision was made at His pleasure.** This decision is fixed and cannot be changed. Having said this I will get to my point. Consider the following passages having to do with repentance: “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke 13:3) “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:” (Acts 17:30) “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” (John 8:24)

Obviously, the message in these passages is that if the sinner does not repent, he will perish. My questions are these:

**First, why would Jesus warn the elect to repent?** If of course, they are in no danger of perishing. According to the Calvinist, *unconditional election* insures that not one of the elect will perish, because they cannot resist the grace of God. God has predestinated their salvation and nothing can change this. Every Calvinist agrees with this.

**Second, why would Jesus warn the non-elect to repent?** According to the Calvinist their destiny is sealed and they cannot repent and be saved? Why would Jesus command men to repent when He Himself has predestined them to hell and made it impossible for them to repent?

If John Calvin were right on this matter, there would never be a need to preach repentance. There would be no point in preaching it.

The truth is we are to preach repentance because unsaved sinners can repent and be saved and election has nothing to do with it. The Word of God makes it clear that Jesus came to save sinners: *“And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”* (Luke 5:31-32) Notice He did not make a distinction between the elect, and the non-elect.

The question again is why would God call sinners to repentance if they are not elected to salvation and are permanently doomed?

### **Why would God condemn men for unbelief?**

Two very important points need to be made relative to this question.

**First, according to Calvin, the elect will believe.** *Unconditional election* insures that the elect are going to be regenerated whether they want to be or not. They can never be charged with unbelief.

**Second, according to Calvin, the non-elect are predestinated to unbelief.** They are sentenced to die in unbelief

and end up in Hell and the Lake of Fire by the decree of Almighty God. The question here is, how could God in good conscience condemn them to hell for unbelief if He predestined them to condemnation and is responsible for their unbelief. This implies that God is inconsistent and applies a double standard when it comes to the elect and non-elect.

### **Why would God create something He hates?**

This question relates to the Calvinist position that God has predetermined every thought, action, and event for all of time. That God has even created the evil and the repulsive wickedness that permeate the landscape of planet earth. My point here is that God is a God of righteousness and not only hates sin, but, is so Holy He cannot even look on sin! The following passage gives us some insight as to how holy our God is: *“Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.”* (Job 25:5)

It defies reason and contradicts his character that He would create things to hate. Yet it is a fact that He does hate some things.

A casual reading of the Scripture reveals that God not only is a God of love, but that He also has the capacity to hate. I have listed a few passages that cannot be disputed on this matter:

***“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”*** (Proverbs 6:16-19) *“And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD.”* (Zechariah 8:17) *“So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”* (Revelation 2:15) To blame God for the violence and wickedness is not only blasphemous, but is the height of ignorance.

### **Why does God tell us to confess our sins?**

If according to the Calvinist, God has predestined every thought, action and event in all of time, why would He command us to repent of our sins? This is not logical or theological. If God has predestined the sin in our lives, why would He condemn us for something He caused? Does this mean that the God of heaven will not face up to His own responsibilities?

Does God exhort us to confess our sins? Evidently, the fact that He does, implies that we are responsible for our sins and not God. Consider the following passages: *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**”* (I John 1:8-10) *“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but **whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.**”* (Proverbs 28:13)

### **What is the difference between being regenerated and being saved?**

This question is raised because of the weird contention of the Calvinist that the elect are totally depraved and cannot repent and believe. Because of this, God comes along and regenerates them so that they can exercise faith and believe. **Prominent Calvinist R. C. Sproul declares, *the point of Reformed theology (Calvinism) is the maxim, Regeneration precedes faith.***

The problem with this teaching with regard to the new birth is that according to the Word of God, regeneration and salvation are simultaneous and occur at the same time. Consider the following passages: *“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;”* (Titus 3:5) *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”* (Ephesians 1:13-14)

There is not one passage in the Word of God that teaches that God regenerates and saves prior faith in Christ for salvation. The Word of God does teach that we are children of God because of faith: *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”* (Galatians 3:26) *“And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”* (Luke 7:50)

### **Is God a respecter of Persons?**

This question is raised because Calvinism makes Him out to be such. This contention by the Calvinist is that God in the morning of eternity **chose at His pleasure** who would be the elect and who would be the non-elect. They contend that He did not do this based on foreknowledge or on the basis of works. It was just at His pleasure. If this is not showing respect, then what would respect of persons be? Lets look at the Scriptures: *“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons:**”* (Acts 10:34) *“And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.”* (Ephesians 6:9) *“For there is no respect of persons with God.”* (Romans 2:11)

### **Is faith a special gift given only to the elect?**

According to the Calvinist, God only gives faith to the elect in order for them to believe, but denies faith to the non-elect leaving them in unbelief and condemnation. The problem with this is that it is not true. Faith is not a gift, but rather it comes as a result of hearing the gospel.

**According to the Scriptures, faith comes by hearing the gospel** and those who exercise faith in Christ are saved. Consider these passages: *“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”*

(Romans 10:14) **“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”** (Romans 10:17) *“And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”* (Luke 7:50) *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”* (Romans 5:1)

### **Why preach the gospel to someone who has already been regenerated?**

This question relates to the Calvinist assertion that all men, elect and non-elect lie in total depravity and cannot respond to the call to repentance, and that God regenerates the elect so that they can respond. It must be understood that regeneration gives the sinner life. *“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;”* (Titus 3:5) Based on this verse, Charles Spurgeon while refuting Calvinist doctrine said:

*Why preach the gospel to those who are already saved?*

Good point! Obviously, this passage teaches that regeneration and salvation are the same.

One other point that needs to be made is that if all men lie equally in wickedness and unbelief, why would God chose to regenerate some and not all? Given the character of God, there is no logical answer to this question.

### **Why the warning about neglecting salvation?**

*“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;”* (Hebrews 2:3)

There are two things here for the Calvinist to think about.

**First, the elect are in no danger of neglecting salvation.**

According to Calvinist dogma, the elect cannot resist God’s grace in conversion. God will regenerate every last one of them even

though they have never sought Him. To warn them about neglecting salvation makes no sense.

**Second, the non-elect cannot neglect salvation.**

According to the Calvinist they are dead, meaning totally depraved and dead men cannot neglect salvation.

This is another example of the conflict of Calvinist doctrine and the Scriptures.

**How could regeneration of the elect be considered a gift?**

The Word of God makes it abundantly clear that eternal life is a gift. A gift is something provided entirely at the expense of the donor and accepted freely by a receiver. *“For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23) *“Thanks be unto God for his **unspeakable gift.**”* (II Corinthians 9:15) *“And this is the record, that God hath **given to us eternal life**, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* (I John 5:11-12)

The question here is, how could a sovereign God forcefully regenerate a wicked sinner, when the sinner is unconscious of his need of God and has no desire to know God because after all he is dead? How could this be called a gift, since a gift must have a receiver? There is no indication that the regenerated sinner received the gift.

If you have read the Calvinist commentary on this subject, no doubt you noticed that they reference John 1:13 to make their argument. *“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”* (John 1:13) This is a very important passage for the Calvinist. Divorcing it from its context and giving it a private interpretation it appears to teach that the new birth is not of man, nor of the flesh but only of God. However, when you put it in its context which includes John 1:12, the meaning becomes quite clear. According to this verse, the new birth comes as a result of receiving Christ or believing in Christ. This new birth comes only to those who receive Christ. *“**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons***

**of God, even to them that believe on his name:”** (John 1:12) *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:”* (Colossians 2:6) A gift must have a giver and a receiver.

### **How can the Calvinist idea of regeneration be called grace?**

Anything that is forced upon an individual cannot be called grace. It would be a contradiction to grace. The only grace that the Bible knows about relative to salvation is the grace that saves as a result of faith in Christ. **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”** (Ephesians 2:8-9) *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,”* (Titus 2:11) *“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”* (Romans 11:6)

The truth is that God has never saved anyone against their will, but that He saves everyone who comes to Him in repentance and faith.

### **Why pray for the unsaved?**

It is obvious that Paul carried a great burden for the unsaved and prayed for their salvation.

*“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. **For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:”*** (Romans 9:1-3) **“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”** (Romans 10:1-4)

According to the Calvinist, Paul could not have been praying for the elect, because God would bring them in with or without their consent and prayer would make no difference. Also, it must be understood that they are in no danger of going to hell since they are predestined for salvation. On the other hand the non-elect could never be saved, so why would he be praying for them? What a dilemma for the Calvinist. I personally believe there are sinners still living and breathing today because someone loves them and continues to pray that God will bring circumstances to bear that will eventually bring them to Christ.

### **How could Satan blind the minds of unbelievers?**

This question again relates to Calvin's doctrine concerning the elect and the non-elect. Two things need to be said relative to the following passage: "*In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*" (II Corinthians 4:4)

There are two things to consider with regard to the above question:

#### **First, the non-elect are predestinated to destruction.**

They could never see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ and be saved because of Calvin's claim that they are *dead and dead men cannot see*. Satan would be wasting his time and efforts trying to blind them since they are already destined to the darkness of hell and the lake of fire.

**Second, the elect are predestined to be regenerated.** If Calvinism is true it would be impossible for Satan to blind the minds of the elect. They will never be among those who *believe not* according to Calvin.

The implication of this passage is very clear, Satan is in the business of blinding the minds of unbelievers lest they see the light of the gospel and be saved. This is a clear refutation of Calvin's false teaching that God in His sovereignty regenerates the elect without their permission or knowledge and dooms the non-elect.

According to the Word of God the gospel has the power to open the eyes of unsaved people and lead them to Christ, contradicting all of Calvin's false teaching concerning the unsaved. *"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."* (Acts 26:18)

### **Why seek the Lord?**

If the Calvinist idea is that the sinner is dead and has no ability to respond to the preaching of the gospel, then why does the Word of God command men to seek God? Keep in mind that the Calvinist contends that no sinner ever wanted to be saved and bases this on a private interpretation of the following passage: *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."* (Romans 3:10-11)

Three very important points need to be made relative to the above question.

**First, God does beckon men to seek Him while he may be found.** *"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:22) "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1) "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:" (Isaiah 55:6) "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD:" (Jeremiah 29:12-14a) "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;" (Hebrews 2:3) In addition to this, there are many illustrations in the Bible where men did seek God. The Jailor in Acts chapter 16 was seeking God. *"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said,**

*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts 16:30-31)*

**Second, why would the elect need to seek God?** If as the Calvinist says God will regenerate them while they are dead in their sin and unbelief, why would He call on men to seek Him while He may be found? After all, dead men cannot respond. There would be no purpose in God exhorting men to seek God.

**Third, why would the non-elect be encouraged to seek God?** If as the Calvinist says, they are not only dead, but predestined to destruction by Almighty God, what would be the purpose of God teasing them with the possibility of finding Him?

This is another example of the inconsistency of Calvinist philosophy when compared with the clear words of Scripture.

### **Why should parents teach their children to be Christians?**

If Calvin was right, if the children are among the elect, they will be regenerated and saved. If they are not among the elect you could never make Christians of them anyway. God’s instructions are very clear on the responsibility of parents in rearing children: *“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7) “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)*

The Psalmist also made reference to God’s command to father’s teach the Word of God to their children so that they would set their hope in God. You will notice in the following passage that whether they are among the elect or not does not enter the picture. *“For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: **That they might set their***

**hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:** *And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.”* (Psalm 78:5-8)

These passages have been used to encourage Bible believing parents to train their children to live according to the Word of God so that they will set their heart upon the Lord and make it a way of life. However, the Calvinist could never accept this truth unless it is modified with the additional phrase *if he is of the elect*. In their philosophy if he is not of the elect, the Scriptures will have no impact on his life and he could never be Godly.

Incidentally, Calvin believed that the children of the elect were also among the elect. He gives no Scripture for this nor is there any Scripture for this. It still amazes me that this man not only integrated many weird and bazaar opinions into his teachings, but that many have bought into them as if they came right out of the Bible.

### **Why were there no elect among the heathen before the arrival of missionaries?**

There are hundreds and thousands of missionary stories that reveal the fact that there were no Christians in pagan lands until the light of the gospel of Jesus was shed among them. The question here is why were there no supernatural regenerations of elect pagans before the missionary showed up? The Calvinist cannot explain this. You can't say, they had to hear the gospel first, because the Calvinist philosophy contends that God regenerates the heathen before they hear the gospel.

### **Why would Jesus weep over Jerusalem?**

If Calvin's philosophy is right, the Christ rejecting Jews in Jerusalem could never be saved. If that were the case why would Jesus weep over them and imply that they could have been saved

when He Himself had foreordained them to condemnation. There is no logic here. Jesus very clearly implies that they could have been saved. Consider the following kindred passages that clearly refute Calvin's teachings: "*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, **and wept over it**, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; **because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.**" (Luke 19:41-44) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, **how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!**" (Matthew 23:37)*

Of course, you have to realize that is the Calvinist philosophy is right, that God does not love all sinners, they you would have to conclude that Jesus did not love them in the first place and if He did not, why is He weeping over them?

### **Is it the will of God that I write this book?**

I raise this question because in the philosophy of the Calvinist, God has decreed every thought, every event and every action that would ever occur in time. If that is true, then wouldn't you agree that it must be the will of God that I write this book to refute the weird and bazaar teachings of John Calvin. I would be anxious to know how the Calvinist would answer this.

## **Conclusion**

The obvious conclusion to the Calvinist question is that we must decide to believe one of two things.

**1) That God sent his son into the world to save all sinners.** To be more specific God send His Son into the world to die as a sacrifice for the sins of the entire world and that whosoever will can through faith in Him **be saved** and spend eternity with Christ. Also, we must see that this truth is based on scores of easy to understand unmodified passages of Scripture.

**2) That God at His pleasure decided to save only a minority and let all others go to hell.** This idea is based on the opinions of John Calvin who borrowed his philosophy from Augustine, the architect of the Roman Catholic Church.

This system of teaching is based on certain controversial passages that [appear] to contradict established Bible doctrines.

If you believe in predestination as the Calvinist defines it and you take every verse at face value without modifying it, then you must believe that there are contradictions in the Word of God.

## **OTHER BOOKS BY DR. GERALD FIELDER**

### **The Road to Scripture memorization**

This book includes two methods for memorization Scripture that work. It also includes a curriculum of 219 Bible topics with easy to memorize passages.

### **Bible Truth On World, Flesh, and Devil**

This book deals extensively with three things every Christian must deal with every day.

### **Bible Truth on Heaven and Hell**

This book reveals what the Bible says and refutes the weird theories of man on these subjects.

### **Bible Truth on Backsliding and Chastening**

This book why people backslide and what happens when they do.

### **Bible Truth on Submission and Rebellion**

This book discusses the importance of submission to the God ordained authorities He has placed in the life of every Christian and the penalties for rebellion.

### **Bible Truth on Tongues**

This book raises at least 20 questions on the subject of tongues and answers them directly from the Scriptures.

### **Bible Truth for Bible Questions (Volumes I & II)**

These Two volumes, raise and answer at least 275 questions that most Christians are confronted with on a regular basis. Many of the subjects are not named in the Bible, but are dealt with in the Bible. Subjects, such as cremation, abortion, trinity, rapture, homosexuality to mention just a few. There are many subjects we deal with on a regular basis that are not mentioned by name in the Bible, but are dealt with in the Bible.

### **Bible Truth on Salvation**

This small booklet answers seven questions that every unsaved individual needs to know the answer to. It is an excellent 28 page booklet to give to the unsaved person you

have been praying for.

**Bible Truth from Jude**

I have discovered at least 20 cardinal doctrines in this small 25 verse book.

**Bible Truth from Galatians**

This a verse by verse commentary on the entire six chapters of Galatians.

**Bible Truth from Nehemiah**

This book deals with the nine factors that were responsible for the completion of the wall in such a phenomenally short time.

**Bible Truth on Calvinism**

This is a practical easy to understand book that reveals the false doctrines of John Calvin.

**Bible Promises for Bible Believers**

This book includes 100 subjects in what God has made precious promise to the believer.

**How to study the Bible**

This book includes several clues on how to get into a book in the Bible once you have read it.

"BIBLE TRUTH on CALVINISM" by Dr. Gerald Fielder was included in its entirety in this volume with the permission of my friend Evangelist Gerald Fielder.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Fielder, Gerald, "*BIBLE TRUTH on CALVINISM*", Bethel Baptist Church, 4212 Campbell Street N. London Ontario, Canada N6P-1A6, 2018.

## Another Consideration Editorial

Dr. Fielder expertly documented this refutation of Calvinism. Its inclusion in this theology book replaces my own 2009 book *“The Biblical Doctrine of Election and Predestination - Why a Baptist will never hold to a doctrine of Calvinism or Augustinian Predestination”* by Pastor Edward G. Rice. Below is an excerpt from the appendix of that work:

If you will excuse the vulgar vernacular, Calvinism is a “Gateway Drug” to Covenant Theology, and Covenant Theology is the “Home Turf” of the diabolical Replacement Theology. A gateway drug is not glaringly horrid, nor even apparently harmful. Once through the gate, more obnoxious, addictive and powerful mind altering concoctions are available. And so it goes, Calvinism and TULIPs are portrayed as Biblical and reasonable. Look inside the gate and you see Covenant/Replacement Theology. Be sure that Replacement Theology sprang from the Gates of Hell via the Roman Catholic Church. It declares that Israel and Hebrews are no longer the elect of God, because now the Roman Catholic Church and Christendom are the true Elect of God. The reformers attempted to grasp the truth that salvation is by faith alone, but they would not let go of all the “Mother Church” mentality and doctrine. Reformed Theology is still rampant with Covenant Theology, a Catholic Church, and their Election before the foundation of the world.

John Calvin's 1536 magnum opus, “The Institutes of the Christian Religion<sup>34</sup>”, the Presbyterian's 1618 Synod of Dort<sup>35</sup>, and Lewis Sperry Chafer's 1948 volume on Soteriology inexplicably tie salvation to election and predestination. The fact is the Holy Bible does not. In the Bible “So Great Salvation” is inexplicably tied to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, without a breath about election. The Calvinist/Reformed Theology nowhere has a Gospel of Jesus Christ separate from their Doctrine of Election and

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34 Freely available at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/>

35 See Darby's extensive development of history in R.L. Dabney “The Five Points of Calvinism”

Predestination. The Holy Bible nowhere has the Gospel of Jesus Christ touching any doctrine of election. Israel was not elect for salvation but for service in God's purposes. In the New Testament economy, souls are not elect for salvation, but saints are elect for service in God's purposes. All Calvinism, all TULIPs no matter what points are ripped out, and all Reformed Theology are laced with enough Bible to deceive and the diabolical purpose is to wedge one away from the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In his article "TULIPs or ROSES" Iain D. Campbell regurgitates the concepts of a leading Reformation scholar, Dr. Timothy George and his book *Theology of the Reformers*. He gives Dr. George's purpose: "He is concerned to bring the mainstream Baptist churches to a deeper appreciation of sovereign grace, but is also concerned to note that we are no longer in the seventeenth century, and therefore that the conclusions of Dort require reformulation."<sup>36</sup> Reformed Theologians want to infiltrate mainstream Baptist doctrine because its core is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their core is not.

I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, Reformed Theologians, Calvinists, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

To read more about the Reformers attack on the Gospel it is highly recommended that you download and read the two books:

**The Biblical Doctrine of Election and Predestination** By Edward G. Rice Paperback: \$18.95 The Author is a USAF retired systems engineer turned Baptist Preacher who brings a fresh Biblical look at this doctrine and all our systematic theology.

Free at [http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/elect/election\\_predest\\_man.pdf](http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/elect/election_predest_man.pdf)

**Reformed Theology's Reformations Are Not Producing a Biblical Systematic Theology** By Pastor Edward Rice Hardcover: \$24.05 Reformed Augustinian Theology is, as its name so aptly captures, a reformation of bad

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36 From [http://www.opc.org/new\\_horizons/NH01/07d.html](http://www.opc.org/new_horizons/NH01/07d.html) accessed 12 February 2014

Augustinian Theology that previously framed up the belief system of Roman Catholic Theology.

Free at

[http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/seminary/master\\_thesis/thesis\\_reformed.pdf](http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/seminary/master_thesis/thesis_reformed.pdf)

Keep up the good fight,

Pastor Ed Rice

## **Chapter 5 Understandings About So Great Salvation**

There are some things that supernaturally flow out of a fuller understanding of God's "so great salvation. Doctrinal error in various protestant denominations, glorious things about imputed righteousness, and the dangers of thinking God elected souls for salvation and damnation are explored in this chapter. In December of 2000, while enrolled at Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Vanhetloo prompted me to use a salvation model to distinguish Roman error, Calvin error and Armenian error. Those distinctions are found in the following report.

### **Understanding The Biblical New Birth Clarifies**

#### **Doctrines about Sacraments, Election, and**

#### **Perseverance of Saints.**

##### **Abstract<sup>37</sup>**

This paper is a brief examination of a Biblical model of the doctrine of salvation and its conflicts with the doctrines of sacraments, the doctrines of Calvinism, and the doctrines of Armenianism.

If one were to systematically outline the events that take place when one is born again, the Scripture addresses five aspects of salvation. When we categorize these five aspects it is found that they all occur simultaneously and completely, i.e. no aspect is left only partially completed and there is no sequence in these events,

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37 Edward G. Rice, "Understanding The Biblical New Birth Clarifies Doctrines about Sacraments, Election, and Perseverance of Saints", Dec 30 2000, Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the course "Soteriology" #404 Video Studies Program (based on spring semester 94), Professor Warren Vanhetloo Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary.

only simultaneous occurrence. These five aspects are 1) conversion, 2) regeneration (quickenings), 3) justification, 4) baptism into Christ, and 5) indwelling of the Holy Spirit. When we keep all five of these contained in this instant of time called salvation we find that it magnifies and brings into focus some denomination departures from good salvation doctrine. Paul wrote the letter of Galatians because believers were so soon departed from the gospel to another gospel. We are in danger of allowing another gospel "in" if we do not focus on the immediacy of these five aspects of so great salvation.

When we comprehend the scriptures about these 5 aspects of the new birth we can root out more clearly the error of a sacramental belief system that expects to attain this salvation by some church connected sacrament. When we secure regeneration to the other four and disallow its separation we thwart a Calvinist's preconceived notion that it occurs at birth. No matter how strong the need of the Calvinist's philosophical model to move it, regeneration (quickenings) is a part of the salvation package, and must stay in the package.

When we try to extinguish this new life generated by God in a new believer, or to expel the Holy Spirit from his new found temple, or to separate a soul from the union with Christ by a strong Armenian "will of man" argument, we are defeated. Coupling of these five aspects of salvation into a single gold ring that may be put on, but never removed is to capture a Biblical model of salvation with such a stronghold as to disallow philosophical tweaking. These five aspect of salvation help us focus and reveal the weaknesses and flaws of other philosophical models of "so great salvation".

## **I Introduction**

Within Christendom there are many divides of doctrine normally falling along denominational lines. There have been efforts to break down the lines and in the words of some, to "not let doctrine divide us and let the spirit unite us." Many have said that we are all Christians we just do things differently; all the same but

with different ideas or doctrines, about how to do what we do. In this article, it will be demonstrated that there is a hinge pin where these doctrinal lines divide in their many directions. That hinge-pin is the view and understanding of the new birth or salvation experience as presented in the Bible. It is important to focus on this dividing point (and it is that) because it sets a crucial difference between denominations, between Churches, and between movements that entangle our Churches in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Standing between Christendom and non-Christendom<sup>38</sup> there exists another dividing line based upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. An incorrect doctrine of who Christ is, his deity, his human-ness, his virgin birth, his equality with God, neatly separates away those which are non-Christian. Plainly many of these concede that they are not Christian and call themselves, latter day saints (Mormons, Joseph Smithites), JWs (Russelites) or other religions. Some, however infiltrate the ranks of Christendom and purposely call themselves Christians (i.e. Ellen White's SDA, Modernists following Rationalism, et al.). They try to follow the teachings of Christ while rejecting the person of Jesus Christ. The departure from this doctrine of "who Jesus was" makes them infidels to Christendom just the same. Those who do not accept completely the deity of the man Christ Jesus are plainly infidels to the faith. This is not the hinge-pin we will focus on in this paper.

When we are fastened on the hinge-pin of who Jesus Christ was; and we call ourselves Christian; and accept the orthodox Christian doctrines as true; a second hinge-pin exists that separates the many doctrinal avenues that are still open. This second hinge-pin is clearly to be found in the doctrine of the new birth, the understanding of what happens when one is born again. Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Brethren, even Charismatic and non-denominational all divide neatly when we consider the 'who', the 'how', and the 'how long' of salvation. These differences find an epicenter in what happens when one is "born again." Thus this makes a hinge-pin for clearly distinguishing between 'Christian faiths', between denominations, and within

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38 Non-Christendom here generally referring to cults, hedonism or non-Christian religions.

'Christian movements'. Biblically evaluating what takes place when a person is saved, and contrasting that with the teaching of a denomination can bring into focus many of the other differences which are often debated in ignorance. Establishing and understanding this root difference clarifies both intra-denominational and inter-denominational squabbling and misunderstandings about the exact syntax of other doctrinal issues. Particularly here, it will help Biblically distinguish and clarify errant doctrines of sacraments (the 'how' salvation is obtained question), election (the 'who' can be saved question) and perseverance of saints (the 'how long' one stays saved question). Clarifying these questions through a look at what happens when one is born-again, will bring into focus a majority of denominational differences within Christendom.

### **Purpose**

A Biblical understanding of the new birth can bring into focus doctrinal errors about 1) how one gets saved, 2) who can be saved, and 3) how one stays saved. In this article we will model the salvation experience and then examine the effect of this model on the doctrines of sacraments, the doctrines of election, and the doctrines of perseverance of saints.

### **Approach**

The approach in examining this thesis shall be to use Scriptures to construct a model of salvation which includes regeneration, conversion, justification, union with Christ, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, to briefly examine some Christian doctrines about sacraments as they relate to this Biblical model, to briefly examine some Christian doctrines about election as they fit with the model, then to briefly examine some Christian doctrines about perseverance of saints as they pertain to a Biblical model of the salvation experience. This examination will not be an exhaustive treaty of these errant doctrines, but will present aspects of each which conflict with a well developed Scriptural model of so great salvation.

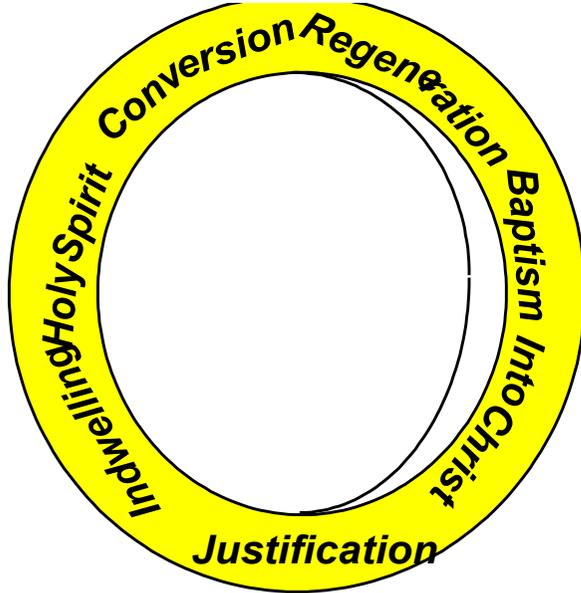
## **II A Biblical Model of the New Birth**

There are two ways of developing a systematic model that captures what Jesus called "being born again", or "being saved", or "receiving eternal life." The first and most often used is to consider 1) the preponderance of Scripture, 2) the orthodox teaching of the past and 3) the logic and philosophy of human reasoning, and then develop a model, choose the supporting verses and dogmatically stick with the model. It will be shown that this method has been widely used and the results take on the names of their prominent developers such as Calvinism, or Arminianism. Such models will often be defended to the death, even when their developments begin to contradict a majority of Scripture.

A second approach, more carefully aligning with Scripture, is to consider the preponderance of Scripture alone, develop a systematic model then contrast the model with the orthodox teaching of the past (as a sanity check and completeness check), and to then consider the logic and philosophy of human reasoning to comprehend the model. We use our deductive reasoning to comprehend Scripture, but we also have a tendency to use our reasoning to twist Scripture and make it fit into our realm of reason. Thus, where this systematic model does not fit our finite comprehension, we do not tweak the Biblically based model, but we compensate our finite understanding with the knowledge that God's thoughts are not man's thoughts. Isaiah 55:7-9 states, "*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*" Let us therefore build our model faithful to the Scriptures and let the misunderstandings not be a misrepresentation of so great salvation.

There are five aspects that seem to capture completely what happens to an individual when they are "born again". These are 1) Conversion, 2) Regeneration, 3) Justification, 4) Baptism into

Christ, and 5) Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They are shown figuratively as a gold ring in Figure 1. Notice here that, like a ring there is no starting place nor stopping place, it is continuous unit. The new birth is quite like the placing of the ring upon a finger, there is no time delayed sequence of events, no process over time, but five immediate transactions that occur when one is born-again.



Figure

1.

This immediacy of the new-birth, that all five portions occur at one instant in time, is vital to the comprehension of Biblical salvation, and is key to distinguishing between denominations and doctrines. Understanding the new-birth as just that, an event in time, for an individual, where all five of these ingredients come together and take place simultaneously, clarifies and distinguishes the Biblical teaching from most doctrinal error and denominational differences. The hinge-pin that distinguishes most clearly between denominations is how far they will separate any of these five events from one another and take them out of a distinct, individual, personal salvation experience. An example developed later but given here for illustration, is the timing of the occurrence of

regeneration within the Reformed & Presbyterian doctrine.

The Reformed and Presbyterian's in general hold to individual soul election and contend that a soul in sin is totally depraved, so depraved they are incapable of turning one fiber of their being towards the redeeming act of salvation. Thus, before that person could start down a path that would lead to conversion, he must be regenerated, i.e. given life, called in the Bible, "being quickened." Regeneration, then is separated from the ring above, and made an event that precedes the new birth. Exactly when this regeneration occurs is debated with several Presbyterian theories. Some suppose it to be before the foundation of the world, some suppose the elect are regenerated at conception or birth, some suppose it occurs just before the new-birth. Their model makes regeneration, or the quickening of a soul, to be a separate entity from conversion and justification.

We here need to carefully develop the timing of these five events and demonstrate that in Scripture they all must occur simultaneously. Then we will just stick tenaciously to the Scriptures as a Biblicist, or Fideist as some have labeled this approach. With this as our basic model of the new birth, we should define each of these five ingredients of the new birth. Then in the next section we will take each and show how they systematically fall out of the Scriptures and how they are tied together in time as a single event.

**Conversion** is the turning from sin to Christ. This is the human part in the salvation transaction. It equally involves turning from sin and turning to Christ, you cannot have one side without the other and have this transaction complete. It involves a completeness in turning from sin and a completeness in turning to Christ in faith. God is not interested in making any new or special deals here; so one must wholly repent and turn from sin (singular) and wholly grasp Christ in faith, letting go of all else for the security of his soul.

**Regeneration** is "that act of God by which new, spiritual life is implanted in man whereby the governing disposition of the soul is made holy by the Holy Spirit through truth as the means."<sup>39</sup> Dr.

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39 Dr. W. Vanhetloo's Syllabus of *Soteriology* #404 Spr 94, Page 42, Calvary

W. Vanhetloo gave here the best one sentence definition of regeneration that this author has seen, the only lacking consideration is that the Bible calls this provision “quickenings.”

**Justification** is best defined by Scripture in 2Cor 5:21 *For he hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Being saved from the condemnation of sin involves coming under the umbrella of what Christ did for us. Justification, then, is a heavenly judicial declaration of 1) remission of sin and of 2) restoration to God.

**Baptism into Christ** often called the union with Christ, this is simply being united with Christ. Again probably best defined by Scripture in Christ's prayer in John 17:21-23 *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* There is no water involved in this baptism.

**Indwelling of the Holy Spirit** is the actual, literal moving into ones body of the Holy Spirit of God whereby he now permanently indwells us. Again Scripture pictures this superbly in 1Cor 6:19 *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.* Also Romans 8: 9 *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* When one is saved, the Holy Spirit of God takes up residence inside them, he indwells them.

The purpose of this paper is not to define and develop these five transactions that occur at salvation, but to demonstrate that Biblically they all occur at an instant in time, the instant one is 'born-again'. We shall develop more fully these five transactions in the next section. Again with our emphasis on the marvelous revelation that all five of them are instantaneous and united

transactions. Making this tie, that all five are tied in time to conversion, is what will allow us to clearly differentiate various denominational differences. We can use this understanding of conversion as the hinge-pin to evaluate and bring into focus all other 'Christian' doctrines and differences.

### **III The Instantaneous Transaction of Conversion**

We said previously that: **Conversion** is the turning from sin to Christ. This is the human part in the salvation transaction. It equally involves turning from sin and turning to Christ, you cannot have one side without the other and have this transaction complete. It involves a completeness in turning from sin and a completeness in turning to Christ in faith. God is not interested in making any new or special deals here; so one must wholly repent and turn from sin (singular) and wholly grasp Christ in faith, letting go of all else for the security of his soul. The Apostle Paul clarifies this conversion in Acts 20:21 *“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Examining conversion as one of the five instantaneous entities that make up salvation is somewhat of a challenge because it is, in our mind, the act that sets off the whole salvation event, and is viewed more as a process than an event. Thus, as we examine it, we shall attempt to separate it from all the events, process's and circumstances that leads a soul to the place where he would turn from sin and turn to Christ. And separate it from the after-math of the changes that begin to happen, and the changes which demonstrate that there was genuine conversion.

This turning from sin to Christ is the hall mark of salvation. Conversion, in various forms occurs in 37 verses<sup>40</sup> of the Bible. It is clearly described in Scripture as an event that happens in an instant of time. A works salvation is very attractive to man. A

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<sup>40</sup> Josh 8:35 1Sam 25:15 Psal 19:7 Psal 37:14 Psal 50:23 Psal 51:13 Isai 1:27 Isai 6:10 Isai 60:5 Matt 13:15 Matt 18:3 Mark 4:12 Luke 22:32 John 12:40 Acts 3:19 Acts 15:3 Acts 28:27 2Cor 1:12 Gala 1:13 Ephe 2:3 Ephe 4:22 Phil 1:27 Phil 3:20 1Tim 4:12 Hebr 13:5 Hebr 13:7 Jame 3:13 Jame 5:19 20 1Pet 1:15 1Pet 1:18 1Pet 2:12 1Pet 3:1 2 1Pet 3:16 2Pet 2:7 2Pet 3:11

works salvation is what surrounds and encapsulates 'religion'. This ever present teaching of works salvation is what makes it difficult, but necessary, to look at this conversion as an event that happens in an instant of time. In examining the Scriptures that pinpoint this as an event, we shall examine the aspects of conversion as 1) A new birth, 2) turning (from sin and to Christ) and 3) belief on/in Christ.

In John 3 there is a record of a religious man asking about his prospects of getting to heaven. In the course of Jesus' addressing the shortfalls of religion he states "*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. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again* (John 3:5-7).

Thus we speak of being 'born again' as an event, and can ask an individual if they are a born again believer. In this explanation, given by Jesus Christ himself, he brings out that being born of the spirit, being converted, being saved from ones sin debt is a voluntary operation or act of belief by an individual. However, it is likened to a birth. Does one voluntarily choose birth, no. What initiates birth? Certainly conception and coming to full term has a role, but even as I write this we wait for twin grand kids to be born. Labor started six weeks early then stopped, and we now wait. We have tried lots of things to help but we often hear that "they will come when they are ready." What initiates the birthing event? God does. In our spiritual life what initiates the spiritual new birth? God does. Can we force it or fake it? Many have, but God is in charge of genuine spiritual birth. We have overlooked several aspects of this powerful illustration let me list a few for your consideration:

1. Birth takes place at a time, thus we end up with a birthday.
2. Birth is a miracle, not just conception and development but birth itself.
3. Birth is initiated.
4. Birth may be labored.
5. Birth is completed.
6. The infant is not in control.
7. It marks the entry of a new independent life into the world.

Jesus used this as an illustration of what Nicodemus needed. Not the only illustration he gave him, but a powerful one just the same. We should be careful not to over weight any of these aspects of birth to the conversion of the soul, but so to we should not discard those that fit so well.

Anyone that is born in the flesh<sup>41</sup> can be born in the spirit. It is thus been said by some "If you are born once, you must die twice, but if you are born twice you may<sup>42</sup> die only once." Clearly this new birth is not a process over years, but an event in ones life. Clearly an infant has little control during this birthing process but lets look at an individuals involvement in the spiritual birth.

Jesus further clarified this new birth with the illustration from Numbers 26 that looking to a brazen serpent saved the life of a

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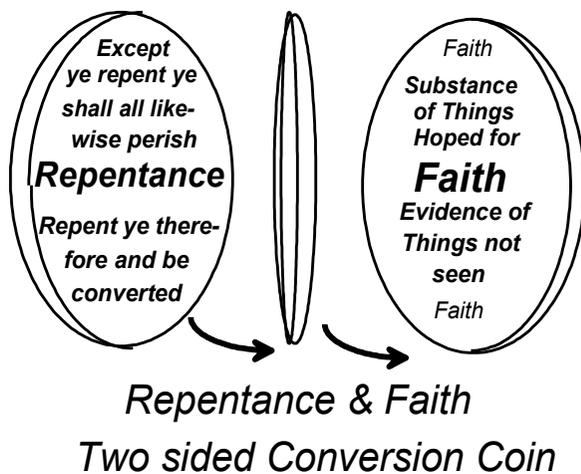
41 Note here that there has been much disparity about exactly what is meant by Christ when he said "*except a man be born of water and of the Spirit*" The very simplest, literal, and logical reading is that this is speaking of ones physical birth. To see the kingdom of God, one must of necessity be born first physically. This reading fits into both the argument of Nicodemus who asked if he necessarily had to enter into his mothers womb again, and into the parallel clarification that follows about being born of flesh. Some like to make this 'born of water' phrase mean touched, anointed, cleansed or born-of the Word of God, (because some times the Word is pictured figuratively as water). They argue that if it was physical birth Jesus was speaking of, he would be requiring Nicodemus to be born physically again. No they say, he is requiring that he be touched with the gospel, to hear the Word of truth as part of the new birth. Although, in a system of theology it is the preaching of the Gospel that precedes the new birth, it is a rough and forced fit to make this 'born of water' fit that requirement. Clearly, in context, it is talking about physical birth. Others will muck this portion up further by requiring that 'born of water' has something to do with water baptism. Again, they are guilty of making the Scriptures imply something that they believe rather than taking a good hermeneutical approach to a literal interpretation of this passage. There are ample references to the power and need of the word of God, without stretching this one to go there. There are ample references to the correct teaching of baptism without making this one capture something it is not intended for. To be 'born of water' is simply equivalent to being physically born of the womb.

42 The term 'may' is used here because Jesus himself said "*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*" John 11:25-26

judged snake bite victim. As much as an Israelite had only to look at the brazen serpent to be saved from his snake-bite, so one has only to turn and look to Christ to be saved from his sin sentence (John 3:14-16). What was man's part? To believe and to look. Belief alone was inadequate. There must be an application of the belief, but that application had no physical requirement, no gauze or ointment, no water washing or need of someone else to dunk them in magical water. In the words of the songwriter one had but to "*look and live, my brother live, look to Jesus now and live, it's recorded in His word, hallelujah, it is only that you look and live.*" Marvelous simplicity. Marvelous availability. Marvelous attainability to all who would believe.

*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.* The word 'believe' has lost its effectiveness today. We say, "I believe it will be a nice day." We say, "I believe the world is round." Believe has been distanced from trust. To capture the intent of Biblical belief on Christ, we must tie the word back to trust, to letting go of other securities and placing the full trust of our soul in Christ. "*Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" Both the turning to the brazen serpent and the turning loose of all else for a belief in Christ, alone, show two inseparable parts of conversion. Repentance, is turning from, and Faith is believing in.

The best illustration of conversion then is in a two sided coin containing faith and repentance. Accepting the whole coin is as easy as reaching out and receiving. Dividing the two is as difficult as cutting a coin without defacing either side. When one is done with the latter, one does not have a complete coin.



Comprehending conversion as an act of an individual that takes place in their volition at an instant in time leads to several clarifications that should be stated.

1. One can know they have done this as sure as one can know that they got married.
2. There is more than a 'head knowledge' involved in believing faith.
3. There is no work to be done to deserve conversion, it is an act of faith alone.
4. There is nothing that can be done externally by the individual, his family or a Church to accomplish a soul's conversion.
5. There are no sacraments (mystical physical acts with spiritual consequences) involved in conversion.
6. The Church cannot issue salvation via sacraments.
7. An infant cannot be converted.

Let's emphasize a couple of verses again and recognize that conversion is this new birth and new birth is conversion.

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.*

John 3:6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

John 3:14-18 *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever **believeth in him** should not perish, but have eternal life. 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. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 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.*

Matt 18:2 *And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, **Except ye be converted**, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Acts 20:20-21 *And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

American society is filled with individuals who were never converted yet think themselves Christian. There is no time or place in their life where they verbally called on Christ for their salvation and realized it a completed transaction. They often have spent their lives acting Christian without the new life and assurance that conversion brings. If you are one of these please realize now that *"Except ye be converted, . . . ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."*

Keeping these things in mind, one goes on in the exploration of events that accompany salvation. Recall that all five of these events, Conversion, Regeneration, Justification, Baptism into Christ, and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, occur simultaneously and in an instant of time in an individuals life.

## **IV The Instantaneous Transaction of Regeneration**

We said previously that: **Regeneration** is "that act of God by which new, spiritual life is implanted in man whereby the governing disposition of the soul is made holy by the Holy Spirit through truth as the means."<sup>43</sup>

Once again we are not covering all aspects of this tremendous miracle in this chapter, only establishing the Scriptural basis that it occurs at an instant in time in an individual's life, that it occurs simultaneously with the new birth, and that this new birth also includes the other four ingredients of Conversion, Justification, Baptism into Christ, and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The word regeneration appears only twice in the Bible, in Matt 19:28 and Tit 3:5.

*Matt 19:28 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.*

*Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of **regeneration**, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

So here the part of regeneration we are interested in might be better conceived with the word quickened. The word quickened, meaning made alive, is used 25 times in the Bible, 10 in the NT and 15 times in Psalms. The fact that the new birth described in John 3 is tied with new spiritual life, quickening or regeneration is indisputable. The descriptions of the new life being just that, a "new" life, where one once was dead and now is made alive are throughout the epistles. We want to examine some of these references in order to establish that regeneration can not precede conversion nor can it be something that tags along or develops later in our Christian life.

Let's notice from scripture that Jesus Christ is the one who quickeneth, and he does so to whom he pleases. *John 5:21 For as*

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43 Dr. W. Vanhetloo's Syllabus of *Soteriology* #404 Spr 94, Page 42, Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary

*the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.* We do not quicken ourselves and it is not thus a process but an event in our lives. Christ uses the spirit in this act of quickening. *John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* There is an interesting development that can be made just by looking at the use of God's word in this quickening action. The psalm about His word, Psalm 119, shows in 12 verses the different relationships of God's word to quickening.<sup>44</sup>

1. Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

2. I Cor 15:36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

3. I Cor 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

4. Eph 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

5. Eph 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6. Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

7. I Tim 6:13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and [before] Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

8. 1Pet 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

9. Luke 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

10. Luke 15:32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

11. Rom 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead

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44 Reference Psal 119:25,40,50,88,93,107,149,154,156, 159

indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The most vivid delineation of quickening is found in Ephesians 2.

*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:... But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)* Ephesians 2:1-2, 4-5

At the new birth, when saved, we are quickened. This is integral with salvation and is indeed the very reception of the eternal life which is a product of salvation. A saved one, in present tense, does indeed “have everlasting life.” When considering this quickening alone, there are only two ways one could lose salvation, 1) if this quickening were not accomplished at salvation, but held out in the future as a reward for keeping the faith or enduring to the end. Such a possibility directly contradicts John 3:16 and Ephesians 2. 2) If this quickening were withdrawn from an individual, i.e. God reached into the soul and killed the eternal life which he had previously made alive. One cannot lose quickening, we have God's Word on it.

## **V The Instantaneous Transaction of Justification**

Justification is probably the most studied of the five aspects of salvation. It is certainly the best illustrated throughout scripture. We had previously defined justification as follows:

**Justification** is best defined by Scripture in II Cor 5:21 *For he hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Being saved from the condemnation of sin is coming under the umbrella of what Christ did for us. Justification

then is a heavenly judicial declaration of 1) remission of sin and of 2) restoration to God.

Justification is illustrated for us in Scriptures in four predominant ways. These are found in Jesus' keen description of salvation in John 3:16. "*For God so loved the world*", this presents the **moral analogy** of justification; "*That he gave*", this presents the **commercial analogy** of justification, the purchasing of souls; "*His only begotten Son*", this presents the **legal analogy**, of a substitute, a surety; "*that whosoever believeth on Him, should not perish*", lastly the **sacrificial analogy** of God's justification of man is presented; "*but hath everlasting life*", praise the Lord this emphasizes the present possession of this so great salvation.

We shall not here endeavor to visit each of these analogies of justification, but to illustrate the timing of this justification to show how it aligns with the other four in our model. When Jesus cried "it is finished" certainly the justification of mankind was a finished act. The love of God had been fully demonstrated (moral analogy); the price had been paid (commercial analogy); the substitution had been complete (legal analogy); and the last sacrifice had been made (sacrificial analogy). However, though the justification of mankind was complete, the transactions that applied that justification to individuals had just begun. Let's examine that application.

God's love provided salvation as a free gift to man. Man must receive the gift or it is not his possession. God's redemption of mankind is akin to the man purchasing the whole field to possess the hid treasure in it's midst (Matt 13 or akin to the pearl of great price, same chapter), although the whole price of the field has been paid, only the treasure is taken to the bosom of God. God's provision of his own son as a surety to man and payment of the sin debt is complete, but although a surety may be accepted by a judge, it is not accepted legally until the guilty man agrees that it be applied to his debt to the law. And although the Passover Lamb was slain on Calvary, as the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world, the Passover is not acceptable until the blood has been applied to the individual door posts.

I was not born justified. I was justified when I received Christ

as my savior in that basement Junior Church class in Gang Mills, New York on that Thursday evening in September of 1960. There, I called upon God, according to Romans 10:9-13 and was converted to Christ. Prior to that moment I was dead in trespasses and sins, but God shewed me that. Prior to that I was blind to the things of God, but God enabled me to see the light that lighteth every man. Prior to that I was responsible for my own sin debt, and I was burdened about that. After that act of faith, in repenting of my 8 year old sin debt and putting my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I was justified. When did that happen? At the moment I was converted, at the same time God made me alive inside, at the same time the Holy Spirit immersed me (baptized me) into Christ, and Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and seal my soul for eternity, all in that instant.

The act of justification is a completed act, but the application of it to an individual's soul is connected with his conversion, his immersion in Christ, his quickening, and his becoming the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Justification is such an integral part of salvation that little needs to be said to substantiate that it is an instantaneous part of the new birth or salvation experience. It is the hallmark of salvation.

## **VI The Instantaneous Baptism Into Christ**

At conversion we are wholly immersed into Christ. In the Bible, most instances of baptism, i.e. being wholly immersed into, do not involve water. A few verses might drive that point home:

*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:*

*Mark 1:8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.*

*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 with fire:*

*John 1:33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.*

*Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

*Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

*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.*

*Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

*Ephesians 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

*Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

*Hebrews 6:2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, ...*

*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:*

We are baptized into Christ. Roman, Protestant and Reformed thinkers tangle water into all baptisms and totally miss this

doctrine of baptisms called out in Hebrews 6 and consequently miss that one is baptized into Christ when converted. To be baptized does not always take water. It simply means to be wholly immersed into. In secular Greek usage of the day ships were 'baptized' into the sea, . . . they were sunk! We are thus baptized into Christ; we are wholly immersed into him. Examine again the key scripture which we already presented for baptism into Christ:

**Baptism into Christ** often called the union with Christ, this is simply being united with Christ. Again probably best defined by Scripture in Christ's prayer in John 17:21 *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

Notice carefully that we are making parallel or synonymous the 'union with Christ' and the 'baptism into Christ'. Again this requires the careful examination of the word baptized without the bias normally connected to this word use. For clarification let's list some of the corrections which need to be considered:

1. Baptism need not be connected to water, but to immersion.
2. Baptism is not connected to purification, checking the modern Merriam Webster Dictionary, one would make a tight connection between baptism and purification. This connection is contrived in error, liking at the strictest sense of the word there is not washing or purification attached to baptism, only immersion.
3. Baptism is not a rite of passage for a child or individual, into adulthood or into the kingdom of God. Again it has come to mean such, but not so originally or properly.
4. Water baptism has always been a symbolic picture of our immersion into Christ, to be portrayed after the actual immersion into Christ has occurred.
5. Baptism, meaning immersion has always been foreign to

the picture attained by sprinkling or pouring. These were done for convenience while the misrepresentation of a purification to baptism connection. Such a means does not give fair justice to the Greek word "baptiso" . . . immersion.

6. Baptist doctrine is more about the baptism of only believers who are genuinely immersed into Christ, than it is about the physical method of Baptism.
7. Christ baptizes in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit baptizes us into Christ. John 1:33. . . . *"the same (Jesus) is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."* I Cor 12:13 *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

In Ephesians chapter one Paul writes to those who are "faithful in Christ Jesus" (vr 1). One could learn a lot by looking at the many uses of the little word "in" throughout chapter one. Look particularly at verse 10: *"That **in** the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth'; even **in** him."* When one is converted he is placed into Christ; at that moment. Examine the central Scripture for this for this aspect of salvation in I Cor 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 all been made to drink into one Spirit."* This concept of being placed into one body, the body of Christ, is found throughout Paul's writings. Notice its clarity in Romans 12:4. *"For we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; So we, being many; are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."* Thus, it is clear from scripture that when saved, we have a new position **in** Christ.

When do we receive this position in Christ? When we are born? No. When we are added to a local church? No. When we are baptized with water? No. We receive this baptism into the body of Christ, this union with Christ, at the moment of conversion. *"If any man be **in Christ**, he is a new creature (regeneration), old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. (II Cor 5:17)* We have seen then that "baptism into Christ", is an act done by the Holy Spirit, whereby a believer is placed in union with the Lord

Jesus Christ. "In Christ", "In union with Christ" and "Baptized into Christ", then, all properly describe this event which occurs at the conversion of a soul to Christ.

Agustus H. Strong<sup>45</sup> lists five Biblical analogies for this union with Christ shown as follows:

1. From the union of a building and its foundation.
2. From the union between husband and wife.
3. From the union between the vine and its branches.
4. From the union between the members and the head of the body.
5. From the union of the race with the source of life in Adam.

He goes on to list these direct statements:

1. The believer is said to be in Christ.
2. Christ is said to be in the believer.
3. The Father and the Son dwell in the believer.
4. The believer has life by partaking in Christ.
5. All believers are one in Christ.
6. The believer is made partaker of the divine nature.
7. The believer is made one spirit with the Lord.

This union with Christ must occur during a believer's life time. When? It occurs at conversion, regeneration, and justification, not sequentially but instantaneously at ones new birth.

It needs to be clarified that this baptism requires no water. When asked if he believed in baptismal regeneration Lester Rolof shocked his audience in stating "Yes I do." After some consternation he clarified, "It is just that you all have to go the the Stream for yours, Bible believers go to the Spirit." This is Spirit baptism we are talking about, and it gets you a position in Christ. I have crawled out of my position as a believer, but the position remains, waiting for me to get things right and crawl back in.

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45 Agustus H. Strong, "Systematic Theology", 1907 p 795.

## VII The Instantaneous Indwelling of The Holy Spirit

It has been well stated that “In the Old Testament God built a temple for his people, in the New Testament God builds a people for his temple.”<sup>46</sup> The difference between indwelling and filling has been hotly debated but in this section we want to ensure clarity about the instantaneous indwelling of the Holy Spirit when one is converted to Christ. That this is a literal indwelling is brought out in our previous description:

**Indwelling of the Holy Spirit** is the actual literal moving into our bodies by the Holy Spirit of God where by he now permanently indwells us. Again scripture pictures this superbly in 1Cor 6:19 *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.* Also Romans 8: 9 *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* When one is saved, the Holy Spirit of God takes up residence inside them, he indwells them.

To examine this indwelling and demonstrate its occurrence and permanence at conversion, let's again examine Paul's tremendous introduction to a new group of believers at Ephesus. In that introduction Paul lists 3 things done by the Father<sup>47</sup>, “to the praise of the glory of His grace”; he lists 7 things accomplished by Christ<sup>48</sup> “that we should be to the praise of his glory:” and he then lists 4 things accomplished by the Holy Spirit, “unto the praise of

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46 The late Evangelist Lauren Dawson popularized this truth, and to my knowledge originally coined it.

47 The Father 1) blessed us with all spiritual blessings, 2) Chosen and Predestined us, and 3) made us accepted.

48 The Son gave us 1) redemption, 2) forgiveness, 3) wisdom, 4) prudence, 5) revealed mystery, 6) gathering place (in him), and 7) purpose.

his glory.” Examining just the 4 done by the Holy Spirit notice that he 1) caused us to hear the word of truth; he 2) caused us to believe; he 3) sealed us and he 4) is the earnest of our inheritance. Noting there the Holy Spirit caused our salvation and he is the seal and earnest of our salvation it is obvious that he indwells us at salvation and stays till we get our inheritance.

Given that the presence of the Holy Spirit within us is an earnest of our inheritance , it must remain until we get that inheritance. That is how an earnest works. Also this earnest is not given until one has assurance of that inheritance of eternal life. When does this indwelling earnest occur? It occurs at conversion, regeneration and justification, not sequentially but instantaneously at ones new birth.

This indwelling of the Holy Spirit is dwelt upon in Romans chapter 8. It is absolutely part of a new birth salvation in this chapter, and the chapter emphasizes over and over the “if so be” aspect of ones salvation. The genuineness of one's salvation is the determining factor of the indwelling and sealing role (Eph 4:30) of the Holy Spirit of God. When one is truly saved, they are truly indwelt, and that indwelling occurs at conversion, and remains till death do us part,... and death cannot do us part in this instance.

## **VIII The conflict with the philosophy of Sacraments**

### **Conversion contrasted with Sacraments**

We have thus far examined the five various portions of salvation and shall now examine the conflict between the instantaneous occurrence of these with the doctrine of sacraments. Broadly we can consider a sacrament as some physical act which produces some spiritual result. Specifically here we are concerned about any sacrament where the spiritual result is thought to be salvation of the soul. We see that any sacrament producing salvation is at odds with our Biblical definition of conversion.

Given that conversion is a non-physical, supernatural act which initiates new birth, it stands in stark contrast with the idea

that one can work, or partake in sacraments, to attain heaven. Either one attains a sure eternal gift of salvation via conversion, or salvation is a process of participation in some sacramental system. Both cannot be true. There can not be a little bit of totally undeserved favor, called grace, and a little bit of good works. There can not be a little bit of grace, and a little bit of mystical participation in a Church Sacrament; not a little bit of grace and a little bit of Church work, not a little bit of grace and a little bit of water baptism, or water washing or water sprinkling. The Biblical interpretation of conversion defeats the doctrine of Sacraments for salvation.

When we examine the Catholic sacramental system we find that its tentacles reach out into many works salvation models found throughout Christendom today. The basis for the Catholic sacraments by which one earns ones way to heaven are best understood through their own butter churn illustration. Gods grace, in this Catholic illustration, is poured out like milk through the spigot of the Catholic Church. Man takes this 'grace milk' and churns it into butter through 'good works'. The churned butter represents man made righteousness which is stacked up to earn ones way to heaven. How much man made butter is needed to secure heaven? Well, that depends. It depends on so many things that one can never know if they churned up enough butter or not. Some, in Catholic supposition, have churned so much butter that they surely made it into heaven and have some left over; these are "Sainted" and men are told to pray to these Catholic Saints,... you can use some of their butter. This catholic model of the salvation process stands in contrast to Jesus' words "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted,<sup>49</sup> . . . ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt 18:3)

Seeing then that the catholic doctrine of sacraments makes conversion a lifetime process of serving the Catholic Church, instead of an instantaneous act of will, we should see it as error and watch for strains of this heretical doctrine throughout Christendom.

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49 The phrase "and become as little children is omitted here to emphasize the verb "be converted". One converted becomes as a little child, but one who becomes as a little child is not necessarily converted.

Protestant theologians, Luther, Calvin, Wesley etc. removed themselves from the churning up of man made righteousness, but still retain some level of sacraments, some physical act to be done or participated in. For conversion, these Protestant reformers properly rejected the Catholic Churches control of God's grace and the churning up of man made righteousness. "Only Scripture! Only Faith! Only Grace! was their battle cry. However, they did leave a remnant of sacraments in their system of theology. Recalling that a sacrament is a physical act, i.e. taking a wafer, or sprinkling with water, etc. that produces a spiritual result, i.e. the salvation of the soul, the purification of the soul, the washing away of sin, etc. In word these reformers removed Catholic control over salvation, they removed all but faith and grace from the new birth, however, they retained the butter churn to aid in sanctification to bring about the spiritual changes necessary in man. This visage of sacraments is forever getting entangled into the salvation message resulting in a works salvation rampant in Protestant/Reformed denominations.

Because of the Catholic doctrine of sacraments and the Protestant retention of some sacraments, most of 'Christian America' carry an idea that if they have been good enough and worked up their own righteousness, they might be allowed into heaven. This working toward an "I earned heaven" fits both our material inclinations and the Catholic doctrine of sacraments; but it does not fit the Biblical necessity of conversion, an act not of works but turning loose of our own righteousness, and grasping onto Christ's Righteousness in faith. Turning loose of ones own righteousness is difficult enough, but when one is steeped in the teaching that there are some physical things that produce spiritual results, a mental wall is constructed which keeps many from conversion.

Our Biblical model that connects salvation of the soul with the new birth and makes this event instantaneous with a conversion, regeneration and justification occurring in a moment of time, causes the concept of progressively working up more and more good to deserve heaven to be seen as the blasphemy that it is. The whole connection of this supernatural event to any physical, material, performance, such as works for a Church or water

baptism is foreign to the Scriptures. It should be carefully kept foreign to our doctrines as well; certainly kept foreign to our doctrine of salvation but we should also keep the sacramental tentacles out of our doctrine of sanctification.

## **IX The conflict with the philosophy of Calvinism**

Since we have demonstrated that conversion, regeneration, justification, baptism into Christ, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, all occur at the same moment in our lives, let's see where such a model would clash with the doctrine of election, particularly with Calvinism. Let's first briefly define Calvinism. Perhaps done best here by the following article by W.G.T. Shedd. CALVINISM –a definition and explanation:

The essential parts of this system are the well-known five points of Calvinism, namely, total depravity in distinction from partial; unconditional election in distinction from conditional; irresistible regenerating grace in distinction from resistible; limited redemption (not atonement) in distinction from universal; the certain perseverance of the regenerate in distinction from their possible apostasy. No one of these points can be rejected without impairing the integrity of Calvinism . . .<sup>50</sup>

In this paper I will not deal with all aspects of this doctrine. Only with the misnomer where regeneration is removed from salvation and placed elsewhere. This is not a misnomer for all Calvinists, but it is an attractive error to the doctrine of individual soul election. It is a common error for those who are hasty to lean on the philosophical renderings of total depravity, and how one who is dead could respond to the Spirit's drawing. Focusing, then, just on the time when man's spirit is made responsive to the Holy Spirit look at the Westminster confession below.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, 1647,

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50 William G. T. Shedd. Calvinism: Pure and Mixed. p. 147

Chapter VIII and Section VIII says: To all those for whom Christ has purchased redemption He does certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same; making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by His Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit; overcoming all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.<sup>51</sup>

Their dilemma arises from the logic that man must be regenerated before their eyes are opened to God's "revealing unto them . . . the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them". One can not reveal to, nor persuade one who is dead. Look also at the thirty nine articles of the Church of England.

The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England in Article XVII states: Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He has constantly decreed by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He has chosen in Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor. Wherefore, those who are endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by His Spirit working in due season: they through Grace obey the calling: they are justified freely: they are made sons of God by adoption: they are made like the image of His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting happiness.<sup>52</sup>

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51 Schaff. op. cit. p. 622

52 Ibid. p. 497

Logically here, the calling and the obedience to the calling can not be done by one that is dead and/or blinded. Thus, within reformed theology, Presbyterianism and Calvinism, there is a dangerous logical tendency to take regeneration and place it at conception or birth, thus removing it as a part of the salvation experience.

The very difficult question concerning salvation, the question of 'how does God do that?' has no simple answer, but moving the act of regeneration from salvation time up to an elect ones conception or birth is a grace error against the Biblical model of salvation. In fact, it so muddies the water that eventually the whole new birth is no longer a golden ring containing all 5 ingredients and available to 'whosoever will'. It becomes a muddled and confused patch work process. It is not so. Although off tract Calvinist theologians pull regeneration from the gold ring of salvation and place it at conception of a soul, You and I must not.

Baptist doctrine has for centuries skirted around this error, and only in the last 50 years have the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches become steeped in the tulips of Calvinism. Their Article X below talks of ones calling and salvation:

The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches Article X states that: We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life. <sup>53</sup>

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53 General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. Literature Item 1. p. 6

Notice the careful treatment of regeneration and how it is brought about in a manner beyond our comprehension. Regeneration remains a part of salvation in this article, but the wording still eludes to the conflict brought on by the Calvinistic tendency to place regeneration at the birth of their elect individuals and not at the time of salvation. Let's once more examine the logic path that causes a defender of individual soul election to place regeneration at the birth of one of these elect ones.

A first tentacle of Calvinism is that man is totally depraved. Their definition of this total depravity is that they are absolutely dead to all spiritual life. Imagine trying to coax a corpse into making a decision. It can not be done. Thus before this spiritual corpse can make a decision for Christ there must be some kind of spiritual awareness, some spiritual life, placed into him. Since, in their philosophy, God chose certain humans for salvation, he only puts this spiritual life into his elect. The placement of this spiritual life, or spiritual awareness in a human is synonymous with the Bible teaching of regeneration, however now it has been made a precursor to salvation so that the Spirit of God can draw this one to himself.

Well then, when does this spiritual awareness, this regeneration occur? At birth! God has his elect souls all chosen, they suppose, so he regenerates them at birth. Suppose they die before birth. OK, at conception. God has his elect souls all chosen so when the genes form from the egg and sperm to lock in ones physical traits, God also locks in their spiritual trait by breathing spiritual life into some and neglecting spiritual life in others... they suppose. God is sovereign and can do just that. Although I believe the latter statement, God's word prevents such a scenario.

God regenerates one at the time of conversion, at the time of justification, at the time of baptism into Christ, at the time of indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The regular Baptist state that it is in a manner above our comprehension. It is best left there, for the Bible says that God tries the reins of every man, that we are all without excuse, that we all have a knowledge of God that the Holy Spirit draws on every man, that the light lighteth every man, that God is not willing that any should perish, that whosoever will may

come, and that if any man come, he will in no wise cast him out. It also says that we are dead in trespasses and sins, that we are blind to the things of God, that no man comes to Christ unless the Father draw him. When the Biblical model of Salvation is incomprehensible to our logic, don't abandon an infallible Bible for mere finite logic. Regeneration occurs at conversion.

## **X The conflict with the philosophy of Armenianism**

Armenius (1560-1609) was an outspoken opponent to individual predestination. He, and his followers became expositors of Armenian doctrine which put an emphasis on the freedom of the will of man to decide his fate. As much as Calvinism upholds a fatalistic view, Armenians upholds an absolute free will view. It is interesting that the Word of God upholds neither. The conflict of our model with Armenian doctrine is not so much with the attaining of salvation, as it is with the retaining of salvation. In examining the issue of retaining ones salvation we still put our emphasis on the immediacy of the five aspects of salvation 1) conversion, 2) regeneration, 3) justification , 4) baptism into Christ, and 5) indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We emphasize this because it makes them each, not only un-sequential and immediate in their origin but un-segmented and finished in their completion. In other words on the day I got saved I was as converted as I would ever be, I was as regenerated as I would ever be, I was as justified as I would ever be, I was as united with Christ as I would ever be, and I was as indwelt by the Holy Spirit as I would ever be.<sup>54</sup>

Armenian doctrines, because of its emphasis on the free will of man, leaves ample room for an individual to become unsaved. For an Armenian, when a man, of his free will, chooses to turn his back on God, he forfeits his salvation. Instead of being characterized as a son, he is somehow disowned by God and

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54 We have not brought out in this paper the 'filling of the H.S." This differs from the indwelling of the H.S. that occurs at salvation. A filling of the H.S. has these characteristics: 1) an emptying of self, 2) A surrender to this H.S. and 3) The will and purpose of God. Thus a filling of the H.S. may re-occur several times, may last an undetermined period of time and is independent of our salvation, given only that so great salvation has already occurred.

becomes, again, lost and in his sins. They use some scriptures to support this idea. Scriptures about "enduring to the end" or having "fallen away" are often sought out and bolstered into their philosophy, but what of the five completed acts in our scriptural model. What of the fact that when converted one, present tense, "hath" eternal life? What of the fact that we once were dead but are now alive; were blind but now we see? Does that new regenerated eternal life now die? What of the fact that we were justified with our sin debt forever paid? Do we take it back onto our own shoulders? What of the fact that we were baptized into Christ? Are we now ripped back out of him because we did not, with our free will, endure till the end? What of the "earnest money" that was given? Is it revoked and the Spirit, once present is ordered out of the premises? No. By no means. Indeed all five of these aspects of salvation, their initiation and completion on the day of our salvation give strong testimony to the permanence of this "so great salvation". For if we do not attain this salvation by our act, we do not retain it by our act, nor can we slay the regenerated man, pull out of the body of Christ and evict the Holy Spirit from our body and go back under the condemnation of sin by our act or our volition.

Do not then allow an Armenian doctrine, a whiplash away from the error of individual predestination, confuse you about the permanency of the new life, the justification, the union with Christ or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. These cannot be denied just because we want to emphasize the free will of man. I am all for a renewed emphasis on the free will of man, and his responsibility for his own actions, however the preponderance of scripture as well as this scriptural model of salvation, demonstrates the permanency of the arrangement made by so great salvation. That which is born in me shall never die, believest thou this?

## **XI John Calvin's Thinking About the Order of Justification and Regeneration**

The struggle of Protestants to clarify the order and temporal

timing of regeneration and then justification, ... or of justification and then regeneration, is brought out well in a 1973 article in Present Truth Magazine.<sup>55</sup> Note that Present Truth Magazine is “An independent journal of theology for evangelical Seventh-day Adventist Christians by evangelical Seventh-day Adventist Christians” and is not endorsed by this author, nor are any other of the exotic and apostate teachings of Ellen G. White, the SDA founder. Dr. Gordon Clark's arguments, and the magazine editor's insertions, however, lend particular light on the dilemma and Protestant infighting that has resulted in separating and or ordering the five aspects of so great salvation, ones 1) conversion, 2) regeneration (quickenings), 3) justification, 4) baptism into Christ, and 5) indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Temporal separation or sequential ordering of these aspects of ones salvation is necessary for Protestant creeds and models to work. Temporal separation and sequential ordering of these five aspects of so great salvation is not implied in Holy Scripture, which is rightfully to be a Bible students sole and final authority. The SDA article is repeated in its entirety below:

**Editorial Note:** We here reprint a statement sent to us in 1973 by the respected evangelical and Reformed scholar, Gordon H. Clark. It was published in the "Letters" section of our previous issue of Present Truth Magazine together with a brief editorial comment which we made at that time. This editorial comment is also reprinted here at the conclusion of Dr. Clark's statement.

**Remarks on Justification and Regeneration  
Gordon H. Clark**

The special issue of Present Truth Magazine devoted to discussions of "Justification by Faith" is the first copy of the magazine that I have seen. Its emphasis

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55 PRESENT TRUTH Magazine, Volume Twenty-Seven — Article 3 “The Order of Justification and Regeneration”, <http://www.presenttruthmag.com/archive/XXVII/27-3.htm> , accessed 12/30/2000, and again 10/22/2018. [Present Truth Magazine is “An independent journal of theology for evangelical Seventh-day Adventist Christians by evangelical Seventh-day Adventist Christians” and is not endorsed by this author, nor are any other of the exotic and apostate teachings of Ellen G. White, the SDA founder.]

on the "material principle" of the Reformation and its opposition to Romish theology speaks clearly to these times when the Protestant churches have largely rejected the Bible.

Among the magazine's excellent pages, however, there was one article — so it seems to me — that did not properly represent the historic Protestant view. On page 18 Rome is characterized by the phrase, "Regeneration — a necessary condition for justification," and the Reformation is characterized by the phrase, "Regeneration — the immediate consequence and fruit of justification." With respect to this latter phrase there are two points to be considered: (1) the article's argument from the Bible is incomplete and in places fallacious, and (2) the historical evidence necessary to conclude that the theology of the Reformation is in view is missing.

On the first point I shall try to be brief. Page 18, column 2, after quoting Romans 4:5 that God justifies the ungodly, says, "This scripture certainly contradicts the notion that God justifies only regenerate saints." The paragraph fails to show any contradiction. The following paragraph correctly states that God justifies the uncircumcised; but Romans 4:9-11 (quoted) does not mention regeneration, as would be necessary for a conclusion about regeneration; and the appended explanation, which says that "the new life is the sign and witness of the blessing of justification," does not reproduce the thought of the passage from Romans, for the scripture says that circumcision (not the new life or regeneration) is the sign. Page 19, point 4, adds to Romans 5 something about a "new heart," which is not found in the text. Finally, so far as Scripture and argument go, page 19, column 2, says, "To those who respond to His drawing, the Spirit gives faith and repentance." Is this not Romanism? An unregenerate sinner, totally depraved, dead in sin, who does not seek God, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, who has no fear of God before

his eyes, cannot respond. He will become able to respond only after the Spirit resurrects him to newness of life.

The second point is the absence of evidence that Reformation theology makes faith prior to regeneration. The only attempt to provide evidence is a quotation from John Wesley on page 21. But John Wesley was a disciple of Arminius, whose rejection of the Reformation doctrines was declared heretical by the Synod of Dort in 1620. Therefore Wesley's theology is not a competent testimony to what the Reformers taught.

One of the best witnesses of what the Reformation taught is the Westminster Confession of 1645-49. Its reliability is such that thousands of ministers from that day to this have subscribed to it. The men who framed it were the most devoted ministers of their day, the most competent and the best informed on the theology of the previous century. The Westminster Confession, X, 1, 2, states, "God . . . enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God . . . renewing their wills . . . effectually drawing them . . . they being made willing by his grace . . . [are] enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it."

To which I should like to add John 5:24: "He who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not come into judgment, but has [already (perfect tense)] passed from death to life." Note that when the sinner hears and believes, i.e., exercises faith, he has already been regenerated.

Further evidence that this is the Reformation view and that the theologians who remained true to the Scripture so testify will be found in W.G.T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, page 509: "A man is not regenerated because he first believes in Christ, but he believes in Christ because he has been regenerated." The whole chapter defends this position.

Similar thoughts are found in H.B. Smith, *System of Christian Theology*, page 557, and even in the

wavering theologian, Augustus Strong, Volume 3, page 825.

Then finally, Charles Hodge, the prince of American theologians, in successive chapters, discusses regeneration in Volume 2, chapter 14, and in Volume 3, chapter 15. Faith comes in chapter 16; and chapter 17 continues with justification. It is clear, therefore, that the article herein discussed does not correctly describe the Reformation position as against Romanism.

#### **Editorial Comments**

Thank you, professor, for your stimulating comments. We are aware that some later Calvinists have tended to place regeneration before justification. As for Calvin, he declared, ". . . justifying grace is not separate from regeneration although these are distinct things. — Institutes, Bk. 4, chap. 2, sec. 2. In fact, in a certain passage in the Consensus Tigurinus, Calvin very decisively places justification before regeneration, not in temporal but in logical sequence. He writes, "Dum fide inserti in Christi corpus, idque spiritus sancti virtute, primum iusti censemur gratuitae iustitiae imputatione, de inde regeneramur in novam vitam."—Cited by Francois Wendel, Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought, tr. Philip Mairet (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p.256.

A further comment: Surely you are not unaware that the whole Lutheran stream of the Reformation very decidedly places justification before regeneration. The Formula of Concord distinctly says that "the renewal . . . follows justification" and "succeeds the righteousness of faith" (see Book of Concord, p.253). John Wesley did not follow Luther on everything, but he certainly followed Luther on the order of salvation. We would like some Lutheran scholars to comment on this letter. —Ed.

#### **Further Observations on the Order of Justification and Regeneration**

All those who stand in the tradition of the Reformation believe that justification and regeneration are closely related and that one cannot and will not be present without the other. However, there has been some sharp disagreement as to their logical order, if not their temporal order.

There is no question about Calvin's placing justification before regeneration in the order of logic (see Institutes, Bk. 3, chap. 11, secs. 6,11). G.C. Berkouwer also acknowledges this in his Faith and Justification, pages 29, 30.

The systematic Calvinists of the seventeenth century, however, reversed Calvin's order and put regeneration before justification. This was the result of moving the doctrine of an arbitrary predestination to the center and starting point of their theological thinking.

There are several grave difficulties with this order of salvation:

1. It reduces the great regenerating work of the Holy Spirit to a secret act of divine grace which is subconscious in whom it is inwrought. Wesley's insistence on a very conscious experience of renewal by the Holy Spirit helped to correct the arid intellectualism and incipient antinomianism in this idea of a secret, subconscious regeneration.

2. It tends to elevate regeneration over justification.

3. It turns Paul's doctrine of the justification of the ungodly (Rom. 4:5) into justification of the reborn. This is a Romanizing tendency and bears a remarkable resemblance to the decree of Trent which says that "if they [men] were not born again in Christ, they would never be justified" — "Decree Concerning Justification," chap. 3.

4. It has regenerating grace creating immediately —i.e., apart from the means of grace, which is the preached Word of God. According to the words of Jesus in John 3, the uplifting of Christ is the means of the new birth. Peter declares that the new birth is accomplished by the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23). The Holy Spirit comes to men only in and with (but not apart from) the preaching of the gospel. What is the justification, therefore, for saying that the Holy Spirit regenerates men even before

and quite apart from hearing the gospel?

5. The claim that men already possess eternal life before they are justified (see Clark's comment on John 5:24) turns the work of justification by faith into an empty formality. Clearly, if a man is unjustified (i.e., prior to his justification), he is condemned, and the wrath of God abides on him until the moment he is justified in the verdict of the Judge. Justification itself is the verdict of life (see Rom. 5:18). In his *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* Melancthon is quite right when he keeps referring to justification as "justification unto life eternal." John 5:24 is not saying that a man has eternal life before he hears and believes but that, as a believer, he will not come into judgment (condemnation at the last day) because he has already, by faith, passed from death unto life. Just as there is no personal justification without faith, so there is no personal salvation and possession of eternal life without faith. And there is no faith without hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Dr. Clark asks how it can be that dead men can hear the Word of God. But Jesus declares, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25). True, our Lord is speaking in the context of the physical resurrection, but even this illustrates the resurrection to spiritual life by the Word of God. Calvinism is to be faulted when it proposes that God's grace imparts eternal life apart from the means of grace in the preaching of the gospel. For further discussion on this matter of regeneration and human freedom, see the article, "The Legal and Moral Aspects of Salvation" (Part 3), in this issue of *Present Truth Magazine*. —Ed.<sup>56</sup>

Again, the inclusion of this SDA article is not intended to endorse any of its, or any of their teachings. But it does clarify and illustrate the Protestant infighting and misrepresentation found in

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

sequentially ordering any of the five Biblical aspects of ones so great salvation, i.e. ones 1) conversion, 2) regeneration (quickenning), 3) justification, 4) baptism into Christ, and 5) indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

## **XII Conclusion**

If one were to systematically outline the events that take place when one is born again, they find five aspects of salvation. When we categorizes these five aspects with a clock in hand, it is found that they all occur simultaneously and completely, i.e. no aspect is left only partially completed. These five aspects are 1) conversion, 2) regeneration (quickenning), 3) justification, 4) baptism into Christ, and 5) indwelling of the Holy Spirit. When we keep all five of these contained in this instant of time called salvation we find that it magnifies and brings into focus the “what,” the “how,” and the “how long” aspects of so great salvation. It further brings into focus some denomination departures from solid Biblical salvation doctrine. Paul wrote the letter of Galatians because believers were so soon departed from the gospel to another gospel. We are in danger of allowing another gospel if we do not focus on the immediacy of these five aspects of so great salvation.

When we understand the scriptures surrounding these five aspects of the new birth we can root out more clearly the error of a sacramental belief system that expects to attain this salvation by some Church connected sacrament. When we secure regeneration, i.e. “you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,” to the other four and disallow its separation we thwart a Calvinists preconceived notion that it occurs at ones birth, or ones conception, or at the foundation of the earth. It can not. Regeneration, no matter how strong the need of their philosophical model to move it, is a part of the salvation package, and must stay in the package.

When we try to extinguish this new life generated by God in a new believer, or to expel the Holy Spirit from his newly established temple, or to separate a soul from the union with Christ by a strong Armenian “will of man” argument, we are defeated. The coupling of these five aspects of salvation into a single gold

ring that may be put on, but not removed, is to capture a Biblical model of salvation. It gives one understanding such a Biblical stronghold as to disallow philosophical tweaking. These five aspects of salvation help us focus and reveal the weaknesses and flaws of other philosophical models of salvation. The two tables below summarize these five aspects of salvation and show their conflict with some doctrines.

If one is already locked into one of these models then the five aspect instantaneous model can be used to safeguard them from extremes or even to draw them back to the truth of Scripture. The surety that all five of these events occur, not sequentially, but instantly, can be a hinge-pin to tell how far a belief system has drifted from the Bible. Does your hinge line up properly with the hinge-pin? If so the door of salvation can be secured and you can go in and out and find pasture. Note these five Biblical aspects of so great salvation:

Table I Truths Established for Each Aspect of Salvation				
<b>Conversion</b>	<b>Regeneration</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Baptism Into Christ</b>	<b>Indwelling of Holy Spirit</b>
One can know they did this as sure as marriage vows.	I once was dead, and now I live, was blind, but now I see.	One can read and understand this promise.	Like a building on its foundation, believer is IN Christ	One can know when someone moves into their life.
Involves both mental assent and willful trust.	One can know this happened; know there is now new life.	Illustrated in moral analogy of Scripture Done because "God so loved".	Like the body members and the head, Christ is IN the believer.	Leads us into truth.
Wholly independent of works	New life is imparted by God.	Illustrated with the commercial purchasing analogy of Scripture	Like the vine and its branches, the Father and Son dwell in the believer.	Causes us to believe.
No external, physical act	The new life is eternal, it	Illustrated with the legal	Like union of husband and	Seals us in Christ.

done, or to be done by another.	cannot die.	analogy of Scripture.	wife believer has life by partaking in Christ,	
Independent of self reformation	The new life CANNOT sin.	Illustrated with the sacrificial analogy of Scripture.	Like the Race with the source of life in Adam, believers are one in Christ.	Is the earnest of our inheritance.
Independent of Church Sacraments	The new life can see spiritual things.	Completed for the world at Calvary.	Believer is made partaker of divine nature.	Will never leave us.
Not done by/to infants.	The new life responds with the Holy Spirit.	Applied for the individual at conversion.	Believer is made one spirit with the Lord.	Intercedes with words that cannot be uttered.
Conversion is an instantaneous act with other four aspects, not sequentially, but instantaneously.	Regeneration is an instantaneous act with other four aspects, not sequentially, but instantaneously.	Justification is an instantaneous act with other four aspects, not sequentially, but instantaneously.	This baptism is an instantaneous act with other four aspects, not sequentially, but instantaneously.	Indwelling is an instantaneous act with other four aspects, not sequentially, but instantaneously.

Table II Conflicts Between Systematic Doctrines and Each Aspect of Salvation

The Bible Model	<b>Sacramental Salvation</b> (Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian)	<b>Calvinism</b> (Reformed, Presbyterian) Supposition.	<b>Armenianism</b> (Methodist, Pentecostal) Supposition.
<b>Conversion</b> the act of turning from sin, i.e. repentance; and turning to Christ, i.e. in faith. More	The Church hands out physical mystical sacraments used to attain Salvation. Conversion is	Consider conversion impossible unless one is first chosen of God and then already	No conflicts. Except that the will of man was unaffected by the fall they agree to conversion and thus all can use the will

than a mental persuasion. The act of letting go of all else and trusting Christ with your soul.	coming into the Church, not coming into the Kingdom of God.	regenerated. Man is totally depraved spiritually unable to make a decision for Salvation.	and whosoever will may come.
<b>Regeneration</b> act of God whereby a new spiritual life is implanted in man whereby the governing disposition of the soul is made holy by the Holy Spirit through truth.	Salvation is not a new life implanted but a process of feeding ones soul with sacraments, thus administration of Communion and Last Rights.	Since one who is dead cannot show even enough volition to grasp at salvation, regeneration must occur at pro-creation. God only regenerates those he foreknows will accept.	No conflicts. Except for the lost logic that once regenerated the eternal life may die at the will of the recipient.
<b>Justification</b> a heavenly judicial declaration of 1) remission of sin and of 2) restoration to God, accomplished at Calvary, but applied at conversion.	Justification must be a process where our good and bad is weighed to determine if our sins will be covered.	Jesus died for only the elect, his finished sacrifice was effectual for the elect at Calvary. Therefore he died ONLY for the elect, not the world.	No conflicts. Except for the lost logic that once justified the uncondemned may take up condemnation again at the will of the recipient.
<b>Baptism into Christ</b> <i>as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: . . . And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:</i>	One has no position in Christ, only an effort to act like him, and someday attain that position.	Inevitable for the elect. Occurs at their acceptance of Christ as Saviour.	No conflicts. Except for the lost logic that once In Christ the will of the recipient may pull himself back out.
<b>Indwelling of Holy Spirit</b> the actual literal moving into our	No clear teaching about the indwelling Holy Spirit.	Inevitable for the elect. Occurs at their acceptance of Christ as Saviour.	The Holy Spirit is not considered as a present seal and earnest of our

bodies by the Holy Spirit of God where by He now permanently indwells us. <i>your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,</i>			inheritance.
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When one is born-again, saved, blood bought and redeemed, they experience 1) conversion, 2) regeneration (quickenings), 3) justification, 4) baptism into Christ, and 5) indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In Biblical study these have no temporal separation or sequential order in which they occur, they are simultaneous events in ones new birth. In man's understanding and in man's philosophical modeling of things they are often ordered and/or temporally separated. Evaluating this unBiblical tendency shed's light on a denominations other errant concepts about so great salvation. It is important to be a Biblicist in these matters, and keep one's understanding of the new birth Biblical.

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2. ----- . "History of the Christian Church". Third edition, revised in eight volumes, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1910.
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5. ----- . "Dogmatic Theology". Three volumes, New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, volumes I and II third edition, 1891, volume III Supplement, 1894.
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## Imputed Righteousness

In the Epistle to the Romans God lifts Abraham's salvation by faith without works to the forefront as an example of how individual soul salvation works (Rom 4). A Bible First instructional booklet<sup>57</sup> captures this detail in exemplary fashion and is worth repeating here. The outreach booklet states,

Why is it so significant that God imputed righteousness to Abraham? Proverbs 11:4 gives a glimpse of the vital importance of righteousness in the life of any individual: *“Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.”* This states that there will be a day when God will judge all men for their deeds and that the only way to survive is to have righteousness. Unfortunately, all fall short of God's righteousness, or holy perfection. Experience confirms what the Bible has already stated, that there are no righteous people to be found on the face of the earth. *“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”* (Rom 3:10-12).

Seemingly then, there is no hope for anyone. Are all going to hell after death? The Bible says that some, albeit few, do escape destruction on the terrible day of God's judgment. One of those who escaped was Abraham. This is evident from reading, among other passages, Luke 16:19-31 which records the story of Lazarus and the rich man. In this story the rich man was suffering in hell, while Lazarus was with Abraham in paradise. How did Abraham survive the judgment and the wrath of God? Was he not a sinner like everyone else? Yes, he was a sinner. But before he

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57 “Bible First!, Vol 4, Lesson 12 – Abraham, Part 2” Euro Team Outreach Inc. [www.euroteamoutreach.org](http://www.euroteamoutreach.org), pgs 31-32.

died, Abraham received a special gift from God which saved his soul. The gift is called *imputed righteousness*.

**Did you know?** The word impute is an accounting term which is defined by Webster's dictionary as follows: "To attribute, to set to the account of, to charge, to reckon to one what does not belong to him."

The following is a brief overview of how Abraham received this righteousness from God.

- . God made a statement to Abraham about something supernatural.

- . Abraham believed God's statement to be true.

- . God saw Abraham's faith, and counted it for righteousness.

It seems so simple, and yet this event became the pattern by which all men would have the opportunity to be saved from destruction on the day of judgment. In Romans 4:11 the Apostle Paul calls Abraham "*the father of all them that believe.*" Later in the same chapter, Paul relates the following account:

*"[Abraham] against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what [God] had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Rom 4:18-22).*

Because God imputed this righteousness to him, Abraham's sins were not counted against him. At his death, Abraham stood justified, saved from wrath because he had believed God.

**The Bible Says:** "*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is*

*counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works” (Romans 4:5-6). And again, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). And again, “And be found in [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Philippians 3:9).*

The Euro Team Outreach's summary of how Abraham was imputed righteousness gives great insight. God made a supernatural declaration to Abraham, Abraham believed God, and when God saw Abraham's faith, he accounted it to him for righteousness. In all the detailed examination of soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, don't miss this simplicity. Today God makes a supernatural declaration about his Only Begotten Son, when one believes, and God sees his faith, he can account it to him for eternal righteousness, quickening their eternal life.

### **Semi-Pelagianism and Pelagianism**

This work on soteriology must deal in part with the doctrines of election and predestination as they touch “so great salvation” on several fronts. A couple antiquated terms for this area should be noted. Semi-Pelagianism is a sound Christian theological understanding about salvation, which explains the process of restoring the relationship between humanity and God. It arose among the monks of southern France in the fifth century, in reaction to the errant teachings of Pelagius and to Augustine's errant doctrines of divine grace and predestination.

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, “Pelagianism received its name from Pelagius and designates a heresy of the fifth century, which denied original sin as well as Christian grace.”<sup>58</sup> Semipelagianism, they say is, “A doctrine of grace

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58 New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia s.v. “Pelagianism,”

advocated by monks of Southern Gaul at and around Marseilles after 428. It aimed at a compromise between the two extremes of Pelagianism and Augustinism, and was condemned as heresy at the Ecumenical Council of Orange in 529 after disputes extending over more than a hundred years.” Semipelagianism, then, was a Biblical middle ground between the two extremes in the same way a middle ground is sought between Calvinism and Arminianism. Although the term is lost to antiquity, it is understandable that Semipelagianism would be considered heresy to both Augustinian and the Pelagianist, just as a Biblicist view is despised by Calvinist and Arminian.

The Reformed Theologian, and those entangled in their doctrines and/or denominations, thoroughly muck up Soteriology, the Doctrine of So-Great-Salvation. They believe that they are the elect which replaces the elect Israel. Their view of God as the Sovereign Predestinator who chose them for that role overrides all else, and thus they cannot discern Scripture which describe corporate salvation, Israel's salvation, and even salvation from enemy or circumstance. Their focus is on John Calvin's Covenant Theology, his single Covenant of Grace, and his Roman Catholic rooted Replacement Theology. The tentacles of their error reach deep into their doctrine of salvation. They must allegorize, discredit or dismiss all language of the salvation of Israel, all language of the "corporate" in salvation, and all consideration of ones salvation from enemy and circumstance. These dismissals and shortcomings so permeate Protestant thinking that they regularly leaven into Baptist thinking, even though Baptists are to be people of the Book, not people of the reformation.

This systematic theology spends considerable effort in exposing the errant thinking of Calvinism that springs from its errant model of salvation. The Bible is clear that “whosoever will” can be saved. That awareness is important to a soul winner. People caught in the “rip-tide” of sin, need the Lord. That truth is brought out in the following essay.

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;

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<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11604a.htm> (accessed 11/05/2016).

which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, ...” (Heb 2:3a). Along the east coast of America there are places where powerful rip-tides flow rapidly out into the ocean. A rip-tide is formed when high tide draws water into lowland areas, and low tide funnels them back through subtle valleys in the sand. An unaware swimmer captured in a rip-tide is helpless to get back to shore. No matter how gallant his effort he is carried further and further out into the ocean depths. Without a savior that will pluck them out of their plight and set their feet back on solid ground, all hope is gone. The swimmer does not initially realize his dilemma. Cries from shore go unheeded. When they suspect their situation may be worsening they swim harder until their whole focus is getting back to the shore. They are certain they can swim the distance because they do not know the power of a rip-tide. The theme of the whole Bible is Salvation. Salvation defines a lost estate, a helpless condition, and a savior who can restore that estate. With Christmas behind us, and a new year before us, it is important to know that no religion, no mass, no penance, and no new-leaf can save us from the rip-tide of sin; you need a Saviour. Those already saved from that rip-tide, rejoice in, and openly worship our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ. Those still dabbling in sin, and not understanding the power of a rip-tide put their strength in religion, mass, penance, peace on earth, and turning over new leaves. Cries from the shore go unheeded. What a loved one needs are cries from the knees. Salvation is of the Lord.<sup>59</sup>

## **Chapter 6 Critique of other Systematic Theology Soteriology Works**

A systematic theology's soteriology needs to systematically review some belief systems that preceded it. This author's doctoral

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<sup>59</sup> An Essay for week #52 Sun, Dec 29, 2013, Msg #1352 The Rip-Tide of Sin, What The Bible Says, Good Samaritan's Penny Pulpit by Pastor Ed Rice.

coursework required such a review and culminated with critiques of John Miley's 1892 Methodist Soteriology, Charles Hodge's 1878 Presbyterian Soteriology, Augustus Strong's 1907 Baptist Soteriology, Henry Clarence Thiessen's 1949 Baptist Soteriology, and Geisler's 2002 Evangelical Soteriology. The principle text for the coursework was Lewis Sperry Chafer's 1948 *Systematic Theology*. The founding president of Dallas Theological Seminary wrote an acclaimed eight volume theology which is critiqued extensively in this work. These men were genius, gifted and used of God. While the critiques are often hard hitting, straightforward, and at times harsh, I mean no disrespect nor detraction from their genius or integrity. In general they treated theology as a science, attempting to center in on truth via the hypothesis and theories of the scientific method; that was all the rave of the last century. Ergo, in general, they did not use the inerrant, infallible, verbally inspired Word of God as their sole and final authority. Ergo these critiques are deservedly harsh.

### **Critique of John Miley's 1892 Methodist Soteriology**

John Miley (1813-1895), a Methodist, published his *Systematic Theology* in 1892. It is introduced here because it staunchly refutes the Calvinism tainting of all other systematic theologies. It is also superbly organized and utilizes aged reasoning. One hundred and twenty years ago writers worded their reasoning and their arguments with great depth and compound sentences. The dumbing-down of English prose, human reasoning, and judicial argument has produced a society which does not tolerate much reading of the *Systematic Theology* of Miley, Hodge or Strong. "*Ology*" still has the meaning that the target subject is covered with such depth that one goes on and on about it, examining every angle and consideration. Miley published a carefully structured Soteriology section in his *Systematic Theology*, but he does go on and on about it. Its prime argument is that salvation is forever deeply entangled in the work of Christ's atonement, and it categorically refutes Calvin's system of theology.

The heart of Miley's Soteriology is knit with atonement which he defines as: "The vicarious sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin as a conditional substitute for penalty, fulfilling, on the forgiveness of sin, the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in moral government." He structures this argument with the following general outline:

**PART V SOTERIOLOGY.**

**THE ATONEMENT IN CHRIST.**

CHAPTER I REALITY OF ATONEMENT,

CHAPTER II. NECESSITY FOR ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER III. SCHEMES WITHOUT ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER IV. THEORIES OF ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER V. THEORY OF MORAL INFLUENCE.

CHAPTER VI THEORY OF SATISFACTION.

CHAPTER VII. GOVERNMENTAL THEORY.

CHAPTER VIII. SUFFICIENCY OF THE ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER IX. OBJECTIONS TO THE ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER X. A LESSON FOR ALL INTELLIGENCES.

CHAPTER XI UNIVERSALITY OF THE ATONEMENT.

**THE SALVATION IN CHRIST**

CHAPTER I. BENEFITS OF THE ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER II. DOCTRINAL ISSUES.

CHAPTER III. FREE AGENCY.

CHAPTER IV. FREEDOM OF CHOICE.

CHAPTER V. JUSTIFICATION.

CHAPTER VI. REGENERATION.

CHAPTER VII. ASSURANCE.

CHAPTER VIII. SANCTIFICATION.

CHAPTER IX. THE CHURCH.

In Chapter I of his argument John Miley exposes the error of John Calvin's system. He declares that as much as Scripture interprets Scripture, so to doctrine must interpret doctrine. "Thus, beyond the fact of an atonement, we search for a doctrine. We seek to understand its nature; what are its elements of atoning value; how it is the ground of divine forgiveness." Ergo, one doctrine in a defective system can completely circumvent another doctrine,

rendering it completely ineffectual. Under this principle, Miley states:

"A doctrine of atonement must be in scientific accord with cardinal doctrines vitally related to it. If other cardinal doctrines of Calvinism are true, its doctrine of atonement is true. It is an integral part of the system, and in full harmony with every other part, the doctrines of divine sovereignty and decrees, of unconditional election to salvation, of the effectual calling and final perseverance of the elect, and that their salvation is monergistically<sup>60</sup> wrought as it is sovereignly decreed, require an atonement which in its very nature is and must be effectual in the salvation of all for whom it is made. Such an atonement the system has in the absolute substitution of Christ, both in precept and penalty, in behalf of the elect. He fulfills the righteousness which the law requires of them, and suffers the punishment which their sins deserve. By the nature of the substitution both must go to their account. Such a theory of atonement is in scientific accord with the whole system. And the truth of the system would carry with it the truth of the theory. It can admit no other theory. Nor can such an atonement be true if the system be false."<sup>61</sup>

Rather than labor through more of this carefully worded argument, be it said Miley argues extensively that since Calvin

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60 Miley's 1894 work was received with all the folly of an early text scanner.

This word is either his own creation or it might be *monogenistic* having to do with the theory that all human beings are descended from a single pair of ancestors. Incidental, Bible believers hold that as fact, and not as theory via the American Heritage Dictionary.

61 John Miley, *Systematic Theology*, Volume II, The Library of Biblical and Theological Literature, New York: Eaton and Mains, 1894 by Hunt & Eaton, The Internet Archive [www.archive.org/details/systematictheolo01miley](http://www.archive.org/details/systematictheolo01miley), pg 67-68.

held to "the doctrines of divine sovereignty and decrees, (and) of unconditional election to salvation,"there is no real need to examine his belief about atonement.... Such an atonement (cannot) be true if the system be false." In John Calvin's system, a person is saved by election and not by atonement. Miley parallels the Calvinist's dilemma in this regard with the dilemma of the Socinian. Since the Socinian does not believe in the deity of Christ, there is little merit in considering what he may believe about the atonement. It is not effectual. So to, in the system of John Calvin, the atonement is not effectual and, ergo, not even pertinent for consideration.

Of Arminianism, Miley, the Methodist, declares its certain truth:

If the cardinal doctrines of the Arminian system, such as differentiate it from Calvinism, be true, then the atonement of satisfaction, in the Calvinistic sense of it, cannot be true. If the atonement is really for all, and in the same sense sufficient for all, then it must be only provisory, and its saving benefits really conditional. And no other truths are more deeply wrought into Arminianism, whether original or Wesleyan; none have a more uniform, constant, unqualified Methodistic utterance. They are such facts of atonement, or facts in such logical relation to it, that they require a doctrine in scientific agreement with themselves. Such a doctrine is the special aim of this discussion, not without regard to consistency in the system, but specially because these facts are scriptural, and the doctrine agreeing with them scriptural and true.<sup>62</sup>

Such a black and white contrast between Calvinism and Arminianism is refreshing, and true in principle. The system of Calvin has the pre-creation election of souls for salvation and for damnation as its pillar of truth. It need not fuss that much about a

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62 *ibid.* 68

doctrine of atonement. But the system of Armenian does not take the doctrine of atonement to its completed end. That system is flawed in doctrine about the perseverance of the soul. When the atonement produces a quickening of the soul, that quickening is not dependent on ones keeping the faith, and it cannot be undone. John Miley's discourse on Soteriology has it directly connected to the atonement. The atoning work of Christ is defined and developed extensively. But, alas, in the Armenian and Methodist system the atonement lacks being a completed work, and their 'hope' is that they might endure to the end and make it to heaven. For the Bible believer the atonement applied produces a quickening of the soul, which can never be undone, it is an everlasting life.

### **Critique of Charles Hodge's 1878 Soteriology**

Charles Hodge (1797-1878), called the father of printed systematic theologies, in a perfectly thorough systematic theology, by a perfectly thorough, albeit Presbyterian, theologian, organized his soteriology poorly. Hodge treated theology as a pure science, and treated salvation only as God's sovereign plan and purpose for individually elected souls. For the area of Theology Proper it would be hard to improve on Hodge's Systematic approach, however, as stated so eloquently by Methodist John Miley previously, when the whole salvation model is based on election of souls, John Calvin's concepts, repeated by Charles Hodge's genius, have little to offer in soteriology.

### **Critique of Augustus Strong's 1907 Soteriology**

Augustus H. Strong, 1836-1921, was a Yale graduate who taught theology at Rochester Theological Seminary for forty years and became the first president of the Northern Baptist Convention. His systematic theology has a tremendous depth and scope but his motivation and purpose must cause grave concern. Strong sets out to mold a traditional reformed emphasis and an atheistic evolutionary critical scholarship into the distinctive Baptist

conviction. In his soteriology, this dangerous blend caused A. H. Strong to follow Charles Hodge's lead and submerge his soteriology in the decrees of God and the election of souls.

Strong's dogmatic belief in reformed theology and their decrees of God, not only robs him of a passion in soteriology, it prevents him from seeing God in all his glory. Reformed, Presbyterian, and Calvinistic theology has God's sovereignty, God's decrees, and God's unfolding of events exactly as he knew from eternity past, held in such an overbearing consideration, that they cannot see the whole truth of Scripture. Baptists are first and foremost people of the Book. It is distressing that A. H. Strong sacrifices solid Baptist distinctives, on the altar of John Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion. Once indoctrinated with reformed theology's notion that the catholic church is the new chosen people of God, elect in the foreknowledge of God, elect before the foundation of the world,... little else can penetrate that dogma. It feeds their Replacement Theology and nurtures their Covenant Theology, and here, not even the centerpiece of all Scripture, Christ's salvation of man, can bump their dogma. Their decrees must remain in its preeminent position, even above so great salvation.

Augustus H. Strong is a worthy student of theology but when reading his extensive systematic theology one must always keep in mind his objective. Strong's overriding purpose is to blend together reformed theology, Baptist distinctives, and the atheistic evolutionary process of creation. Abram was a friend of God forever. The second lesson that Abram learned about God, was God does not need blenders he desires separators. Strong is genius, but he is a blender that takes doctrines, blends them and tries to reconstruct a persuasive Bible doctrine. Although he is a deep thinker, and a profound communicator, he is dangerous.

### **Critique of Thiessens' 1949 Soteriology**

While Dr. Cambron assembles an exceptional “boiler-plate” on the doctrine of so great salvation, Dr. Thiessen fleshes out the outline superbly. Henry Clarence Thiessen (1883-1947) was a

Baptist theologian and the 1947 president of Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary. He wrote his "*Lectures in Systematic Theology*"<sup>63</sup> which were published in 1949. I have criticized him staunchly for his attacks against God's inerrancy, infallibility, verbal inspiration and perpetual preservation of the Holy Bible. I have criticized him for his staunch support of the Westminster Confession and the Decrees of God over the "whosoever-wills" of the Holy Bible, over his treatment of theology as a "science" with mere man's hypothesis and theories overbearing on our true sole and final authority of the Word of God, and over his preference for Roman held philosophical leanings and even their sacraments over Holy Scripture. Despite those justified criticisms of Dr. Thiessen, his soteriology seems to be sound.

Dr. Thiessen opens Chapter XXIX "Conversion," with this succinct clarification, "What is the logical order in the experience of salvation? There is, of course, no chronological sequence; conversion, justification, regeneration, union with Christ and adoption, all take place at the same instant."<sup>64</sup> He then goes on to define conversion as including both repentance and faith, developing that both are essential, and both include three aspects an intellectual, an emotional and a volitional aspect.<sup>65</sup>

Despite his well written and thorough six chapters on conversion, justification and regeneration, union with Christ and adoption, sanctification, perseverance, and means of grace, Dr. Thiessen starts his soteriology with a chapter titled "Election and Vocation", wherein he defends and stands by John Calvin's misgiving the saved people were elected to be so before the foundation of the world, and did not, yeah cannot, come as a whosoever-will. Any reading of the Baptist theologian Henry Clarence Thiessen must be with a precursor that he made many dangerous compromises. He attacked God's inerrancy, infallibility, verbal inspiration and perpetual preservation of the Holy Bible, herein leans on the Westminster Confession and the Decrees of

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63 Henry Clarence Thiessen, "*Lectures in Systematic Theology*," Eerdmans, 1949.

64 Ibid. 352.

65 Ibid. 352-361.

God over the “whosoever-wills” of the Holy Bible, treats theology as a “science,” and prefers the word of philosopher over Holy Scripture. The gains of reading his few sound chapters on soteriology must be weighed against these dangers. Just the same I think it appropriate to include a more thorough review of what Dr. Thiessen included in his coverage of soteriology.

Below is included in entirety my written report for “COURSEWORK FOR TH503 SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY III SOTERIOLOGY”, An Assignment Presented to the Faculty of Louisiana Baptist University, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Master's in Theological Studies Degree, by Pastor Edward G. Rice January, 2011.

## **Coursework For TH503 Systematic Theology III Soteriology**

### **Assignment: TH503 Systematic Theology III**

**TEXT:** Theissen, Henry (rev. by Doerksen), **LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., any date is acceptable.

**COURSE OBJECTIVE:** This study pertains to the Person and work of Christ, and then proceeds to consider the doctrines of grace, election, repentance, faith, conversion, justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, union with Christ and the security of the believer.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- (1) Read chapters 21-34 of the textbook for understanding. Mark listings, Scriptures and information you wish to quickly locate for outlining each of the above chapters and for preparing the required questions and answers that are described below.
- (2) Select another conservative theology book and read what the author teaches about the subjects shown above under "Course Objective." Document what you read on the "Required Supplemental Reading Report".
- (3) Prepare a detailed outline (at least three or four full pages for each chapter of Thiessen) in such a way that it can be used for teaching a series of lessons about these theological subjects to your college class, church congregation, staff members, or a Sunday school class.
- (4) From each of the above chapters, prepare and show the answers to at least eight (8) questions (true or false, fill in the blank, multiple choice or listings of important facts) which you feel could be an appropriate final exam if you were actually developing this course for a college or Christian school. Indicate the page number where you found each question and its answer, and place these questions and answers after your reading report.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: LOUISIANA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY, 6301 WESTPORT AVENUE, SHREVEPORT, LA 71129

## **Supplemental Reading Report - Soteriology**

The selected conservative theology books listed below were read and considered in light of what Thiessen covered on the course objectives (The Person and work of Christ, and then proceeds to consider the doctrines of grace, election, repentance, faith, conversion, justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, union with Christ and the security of the believer.)

Cambron, Mark G., “Bible Doctrines, Beliefs That Matter”, 1954,

Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Erickson, Millard J., “Christian Theology”, 1985, Baker Books,

Grand Rapids, MI

Ryrie, Charles C., “Basic Theology”, 1981, Victor Books,

Wheaton, Illinois

Specific differences from Thiessen's work are analyzed below:

### **The Person and Work of Christ**

Cambron – Names of Christ pg 60- 69

Erickson - Introduction to the Word of Christ pg 761- 780

Although this was a heading containing the subheadings covered in more detail below, it was of interest that Cambron and Erickson covered it distinctly different than did Thiessen. Whereas Thiessen covered the doctrine of Christ as a sub-point to soteriology Cambron covered it specifically as a doctrine and Erickson as a 'theological discussion' of the Person of Christ. Cambron, treating the doctrine of Christ as a stand alone subject provides a much more systematic coverage of doctrine which begins with the names of Christ, a topic not even addressed by Thiessen. Erickson, always waxing more scholarly, philosophical and less eloquent choses to give his attention to “not only ontologically prior to his work, but also epistemologically prior.” (pg 762) In English defined as<sup>66</sup>: on·tol·o·gy n. The branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of being. e·pis·te·mol·o·gy n. The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its

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66 The American Heritage Dictionary, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1994, Softkey International Inc.

presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity. With my preference for a systematics in a systematic theology the doctrine of Christ should indeed be covered outside the realm of soteriology.

## **Historic and Preincarnate (Thiessen Ch 22 pg 283-288)**

Ryrie – The Preincarnate Christ pg 237- 240

Erickson – History and Christology pg 662- 674

Erickson – Historical Departures pg 693- 697

Of Thiessen and Erickson there is very poor and non-systematic coverage of the Preincarnate Christ; in my sources only Ryrie digs into this doctrine with a Bible centered examination. I suppose it somewhat necessary to investigate the errors of the earliest Catholics with their counsels and heretics. But Thiessen spends most of his effort there and exerts precious little priority on what the Bible teaches us about the Preincarnate Christ. Erickson also places his emphasis on “Christology of the earliest centuries of the church” and the “historical reliability of the whole of Scripture” (pg 665) rather than doing this rich topic Biblical justice. Ryrie, however covers the meaning, importance and Biblical evidence of the preexistence of Christ, then examines his 'eternality' and Biblical activity. It is no wonder Baptist's generally prefer Ryrie over Thiessen for their Theology. Even though he is not quite as systematic, he is always more Biblical.

## **Humiliation (Thiessen Ch 23 pg 289-298)**

Cambron – The Incarnation pg 69- 81

Ryrie – The Incarnation pg 241- 246

Ryrie – The Self Emptying of Christ pg 260-262

Acts 8:32-33 says “The place of the scripture which he (a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority) read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.” and this is the one and only use of the word 'humiliation' as applied to Christ. It speaks of the miscarriage of justice in his trial and not of his incarnation. Thiessen is ill advised

and unjustified in using it synonymous with the incarnation. Cambron, as would be expected from a Baptist, presents a much more Bible based analysis of the incarnation of Christ than does Thiessen. Below is a table comparing the given reasons necessitating the incarnation as given by Thiessen, Cambron and Ryrie. All gave 7 reasons, and I rearranged there orders to categorize them together. It is interesting if not insightful.

<i>Thiessen's reasons for the incarnation</i>	<i>Cambron's objects of incarnation</i>	<i>Ryrie's purposes of incarnation</i>	<i>Comment</i>
To reveal the Father, To confirm God's promises,	To reveal the invisible God, To fulfill prophecy,	To reveal God to us	All agreed.  He was not incarnate because it was prophesied, It was prophesied because he need come!
	To fulfill the Davidic Covenant,	To fulfill the Davidic Covenant	How about because "God so loved the world" instead. Again the the covenant was because he was coming, not the coming because it was covenanted.
To put away sin,	To sacrifice for our sin,	To provide an effective sacrifice for sin	All agreed.
To become a faithful High Priest,	To provide the redeemed with a High Priest,	To be able to be a sympathetic high priest	All agreed, but should include something about Job's cry for a 'Daysman'.
To destroy the works of the Devil,		To destroy the works of the devil	Not at all! He came for man, for love, and to fix man's fall, Satan did not warrant God becoming flesh in any way.
To give us an example of a Holy Life, and To prepare for the second advent.	To show believers how to live, and To become the head of a new creation.	To provide an example for our lives To be able to be a qualified judge	All agreed.  This is awkward or sloppy. To be a mediator and/or daysman would be more fitting here.

**Two Natures and Character (Thiessen Ch 24 pg 299-311)**

Cambron - Two Natures pg 81- 93

Erickson – The Unity of the Person of Christ pg 723-738

Christ, who is he? The question has been debated, analyzed and philosophized for over 2000 years now. How can there be a union of two natures, God and man in one being is perplexing a question as will ever be asked. Finally, Thiessen seems to answer the question, or at least wrest with it, as well as any conservative theologian in print. Cambron superbly organizes the Scriptures around the Humanity of Christ and then the Deity of Christ followed by an outline of the errors of concerning the two natures. Even Erickson, usually so noncommittal in taking a position, clearly presents the “Basic Tenets of the Doctrine of Two Natures in One Person.” (pg 734-738) But Thiessen truly captures this dilemma. The two natures in Christ “are inseparably found together so as to constitute but one person with two consciousnesses and two wills “ and yet “a true union of the two natures” (pg 304)

**His Death Importance and Meaning (Thiessen Ch 25-26  
pg312-330)**

Cambron – The Death of Christ pg 93- 101

Ryrie – The Meaning of the Death pg 286-297

There are two areas wherein Thiessen did excel in the consideration of Christ's death. Where as Cambron and Ryrie were absorbed in the Biblical analysis of the importance of Christ's death, they likewise only did Biblical analysis of the unscriptural theories concerning the death. Cambron listing well the Scriptures refuting that 1) The Death of Christ was a Martyr's Death, 2) The Death of Christ Was Accidental, 3) The Death of Christ Was a Moral Example, 4) The Death of Christ Was an Exhibit of God's Displeasure with Sin, 5) The Death of Christ Was to Show Man That God Loves Him, and 6) The Death of Christ Was the Death of a Criminal. Ryrie gave these obscure errant theories almost no coverage at all. Thiessen, however gave each one a more thorough background analysis of where each came from, who founded and promoted the philosophy and errant sects that spring from the heresy. Also while Cambron used Scripture well to developed that Christ's death was a ransom, Thiessen exerted great effort to clarify

that this ransom was not a payment to Satan as expressed in the ransom idea in the commercial theory held to by the philosopher Origin of Alexandria and worded by Justin Martyr. These details reported by Thiessen and neglected by Cambron and Ryrie point out the need of a good Baptist Systematic Theology text which first and foremost uses the Bible as its sole authority, (Thiessen does not) but also exposes some of the errant philosophies at their roots, (Cambron and Ryrie do not.)

**His Resurrection and Ascension (Thiessen Ch 27 pg 331-342)**

Cambron – The Resurrection pg 101- 109

Cambron – The Ascension and Enthronement pg 109- 113

Cambron's expository treatment of 1 & 2 Corinthians on this subject dwarfs Thiessen's topical and philosophical coverage hands down. Some theologians teach about the Bible, some teach the Bible. The latter is always preferred.

**Election and Vocation (Thiessen Ch 28 pg 343-351)**

Erickson – Predestination pg 907- 929

Cambron Election ZIP- NATA- NILCH

In Thiessen's (and all other Reformed Theologians) analysis of how God could elect individuals souls for salvation, and reject others there is always an abundant use of the concept of Supreme Sovereignty and God's grace and always a dismissal of man's free will and God's mercy. Thiessen's wrestling with this problem is commendable but he will not let go of the old Augustinian concept of election of individuals. Erickson likewise finally lands on Calvinist ground as each pretend at least they are not supralapsarianists. Thiessen even has the audacity to propose his view eliminates all tension between decrees, providence and prayer. Blind leaders of the blind comes to mind. Cambron, unfortunately, in his text on Bible doctrines remains silent on election, which is insightful in that election is not a Bible doctrine, it is an Augustinian doctrine.

**Conversion = Repentance & Faith (Thiessen Ch 29 pg 352-361)**

Cambron - Repentance & Faith pg 188-191

Erickson – Call, Conversion, Regeneration pg 930- 947

Erickson – Current Conception of Salvation pg 887- 906

When it comes to soteriology Cambron 'nails it.' When it comes

to soteriology, conversion, being repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, he defines it. When it comes to repentance toward God Thiessen just don't get it and Erickson is afraid to say it. Why Thiessen, charged with writing out a systematic theology, begins ever doctrinal coverage avoiding what Christ taught and highlighting what men have philosophized is an ongoing frustration in his work; but when he comes to soteriology, repentance in particular, this frustration crescendos into new heights. Fundamentalism either focuses into a Bible centered separatist Baptist individualism, or softens and dulls into Evangelicalism. Erickson is so very much the cutting edge on the dull sword of Evangelicalism, that he should re-title his book, from "Christian Theology" to 'Evangelical Opinions.' .

Consider then Cambron's cutting edge in describing repentance coupled with faith as the Biblical quintessence of the salvation process. "To those who say that repentance is not to be preached today, and that it is not essential for salvation, we point out that repentance was preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul. Repentance was proclaimed *before* Pentecost, *at* Pentecost, and *after* Pentecost. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5)." (pg 188) Cambron then details that repentance is NOT Reformation, NOT contrition, NOT Penance, and it IS change of mind. He also describes repentance manifestation to include Change of Intellect, Change of Feeling, Change of Will, and Change of Action. Such coverage far exceeds Thiessen's weak coverage of repentance. It is unfortunate that Cambron never connects repentance and faith as the two sided coin called conversion. I do not recall where I came across such a description but considering that Jesus said "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt 18:3) "lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." (Mar 4:12b) "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19a) Indeed Cambron says almost nothing about conversion, except to allude that "conversion means to turn around" (pg 192).

The Biblical consideration that Cambron gives to faith is equally

of higher caliber than Thiessen's coverage. He considers that faith is composed of 1) Knowledge, 2) Belief, 3) Trust, and 4) Recumbency (? def as assuming a position of comfort or rest) It is remarkably inadequate that no author I cited references Hebrews 11 in their dissertation on faith, Cambron remarkably paralleled his four to God's four of Heb 11:13 "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off (knowledge), and were persuaded of them (belief), and embraced them (trust), and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (recumbency)" All theologians call God's definition of faith "The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." inadequate and fail miserably in providing a better one.

**Justification and Regeneration (Thiessen Ch 30 pg 362-369)**

Cambron – Justification pg 194-196

Erickson – Objective Aspect Justification pg 954- 960

Cambron – Regeneration pg 192-194

Erickson – Call, Conversion, Regeneration pg 930- 947

While Erickson's wordy analysis of justification considers "The linguistic evidence that justification is forensic or declarative in character." (pg 957) it is Cambron that skillfully differentiates a declarative justification of Romans, and manifest justification of James. Thiessen, holding to elect individuals getting justification and non-elect getting damnation cannot hold a candle to Cambron's thoroughly Biblical analysis of justification and quickening, and all of soteriology.

**Union with Christ and Adoption (Thiessen Ch 31 pg 370-376)**

Erickson – Objective Aspect Union with Christ pg 948- 953

Cambron – Adoption pg 201-202

Erickson – Objective Aspect Adoption pg 961- 966

It is beyond me how Thiessen can mix up the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of Christ with the believer being placed 'in' Christ, but Carmon is practically silent on this union and Erickson, the wordy non-committal evangelical, seems to provide the best coverage of this baptism into Christ. Even Erickson, however, fails to call it the latter.

Erickson also clarifies that adoption is justifications acquiring of a positive standing, adoption into God's family. Thiessen mixes

adoption into the actual operations of salvation rather than treating it as a result of the operations. Camron provides the extensive Biblical examination and analysis of this adoption that one would expect of a Baptist who bases all doctrine on Sola Scripture. He too recognizes adoption as a result of salvation not an operation of salvation.

**Sanctification (Thiessen Ch 32 pg 377-384)**

Camron – Sanctification pg 196-201

Erickson - Sanctification pg 967- 973

Where Thiessen's Calvinism prevents his competent examination of 'so great salvation' he, and Erickson operating under the same handicap, provide very extensive coverage of Sanctification.

Camron, the Baptist begins his Scriptural coverage of Sanctification with “This is one phase of salvation which is very much confused today. The Bible student will be surprised at what God has to say about sanctification” and proceeds surprise with a very Biblical accounting. “Sanctification” says Camron “is the work of God which perfects the believer in the likeness of Christ by his appearing in glory.” Awesome coverage of this topic from all three of these examined sources.

**Security of the Believer (Thiessen Ch 33 pg 385-391)**

Erickson – Perseverance pg 986- 996

Ryrie – The Security of the Believer pg 328- 334

“The doctrine of perseverance does not stand alone but is a necessary part of the Calvinistic system of theology,” Erickson's quote of Boettner (pg 987) clarifies both Thiessen's and Erickson's misnomer of a doctrine of perseverance, rather than the proper doctrine of eternal security. While Thiessen and Erickson both find the doctrine of perseverance in the Augustinian decrees and individual soul election of God, Ryrie aptly defines the doctrine of the security of the believer using the Holy Scriptures.

**Grace – Thiessen=Means of Grace – The Word of God and Prayer (Thiessen Ch 34 pg392-398)**

Camron – Prayer pg 203-210

Erickson – Views of the Means of Salvation pg 1003-1014

The doctrine of Grace, although called out as a course objective in the syllabus, is not particularly dealt with by Thiessen or in any

of my sources. That said, it is interesting that Thiessen must address the 'Means of Grace' to draw off criticism on his insistence that God chose and elect all the individuals for salvation before the foundation of the world. He, thus, did a 'soft show' contending, or pretending that the means of grace is both the Word of God and Prayer. As Erickson always does he presents several opinions about a doctrine without taking sides and never pursuing any Biblical depth to a doctrine. At the end of his section on the means of salvation we know what liberation theology holds, what Gutierrez's views are, and what Catholics consider true about sacraments, and even what Evangelicals view as true, but find no Biblical examination of the means of salvation. Cambron, however, presents the means of salvation well integrated throughout his soteriology chapter which ends with a thorough Biblical examination of prayer. This treatment far exceeds Thiessen's 'soft shoe'. When a person believes that the Bible is our sole authority for doctrine, and believes in both mans free will and that prayer changes things, it is amazing how much insight is found in his theology book, even when he calls it a doctrine book.

## **Q&A From Chapter 21 The Purpose, Plan, and Method of God pg 275-282**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 275-282 (r 199-205)

**1. The Reformed Baptist, Augustus H. Strong, begins his soteriology study with “Redemption Wrought by Christ.” The Independent Baptist, Mark G. Cambron, begins his soteriology study with “Repentance, Faith and Regeneration.” How does Thiessen start his study and why?**

Ans pg 275 Thiessen begins his soteriology lectures by explaining God's definite purpose, plan and program. Thiessen obviously does this because he believes that God chose, before the foundation of the world, who would be saved and who would be condemned to hell.

**2. The Reformed Baptist, Strong, begins his soteriology study with the verse “but when the fullness of time came God sent forth his Son.” The Independent Baptist, Cambron, begins his soteriology study with the verse “Jesus began to preach and say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” With what verse does Thiessen begin his discourse and why?**

Ans pg 275 Thiessen begins his soteriology lectures with “chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame(KJV) (*'blemish'* Thiessen's *ASB*) before him in love.” Obviously Thiessen's staunch Calvinistic bias is going to taint his whole examination of soteriology.

**3. When addressing the purpose of God in Soteriology, Thiessen first references the most snagging issues of his logic. What is his leading topic sentence, and why is it a snag to ones intellect?**

Ans pg 275 “By His foreknowledge God was fully aware of the fact that man would fall into sin and become utterly ruined even before He created him.” This statement and reasoning is nowhere found in the Bible it is derived by a logic that is several steps removed from the revelation of God in the Scriptures, but it is a logic always pursued by a Reformed Augustinian.

**4. According to Thiessen, In what two ways is the purpose of God in soteriology indicated?**

Ans pg 275-277 According to Thiessen the purpose of God in soteriology is indicated by the human nature via a knowledge of God, and of Sin and of a needed sacrifice, and in the Scriptures via the law and the prophets.

**5. What are Thiessen's 5 parts of God's plan for bringing salvation?**

Ans pg 277 “This plan includes 1) the means by which salvation is to be provided, 2) the objectives that are to be realized, 3) the persons that are to benefit by it, 4) the conditions on which it is to be available, and 5) the agents and means by which it is to be applied.

**6. In his explanation of a plan of God for salvation Thiessen must needs include one of the 5 Presbyterian TULIP points. Which one and why so?**

Ans pg 278 According to Thiessen's explanation of the plan of God in salvation “Salvation was provided ... more particularly for the elect, those who will believe on Christ and walk in his way.” This aligns with the Presbyterian TULIP model's 3<sup>rd</sup> point of Limiting the atonement for only 'the elect' and not having it available to 'the whosoever will' as the Bible clearly implies.

**7. What is Thiessen's three fold object of the preparation time before Christ?**

Ans pg 279 Thiessen's threefold object of a preparation time for salvation is 1) to disclose to man the true nature of sin and the 'depth of depravity' to which he had fallen 2) to reveal mans powerlessness to save himself, and 3) to teach man that forgiveness and restoration are possible by substitutionary sacrifice.

**8. Under soteriology and the methods of God Thiessen, normally a reformed theologian who would hold to a Covenant Theology<sup>67</sup> or Replacement Theology<sup>68</sup> outlines verbatim the 7 dispensations depicted by C.I. Scofield. What are they?**

Ans pg 279-282 Thiessen, provides that the methods of God change and in the past there was an 1) Edinic Period, where the environment was most perfect, this aligns with C. I. Scofield's

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67 Covenant Theology (or Federal theology) see Appendix

68 Replacement Theology or (Supersessionism) see Appendix

dispensation of innocence; 2) an Anti-Deluvian Period where conscience now became active, aligns with Scofield's dispensation of conscious; 3) a Post-Deluvian Period, wherein God asked Noah to institute human government, aligns with Scofield's 3<sup>rd</sup> dispensation of human government; 4) a Patriarchal period wherein God made a covenant with Abraham, which aligns with C. I. 's dispensation of Promise; and 5) a Period of Mosaic Law that Thiessen calls a covenant of works (taken directly from the old Reformed Covenant Theology) which aligns with Scofield's 5<sup>th</sup> dispensation of Law. Thiessen then describes the present method of soteriology as the Church period, (interestingly enough he avoids the use of the word grace, although the Covenant Theology leans on it heavily) this aligns with Scofield's 6<sup>th</sup> dispensation of Grace. He then speaks of a future method in the Kingdom Period, which aligns with the 7<sup>th</sup> and final dispensation of Scofield's notes, the Kingdom Age. Thus Thiessen seems to hold an interesting position striving to hold onto Reformed Theologies Calvinism, but departing from their Covenant Theology and embracing Dispensationalism.

**Q&A From Chapter 22 The Person of Christ: Historical Views and Pre-Incarnation State pg 283-288**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 283- 288 (r 206-)

**1. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Ebionites.**

Ans pg 283 Ebionites are from 2<sup>nd</sup> century Jewish believers who retain Mosaic ceremonies and as Nazareans and Judaizers they both deny Christ's divine nature thinking it incompatible with monotheism.

**2. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Gnostics.**

Ans pg 283 Gnostics deny the reality of Christ's human body (Docetae) or deny his real body was material, or consider that Jesus and Christ were distinct (Cerinthians)

**3. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Arians.**

Ans pg 284 Arians are followers of Arius, an Alexandria Egypt presbyter of 280 AD, who opined that Christ was the first of created beings, through whom all other things are made, ... including time.

**4. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Appollinarians.**

Ans pg 284 Appollinarians denied the integrity of the human nature of Christ because of the difficulty in conceiving how two complete natures can be united in one life and consciousness.

**5. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Nestorians.**

Ans pg 285 Nestorians follow Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, deny the real union of the divine and human natures in Christ, implying a twofold personality in Christ, making him simply indwelt by God. Nestorius was deposed and banished in 431 AD.

**6. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Eutychians.**

Ans pg 285 Eutychians, followers of Eutyches who considered Christ so deified that it was not of the same human nature as our. Opposite of Nestorians.

**7. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Orthodox.**

Ans pg 286 “In one person Jesus Christ there are two natures, a human nature and a divine nature, each in its completeness and integrity and these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby. ... Orthodox doctrine forbids us either to divide the person or to confound the natures.”

**8. Summarize the pre-incarnate Christ.**

Ans pg 286-288 In the eternal past Christ was with god, and indeed he was God, and the term 'the Angel of Jehovah' “seems in the Old Testament with hardly more than a single exception, (Hag 1:13) to designate the pre-incarnate Logos, whose manifestation in angelic or human form foreshadowed His final coming in the flesh.” Sixteen of these references are Gen 16:7-14, 22:11-18, 31:11,13, Exod 3:2-5, 14:19, 1Cor 10:4, Num 22:22-35, Jud 6:11-23, 13:2-25, 1Chron 21:15,18, 1Kings 19:5-7, 9-18, 2Kings 19:35, Zech 1:11, 3:1.

**Q&A From Chapter 23 The Person of Christ: The Humiliation of Christ pg 289 - 298**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 289-298 (r )

**1. Thiessen begins this poorly titled chapter justifying the**

**narrative of Christ's birth against the textual critics; how and why?**

Ans pg 289 Thiessen uses a citation of Orr to document that the narratives of Christ birth are undoubtedly genuine and present in all ancient texts and versions. Such a rigorous defense indicates that textual critics had attacked the genuineness of these texts in his day.

**2. When listing seven primary reasons why God became man Thiessen overlooks the two most important and best referenced reasons; what are they with reference?**

Ans pg 290-294 Unbelievably Thiessen leaves out “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.” God became flesh because he loved man and provided the only possible means for his redemption by his incarnation. Thiessen, a reformed theologian and Calvinist, likely missed this reason because the verse includes the whole world and the 'whosoever will' provision. His theology has neither. Secondly, Thiessen misses the essential provision of a daysman required by Job, “For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in Judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.” (Job 9:32-33) It was necessary for God to become flesh “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man' the man Christ Jesus. (1Tim 2:5) Thiessen only brushed against these two reasons for the incarnation in his 'High Priest' and 'Put Away Sin' consideration.

**3. In Thiessen's first reason for the incarnation he seems to have gotten the cart before the horse; how so?**

Ans pg 289 Thiessen states his first reason of the the incarnation to be “in order to confirm the promises made to the fathers and to show mercy to the Gentiles.” This is stated as if God had to because He promised, rather than he promised because He had to, i.e. because “He so loved the world.” Such an impersonal almost callous consideration of redemption is spawned by the view that God is just executing His plan ... keeping his promise to save a few.

**4. The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th reasons given for the incarnation are**

**straight forward; what are they?**

Ans pg 290-291 Some more straight forward reasons for the incarnation are to reveal the Father to man, to become a faithful High Priest, to man, and to put away the sin of man. These three are also presented by Thiessen as though they are distant from God's love for man.

**5. How do Thiessen's 5th and 7th reasons relate to the cart and the horse questioning of his first?**

Ans pg 292, 293 Again Thiessen reasons for the incarnation skirt God's main purpose, the redemption of mankind. The reason is not really to destroy the works of the devil, nor to prepare for the second advent. These are both secondary results connected to his primary reason.

**6. The poor title to this chapter “The humiliation of Christ” seems to stem from consideration of Phil 2:6; what does it state, and in context, what does it say?**

Ans pg 294 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (Phil 2:5-7) The theme here is the attitude which was in Christ Jesus had and should be in us. When he “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” it cannot be interpreted that 'he thought it not robbery to attain equality with God' or 'to become equal to/with God', or to achieve equality with God he was already equal with God, equal to God, and he became man.

**7. That Christ was as much man as if he were not God, and as much God as if he were not man seems to be a good representation, but it is impossible to comprehend or accurately word. If Christ took on finiteness of humanity he had to set down the infinite attributes, i.e. His relative attributes, or the 'omni' attributes. But Thiessen, evidently in good company with other Reformed Theologians, insists that he kept his omniscience, omnipotence and even his omnipresence! How so?**

Ans pg 295-296 Thiessen and Strong contend that Christ “emptied Himself by giving up the independent exercise of His relative

attributes” while still being 'omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent.” Somehow Thiessen argues “That this is the true view is evident from the fact that Jesus speaks of the things that the Father had showed Him, taught Him and given Him to do”

**8. Refute each argument made for Jesus retaining his omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence.**

Ans pg 295-296 Thiessen provides evidence that Jesus was indeed omniscient because he “knew all men and He knew what was in man” in John 2:24,25, but you or I could say the same with just a little Bible study. “He knew all things that should come upon him” in John 1:4, but again such knowledge does not necessitate omniscience, only a very close relationship to the Father. Some better argument that Thiessen does not account are the 5 marriages of the woman at the well (John 4) or the three denials of Peter, but again each of these, although they could make one suspect omniscience, they do not necessitate it. Indeed the overriding emphasis of Scripture is that the works that Jesus did, the perceptions, attitudes, compassions and zeal which he had are available to the spirit filled believer today and are available without omniscience, omnipotence or omnipresence.

The same observations go for the arguments that Christ asserted his own power to work miracles and therefore he must have been omnipotent. In actuality it was not until he was resurrected and being placed in his old position of glory where in he said 'all power is given unto me.’ Even therein implying that it was previously set aside from and previously not so.

That Christ in his finite form of Son of man was omnipresent seems hardly worth arguing but backed into his untenable corner Thiessen draws out John 3:13 “And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven.” To stretch this tremendous revelation about the son of man to an untenable argument that causes the son of man to be omnipresent is worse than illogical, it is almost criminal.

Understanding the union of God and Man will prove difficult or impossible, trying to insist that he be omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence in a finite body is not a good start for the controversial discourse.

**Q&A From Chapter 24 The Person of Christ: The Two Natures and the Character of Christ pg 299-311**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 299-311 (r )

**1. Thiessen's lead paragraph of this chapter does not clarify the problem under consideration as well as his closing paragraph of section III, point 1. Succinctly word the dilemma from that paragraph.**

Ans pg 304 The two natures in Christ “are inseparably found together so as to constitute but one person with two consciousnesses and two wills “ and yet “a true union of the two natures”

**2. In Christ's virgin birth, when considering if he inherited a sinful nature from Mary, what view does Thiessen call derogatory and bordering blasphemy?**

Ans pg 300 “That in the incarnation Christ took fallen human nature and through the power of the Holy Spirit, or his own divine nature he not only kept his human nature from manifesting itself in any actual sin, but gradually purified it through struggle and suffering, until in his death he completely extirpated its depravity and reunited it to God” That is humanist, Catholic and modernist blasphemy.

**3. Rather than use Christ's human development to defend his omniscience, Thiessen used it to defend his humanity, how might he have done the former?**

Ans pg 301 John 7:15 says “And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” Thiessen could have followed this lead to argue for the omniscience of Christ. Combined with the 12 year olds astonishing understanding and instructions to doctors in Luke 2, there is a good argument for his omniscience here, but instead Thiessen leaves Christ's superior knowledge on a good home schooling and regular trips to the synagogue. My my.

**4. In an overbearing development of a total depravity wherein the human nature is a carnal nature and a carnal nature is the human nature; what must Thiessen now deal with when considering Christ's human nature?**

Ans pg 301 “But in saying that he took on our nature, we must

ever distinguish between a human nature and a carnal nature. Jesus had the former, but not the latter.” Such is the required path of one who overdeveloped and over emphasized depravity.

**5. What are the 7 previous proofs that Thiessen gave for the deity of Christ?**

Ans pg 303 In showing the deity of Christ it was shown that 1) He possess the attributes of deity; 2) divine prerogatives are his; 3) OT things said of Jehovah are said of Him in the NT; 4) the names of Deity are given to him; 5) He sustains certain relationships to God; 6) He accepts divine worship, and 7) He was conscious of being God incarnate and represented himself as such.

**6. Thiessen lists 6 things that are not comparable to Christs union of two natures; list them.**

Ans pg 304 The union of two natures in Christ is NOT comparable to 1) marriage, 2) believers united with Christ, 3) Christs dwelling in a believer, 4) Neither could Christ unite himself with imperfect humanity, 5) Neither did the two natures combine to form a third, 6) Nor did Christ gradually take of the divine nature.

**7. What is theanthropic?**

Ans pg 305 The person of Christ is theanthropic but the natures of Christ are not. i.e. we may speak of the God-man in relation to his person, (not God and Man in his person) but we may NOT speak of a divine-human nature. (We must speak of the nature of God and the nature of man separate but united.)

**8. Explain non-theanthropic natures with the contrast made by Thiessen.**

Ans pg 305 “Christ had an infinite intelligence and will and a finite intelligence and will; that He had a divine consciousness and a human consciousness. His divine intelligence was infinite, His human intelligence increased. His divine will was omnipotent; His human will had only power of unfallen humanity. In his divine consciousness He said “I and the Father are One”; in His human consciousness He said “I thirst.” In Christ's present exalted state the essential elements of his humanity continue which the accidental elements, his hunger , his thirst his weariness, these elements have ceased.” Amazing.

**9. Volumes could not contain the character of Christ, what 7**

**attributes does Thiessen attach to it?**

Ans pg 307-311 Thiessen attaches 7 qualities to Christ's indescribable, uncapturable character; 1) He was absolutely holy, 2) He had genuine love, 3) He was truly humble, 4) He was thoroughly meek, 5) He was perfectly balanced, 6) He lived a life of prayer, and 7) He was an incessant worker.

**Q&A From Chapter 25 The Work of Christ: His Death – Importance and Misinterpretation pg 312-320**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 312-320 (r )

**1. Give 7 reasons why the death of Christ, over the earthly life of Christ, is of supreme importance.**

Ans pg 312-315 The death of Christ, more so than the life of Jesus, is given supreme importance because it is 1) it is foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, 2) it is most prominent in the New Testament Scriptures, 3) it is the chief purpose of the incarnation, 4) it is the fundamental theme of the Gospel, 5) it is essential to Christianity, and 6) it is essentially the so-great salvation provided from heaven where 7) his death is of supreme interest.

**2. Thiessen mentions that the death of the Christ has been approached with “bias and philosophical predilection” such that 5 miss representations have been expanded over the years; what are they?**

Ans pg 315 – 320 Satan has lead the minds of man away from the supreme importance of Christ's death to where they have considered it an 1) accident or that he was simply 2) a martyr. They in their philosophy have considered that Christ's death was just a 3) moral demonstration of God's love or even a 4) governing demonstration of God's hatred of sin. Some have weighed his death as 5) only an infinite payment for an infinite sin, sort of like a commercial enterprise. All of these philosophical perspectives miss the great value and provision in the atoning substitutionary sacrificial death of Christ.

**3. Extreme rationalists held that Christ's death was just an accident; how is this refuted?**

Ans pg 316 Christ's death is clearly foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures most clearly in Isaiah 53 or Psalms 22, “for he was cut

off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.” ... “my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.” The death of Christ was no accident but the sacrificial, substitutionary, atonement for sin in God's plan.

**4. Laelius and Faustus Socinus of Poland in the 16th century contended that Christ was just an exemplary martyr; what denominational movement is founded in that contention?**

Ans pg 316 Laelius and Faustus Socinus of Poland in the 16th century founded the modern Unitarian movement, contending that Christ was just an exemplary martyr; and that there was no propitiation, no substitutionary mediation, no sacrificial benefit, and no atoning work in his death, burial and resurrection. They continue today with the same balderdash.

**5. Origen (185-254 AD) of Alexandria Egypt and Schleiermaker (1768-1834 AD) “The father of modern Protestant theology” had strange philosophies about the death of Christ, what was it?**

Ans pg 317 Origen (185-254 AD) of Alexandria Egypt and Schleiermaker (1768-1834 AD) “The father of modern Protestant theology” had strange philosophies about the death of Christ because they were philosophers, not theologians. They believed that Christ's death was a supreme show of God's love for man and had no connection with a propitiation.

**6. The “Governmental Theory” for the death of Christ believes it simply demonstrates God's despise of sin and again was no propitiation; define propitiation.**

Ans pg \_\_ Propitiation used 3 times in the Authorized version and NOT AT ALL in the NIV, (in the Greek, ἱλαστηριον hil-as-tay'-ree-on OR ἱλασμοσ hil-as-mos') always means relating to an appeasing or expiating, having placating or expiating force, expiatory; a means of appeasing or expiating, a propitiation (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance)

**7. What was and what ails the ransom idea in the commercial theory held to by the philosopher Origen of Alexandria and worded by Justin Martyr?**

Ans pg 319 Mixing Philosophy into theology is always detrimental

to the truth and Origin of Alexandria, editor of the Alexandrian bible manuscripts which form the basis for all modernist English bibles, (NIV,NASB,NEB, et al.) was first and foremost a philosopher. Some where there developed after him a philosophy that the “ransom for many” which Christ provided was paid out to Satan himself and that Christ bought us out of Satan's Kingdom with his death. Such a view is very good hedonistic, diabolical philosophy, and completely lacking in a Scriptural basis.

**8. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109 AD) expressed a view which “did not sufficiently stress the substitutionary aspect of Christ's death.” but is “true as far as it goes.” In that it “does not go far enough”, reword Anselm's view so that it DOES go far enough.**

Ans pg 319-320 Thiessen states that Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109 AD) (erog spokesman for the Church of England and all Episcopal doctrine) presents a view of Christs death that is “true as far as it goes but it does not go far enough.” A slight rewording of Episcopal doctrine that would then go farther and answer Thiessen's complaints might be:

“Sin violates the divine HOLINESS (not just honor) and since it is committed against an infinite Being, it deserves infinite punishment. God's HOLINESS (not just honor) requires Him to punish sin, while the love of God pleads for the sinner. This conflict between the divine attributes is reconciled by the voluntary, SUBSTITUTIONAL, PERPITUATIONAL, sacrifice of Christ, by which the divine claims are satisfied and God is free to pardon the sinner WHO IN HIS FREE WILL SEEKS AND APPROPRIATES THAT PARDON.” (Of coarse Thiessen, a devout Reformed Theologian, ergo a Calvinist, would never agree to this last added clause, contending instead that God 'in Sovereign grace' choose who would be saved and lost.)

**Q&A From Chapter 26 The Work of Christ: The Work of Christ: His Death – Its True Meaning and Extent pg 321-330**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 321- 330 (r )

**1. What does Thiessen state about he statements already made about the death of Christ?**

Ans pg 321 Of all the statements thus far made concerning the death of Christ Thiessen says “They are true as far as they go but they do not go far enough.”

**2. What three qualities of Christ's death does Thiessen emphasize to the previous lack?**

Ans pg 320-328 To the previous lack of coverage on Christ's death Thiessen adds and emphasizes that Christ's death is Vicarious, it is Satisfaction and it is a Ransom, he should more so include that it was a propitiation and substitutionary.

**3. What 5 things must be satisfied in Christ's death?**

Ans pg 324-327 Christ's death must need satisfy 1) the Justice of God, 2) the Law of God, 3) the Atonement for Sin, 4) a Propitiation, and 5) a reconciliation. None of these aspects of satisfaction can be laid aside by philosophy.

**4. When considering Christ' death as a ransom how is it not a ransom to Satan?**

Ans pg 328 Thiessen clarifies that a ransom is “a payment of a price in order to set another held in bondage free.” We are held in bondage to God's Justice not Satan's whiles. “God's mercy ransoms man from God's justice.” Careful word smithing is necessitated here because a price had to be paid, even a random, but that is not paid to Satan even though he holds man captive and man is redeemed from Satan and his hold on him, however he gets no ransom.

**5. In explaining the ransom Thiessen lists 4 things we are redeemed from; what are they?**

Ans pg 329 The death of Christ redeems man from 1) penalty and/or curse of the law, 2) redeems from sin as a power, 3) redeems from Satan who held us in captivity and 4) redeems from all evil including, eventually, our present mortal body.

**6. Concerning the extent of Christ's death Thiessen's first sentence connects the question to what, and to where is the answer bound up?**

Ans pg 329 When transgressing clear Scripture about the extent of Christ's death, Thiessen likens the discord to a “difference of opinion” and binds up the answer to the difference in “ones conception of the order of the decrees.” But I would contend that

when one properly and rightfully tosses out the all inclusive decrees, one resolves the difference and the transgression.

**7. It is herein contended that Calvin was neither a superlapsarian nor a sublapsarian but a proponent of universal atonement; what is the meaning of these three categories?**

Ans pg 329 A superlapsarian view holds that Christ died only for 'the elect.' A sublapsarian view holds that Christ died, 'at least in some sense', also for the whole world.. Calvin holding to a universal atonement held that Christ's death was in every Scriptural way an atonement for the whole universal need of mankind, Christ was indeed the lamb that taketh away the sin of the world.

**8. What 7 inconclusive verses does Thiessen provide to demonstrate that Christ died for only the elect and how are they inconclusive?**

Ans pg 329 To demonstrate that Christ died for only the elect, Thiessen provides inconclusive evidence such as Matt 20:28 “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;” wherein 'a ransom for many' cannot be construed to mean 'a ransom for ONLY the many and NOT the REST.' and 1Tim 4:10 “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe;” is not and CANNOT be ONLY to them that believe, likewise in John 17:9 “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine;” Jesus praying “for those who thou hast given me; for they are thine;” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue, and in 2Tim 1:9 God “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,” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue. In Eph 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue. And Rev 13:8 “And

all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue.

**9. Thiessen and all Reformed Theologians including Reformed Baptist, like Augustus H. Strong, carry a bias into soteriology when they consider that God chose before the foundation of the world those who would be saved and received in heaven and those who would be damned to an eternal hell; this bias requires the question who then did Christ die for? and Thiessen lists 8 verses to answer Christ died for the whole world; what are they?**

Ans pg 330 That Christ died for the whole world and not just a few chosen ones is amply displayed in 1Tim 4:10, John 1:29. 1Tim 2:6, Tit 2:11, 2Pet 2:1, 3:9, Heb 2:9, 1John 2:2, and 2Cor 5:18-20.

**10. Critique Thiessen's summary of the sense in which Christ is the Saviour of the world.**

Ans pg 330 Thiessen just finished establishing that Christ's death is a vicarious ransom yielding satisfaction of God's justice, law, atoning requirements, propitiation, and reconciliation of man to God, but in his summary he extremely limits it for the world as a 'significant delay to execution, and a “space for repentance” with no “whosoever will” for effectual repentance. Thiessen again references Catholic penitence for restoration instead of Bible repentance for restoration. Thiessen implies that Christ as Saviour of the world provides us the preaching that can be the “powerful incentive to repentance, “while avoiding the reality that our preaching can indeed change the eternal fate of a “whosoever will may come.” Lastly he insinuates that Christ the Saviour of the world provides some assurance to those who die in infancy when indeed Reformed doctrine holds the same for those infants as it does for you and I , “only the elect get in” those infants not elect are cast into eternal hell fire. It is no wonder Robert Ingersoll rebelled against their doctrine and became the founder of Atheism in America, Joseph Smith rebelled against their doctrine and founded the Mormons, Charles Taze Russel rebelled against their

doctrine and founded the JW's. Such doctrine erases all mercy of God and the Mercy of God endureth forever!

**Q&A From Chapter 27 The Work of Christ: His Resurrection and Ascension pg 331-341**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 331-341 ( r )

**1. What 3 parts are necessitated in the gospel of Jesus Christ and by Paul in 1Cor. 15 And what four listed by Thiessen in the opening of this chapter? Discuss the difference.**

Ans pg 331 Paul defines the gospel of Jesus Christ as

- 1)“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;
- 2) By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5) And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6) After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.” (1Cor 15:1-6) While Thiessen says our salvation must include consideration of His death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation. These differences would occur as Paul teaches what must be believed to attain salvation while Thiessen is covering the distinctive parts that provide salvation, or have a larger bearing on bringing us salvation.

**2. Briefly expound Thiessen's three reasons for the importance of the resurrection.**

Ans pg 331-332 The resurrection of Christ is important because 1) it is the fundamental doctrine of Christianity. If Christ be not raised from the dead, we are of all men most miserable. 2) The resurrection is essential in the application of salvation; He must needs be risen to be our redeemer, our mediator and daysman, our intercessor, our High Priest. And 3) the resurrection is the essential 'polemic' for all of God's miracles. Strong says in attempting to

prove the miracles of the Bible we should not begin with Balaam's Ass or Jonah's Whale, but with Christ's resurrection. Believe that and all other miracles present NO difficulty.

**3. Briefly expand three aspects of the nature of Christ's resurrection.**

Ans pg 332-333 Thiessen gives these three aspects to the nature of Christ's resurrection; First it was an actual resurrection wherein Christ was actually dead and buried i.e. separated body, soul, and spirit, and He actually came back to life after suffering this separation of death. Second, it was a bodily resurrection wherein His body was taken from the tomb, reunited with soul and spirit (or for Thiessen's shallow, errant dichotomous belief only body and soul) and made alive again. And lastly, it was a unique resurrection. The Widow of Zaraphath and the Shunamite's son raised back to life by Elijah and Elisha, respectively, died again later; as did Jarus' daughter, the young man of Nain, Lazarus, Tabitha and Eulychus, but Jesus' resurrected body will never die again, it has eternal life and cannot again see corruption.

**4. What causes the so called “discrepancies” in the accounts of Christ's post resurrection appearances to vanish?**

Ans pg 335 Believing the Bible as currently infallible (lacking with Dr. Thiessen, Evangelicals, and Fundamentalists using modernist bibles) and understanding the order of occurrence of the resurrection details causes the so called “discrepancies” in the account of Christ's resurrection to vanish.

**5. What are the four 'cause and effect' arguments which Thiessen tries to use to lend credibility to Christ's resurrection?**

Ans pg 335-336 Thiessen leans on 4 'cause and effect' arguments to bolster credibility for Christ's resurrection: 1) The tomb must have been empty or the deception would have been discovered; 2) the Lord's Day has been Sunday, the 1st day of the week ever since His resurrection; 3) All of Christianity is only accounted for via the resurrection of Christ; and 4) the rise and propagation of the 27 books of the New Testament can be attributed to the reality that the Christ arose.

**6. What are 4 results of Christ's resurrection?**

Ans pg 337 The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb 1) attests to Christ's deity; 2) the resurrection of Christ assures the acceptableness of Christ's work; 3) the resurrection of Christ enables him to function as our High Priest and 4) the resurrection of Christ provides additional blessings in the provision made to bestow repentance, forgiveness, regeneration (quickenings) and the sending and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The resurrection of Christ is additionally the guarantee of our own resurrection.

**7. List 5 things 'embraced' in the exaltation of Christ.**

Ans pg 339 In the exaltation of Christ we find he is 1) crowned with glory and honor; (Heb 2:4) 2) He is given a name above every name; (Phil 2:9) 3) He is enthroned at the right hand of the Father; (Heb 10:12) 4) He became 'head of the Body, the Church'; (Eph 1:22) 5) He serves as the High Priest; (Heb 4:14) and lastly 6) All things are put under His feet (Eph 1:22)

**8, Similar to the things 'embraced' in his exaltation, Thiessen lists come results of his ascension and exaltation, what are they?**

Ans pg 339-340 “The results of His ascension and exaltation may be treated together.” They are 1) Christ is now not merely present in heaven, but is 'spiritually' present everywhere (and is thus 'with us always', Matt 18), 2) He led captivity captive (Eph 4:8), 3) He began his priestly ministry in heaven (Eph 4:8-13), 4) He poured out his Spirit baptizing believers into His body.

**Q&A From Chapter 28 Election and Vocation pg 343-351**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 343-351 (r )

**1. What are the parts and sections which Thiessen has broken the study of “so great salvation” (soteriology) into, and is it appropriate?**

Ans pg 341 Thiessen has divided the study of 'so great salvation' or soteriology, into two parts; first the provision of salvation and then the application of salvation. These divisions seem to be very functional and applicable. He then sections the application of salvation into the beginnings of salvation wherein he covers “getting in” and then the continuation of salvation. He deals with the “super structure” of the Christian life under the latter.

Although this sectioning seems a little contrived, the jury is still out.

**2. Reformed Augustinian Theology and Thiessen will ever insist that God made an election of those individuals who are to be saved; Hod does Thiessen hope to depart from sublapsarianism and Hyper-Calvinism and yet hold to Augustinian's pervasive doctrine?**

Ans pg 343-344 Thiessen is trying to hold on to the Augustinian error that God elect a few for salvation by holding on to those verses which contradict Hyper-Calvinism and explain the election as being based on God's foreknowledge of what individuals would do.

**3. In holding to the election of individual souls for salvation two concepts are wholly over emphasized to the complete peril of two others; explain.**

Ans pg 344-351 In Thiessen's (and all other Reformed Theologians) analysis of how God could elect individuals souls for salvation, and reject others there is always an abundant use of the concept of Supreme Sovereignty and God's grace and always a dismissal of man's free will and God's mercy. Thiessen's wrestling with this problem is commendable but he will not let go of the old Augustinian concept of election of individuals.

**4. What does the doctrine of baptismal regeneration have in common with the doctrine of individual soul election?**

Ans pg 344 Baptismal regeneration is inferred from a couple outlying verses in the Bible; Ac 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."; Ac 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."; and Lu 3:3 "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." These verses carefully read in context do not teach what the baptismal regeneration proponent sees. But these verses alone without due consideration of others indicate that baptism washes away sin and brings about conversion. It is thus locked into the brain as a definite clearly presented truth while all the other verses

and principles implying that there is no water baptism connected to conversion and quickening will be dismissed with extreme bias. Thus a whole unBiblical doctrine is developed and read into all the Bible. So to the idea that individual souls are elect for salvation is inferred from a couple outlying verses in the Bible; Eph 1:4 “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world!”; Rom 8:30 “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”; 1Pe 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.” These verses carefully read in context do not teach what that individuals are chosen for salvation before the foundation of the world as the Calvinist sees. But these verses alone without due consideration of others indicate to them that God chose individuals for salvation and only the elect will attain it. It is thus locked into the brain as a definite clearly presented truth while all the other verses and principles implying that whosoever will may come and God changes things by prayer, can be dismissed with extreme bias. Thus a whole unBiblical doctrine is developed and read into all the Bible. It is just amazing that Calvinists and Reformed Theology will forever insist this misnomer is truth.

**5. In Thiessen's mind his supposing a different ordering for the decreeing makes his approach different than a hyper-Calvinist and their supposed if the decrees; how so and why so?**

Ans pg 343 – 344 Hyper-Calvinism (an undefined term used by Thiessen in hopes to imply that there is some form of Calvinism which is not hyper, and whereby he may imply that his view is Calvinistic but not so much) supposes that the very first thing God decreed was to save some and reprobate the rest. Thiessen expects that by moving that decree to the supposed end of the list of decreed things and adding some supposition about how God may have relied on a divine foreknowledge of personalities to render his decree to 'save only some' that his definition of election is superior to the supposed hyper-Calvinist class of definitions. However, all

the smoke and mirrors of reasoning, the sequential ordering and explanation does not remove the conundrum that all of God's supposed decrees were formed up and decreed before the foundation of the earth. Purely human rationing about how God may or may not have come up with a supposed election list is of little value. Whether God used foreknowledge in His selection list, determining that my gene pool or DNA is more likely than my brothers gene pool or DNA cannot help in the least.

**6. Thiessen tries to differentiate a redemptive aspect of salvation vs an “election to outward privileges”; What is his definition of election and how many verses does he use to establish each of these two aspects?**

Ans pg 344 Thiessen addresses 21 references for our “election to outward privileges” which in reality should be deemed our election for service because every election in the Bible, OT or NT, is an election to service and never an election for heaven. However, Thiessen references NOT ONE SINGLE Bible reference to establish that there is an election for salvation. In fact he states “We are no where told what it is in the foreknowledge of God that determines His Choice.” (pg 344) Such is the case because Thiessen brings his philosophy that God chose who would be saved from the philosophies of Origin and Augustinian and finds it nowhere taught in Scripture.

**7. What is Thiessen's “postulation” about individual soul election for salvation and why must he make this wild postulation?**

Ans pg 344 Thiessen “postulates” that an individual's reaction to the revelation of God is mystically foreseen through the ions of time before his conception and it is that off in the future reaction to the gospel which forms a basis for God to determine whether that individual will be on an election listing or no. By his own admitting such a preposterous postulation must needs be made because 1) it is nowhere worded in Scripture, 2) Scriptures instead demand that individuals are responsible for their own actions, and 3) Scripture instead demands that individuals are responsible for accepting or rejecting the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is striking that rather than discard Augustinian's

unBiblical postulation that God made up a 'to be saved' election list, Thiessen makes up a grander unBiblical postulation that God used an unrevealed mystical future probing foreknowledge to justly but unmercifully make up this list.

**8. When considering Election and Predestination How does Thiessen broaden Schofield's corporate definition without bending it to a Calvinistic individual rendering?**

Ans Pg. 345 Thiessen broadens Schofield's corporate definition of Predestination by saying, "As applied to redemption this would mean that in election God has decided to save those who accept His Son and proffered salvation and in foreordination He has determined effectively to accomplish that purpose." (pg.345) In this definition Thiessen conceptualizes the corporate election revealed in the Bible. He errors greatly when he departs from this corporate definition and tries to apply it to the individuals in St. Augustinian's individual election for salvation list,.

**9. Expand Thiessen's proof of his view, its necessity, the four problems it attempts to remedy and the two that it never touches.**

Ans. Pg. 345-347 In defending his wholly unsupported view of election Thiessen outlines the conundrum of the whole Reformed election doctrine by stating "In the minds of some people, (*i.e. Calvinists and Reformed Theologians*) election is a choice that God makes (*before the foundation of the Earth*) for which we can see no reason. And which we can hardly harmonize with His justice. (*His Bible and His Mercy*) We are asked to accept the theory of "unconditional election" as true but unexplainable (*and unBiblical*) in spite of the fact that the persistent demand of the heart (*the head, and the Scripture*) is for a theory of election that does commend itself to our sense of justice and that harmonies the teaching of Scripture concerning the sovereignty of God and the responsibility (*and free will*) of man." (*italics added by author to emphasize the gross extent of the conundrum*). Thiessen goes on to list four misjustices of Scripture which "unconditional election" affords and which his exasperated view 'helps remedy': 1) Individual soul-necessarily election is unconditional ergo God's decrees are as well: Calvinism and Reformed Augustinian

Theology necessarily adapted Paul's wording in Eph. 2 to decree that election is not of works or of merit lest any man should boast. Just like the atheist's view of how we got here, random chance and random selection is the Calvinist and Reformed Augustinian Theology view of how we get "There!" 2 )Calvinism and Reformed Augustinian Theology necessarily devise that if God elect before the foundation of the world individuals for salvation then the means of salvation was directly for them and Christ did not die for all, but only for those he had selected. 3) Calvinism and Reformed Augustinian Theology, depicting that some get chosen but most do not, and that it is a completely random selection made by a Sovereign, just because he gets to choose, rubs hard on the heart of man that has a sense of justice, right and wrong. 4) If the eternal fate of all souls is sealed before the foundation of the world it is unreasonable and illogical that we are commanded to warn them, yes, compel them, yea persuade them to be saved from an eternal hell. You will make no eternal difference, just lay back and let those unmitigated Presbyterian's and Reformed Augustinian Theology's 'Sovereign Decrees' play out.

Two other considerations that are violated by Reformed Augustinian Theology's doctrine of election are God's mercy and the hermeneutical spiral. The idea that God chose before the foundation of the world all the individuals that would be saved, labeled them elect and sends the rest to hell springs from two Bible verses and two thousand years of vain philosophy, it will never be reconciled to a good hermeneutic. Further, that God has condemned individuals to eternal suffering in hell and there is nothing in their life or in this world that will remove that fate, is irreconcilable with God's mercy, and His mercy endureth forever. Those who believe the Bible and have tasted his mercy will never swallow such preposterous idea no matter how many theologians you line up behind it.

#### **10. In Thiessen's fictitious "Doctrine of God's Call" what ails his coverage of the means of the call?**

Ans. pg.350 Thiessen's unfitting entanglement in a faulty doctrine of election caused him to invent a new doctrine called his "doctrine of vocation" or as he describes it the "doctrine of Gods call."

Herein he confesses that Scripture does not allow him to differentiate between a 'general call' and a 'special call' as other Calvinists do, expresses that God's call is real not fictitious as other Calvinists make it, and then tries to document the means of God's call. In the latter he inadequately captures that believers being His Witnesses are the sole means of his call in this age of Grace, contending rather that there are a variety of means. Three 'variety of means' that should be subcategories under His Witnesses are 1) through His Word- which he left in the hands of His witnesses to propagate, copy and utilize, 2) through His Spirit that indwells His Witnesses and propagates through the word via their presence and 3) through His providential dealings with men wherein he brings them into contact with His Witnesses. Thus a supportable thesis can be made that the ONLY means of propagating the gospel and God's call to repentance is through His Witnesses.

**Q&A From Chapter 29 Conversion pg 352-361**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 352-361 ( r )

**1. What are the 5 instantaneous operations within “so great salvation” and how does Thiessen's list differ from the Biblical list?**

Ans pg 352 Thiessen accurately emphasizes that five distinct operations occur instantaneously without chronological sequence, but considered here in a logical sequence, His list of 5 in this logical sequence are 1) conversion, 2) justification, 3) regeneration, 4) union with Christ, and 5) adoption, and they differ from a Biblical list in three areas. First and second in syntax in that the Bible calls 'regeneration', 'quicken' and 'union with Christ', 'baptism into Christ'. Quicken means 'to make alive' not 'remake alive again'. Baptism means 'full immersion into'; which is bigger than simply uniting with. Words are important, and KJV Bible words carry the best English depth of meaning. Thirdly adoption, is an illustrative portrayal of the result of salvation and not an operation of salvation. Indwelling, a distinct operation involved in salvation is left off Thiessen's list.

**2. Why does Thiessen deal with conversion first off?**

Ans pg 352 Although these 5 operations occur instantaneously with not chronological sequence, there is a logical sequence wherein Conversion seems, in our mind, to lead off the occurrence of the other 4.

**3. In Scripture what are the two necessary ingredients of conversion and how does Thiessen demean this authority?**

Ans pg 353 There is no greater Scripture delineating the ingredients of conversion than Acts 20:21, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Thiessen references this key Scripture only one time and there he uses it only to establish that 'in Paul's opinion' repentance is important. Again, Thiessen's Lectures attempt a systematic theology, but they base all argument on logic and deductive reasoning about Scripture, rather than on the supreme authority of Scripture.

**4. Differentiate the elements of repentance.**

Ans pg 353 Thiessen addresses an intellectual element of repentance, wherein sin is intellectually recognized as irreparable personal guilt before a holy God, and an emotional element wherein there is present an emotion or feeling of sorrow for sin and desire for pardon. He makes no mention of a voluntary element that appropriates a salvation. Thought and feeling may be present without a voluntary element wherein is voluntary surrender to our own helplessness and His own holiness. Nor does he mention a spiritual element wherein the Holy Spirit of God is convincing one of their condition and His righteousness. The former is dealt with as a distinct element of faith, the latter is not regarded by Thiessen as an element of repentance nor faith and ergo not an essential part of conversion. But it indeed is..

**5. Finally Thiessen differentiates repentance from Catholic penance, how is this yet lacking?**

Ans pg 354 Finally Thiessen points out a gross error of Catholic doctrine, the base doctrine that reformed theology is reforming, wherein they removed all concepts of repentance and substituted for it 'do penance', to derive a works salvation system. Although he references the errant Douay Version of the Catholic bible, which states 'do penance' which "is positively not the meaning of the word in Scripture," he fails to point out that the Latin Vulgate errantly translates it on every occurrence of the word!

**6. How does Thiessen muck up Hebrews 11:1-2?**

Ans pg 356 The Bible says "Now faith is the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for, the EVIDENCE of things not seen." but Thiessen is misled by ecumenical modernist scholars to think that it is 'ASSURANCE' instead of 'SUBSTANCE' and 'CONVICTION' instead of 'EVIDENCE' Shame on Thiessen for not knowing or noting the differences herein.

**7. What does Thiessen present as a definition of faith?**

Ans pg 356 Although Thiessen uses several arguments to establish that Heb 11 does not meet the strict requirements to be a 'definition' of faith, neither he, nor any of his sources, could improve upon what God gave for a definition. So many teachers have mimicked the scholarly line that Heb 11 is not technically a definition, that few have examined it as a definition. It fully

qualifies and is by holy inspiration far superior to any definition attempted by the scholars and 'theologians' who insist it is inadequate. IT seems Theologians, scholars, and seminaries are forever teaching about the Bible, but never teaching the Bible. Modernist English translations ever eager to substantiate their 69,000 major deviations from the public domain KJV, all butcher the 'definition' but "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." is indeed the only definition of faith and it is amply, amplified by the remainder of the chapter. How is it that Thiessen attempts to teach about faith without leaning on the inspired wisdom found in this chapter? It is almost criminal.

**8. How does Thiessen's use of an ecumenical modernist translation tarnish his argument for an emotional element of faith?**

Ans pg 358 Twice Thiessen uses an ecumenical modernist translation of 'stumbleth' when the Bible says 'he is offended.' There is significant difference between a physical accidental stumbling, and a mental emotional offending. The former lacks ability to differentiate a 'belief in ' and a belief of' while the latter is altogether appropriate, ... and altogether accurate Scripture as well.

**Q&A From Chapter 30 Justification and Regeneration pg 362-369**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 362-369 (r )

**1. In treating the 5 operations of 'so great salvation' as 'subjects that pertain to salvation' rather than operations of salvation, how does Thiessen violate his initial advancement that these are instantaneous and not chronological?**

Ans pg 362 In treating the 5 operations of 'so great salvation' as subjects that pertain to salvation Thiessen muddies the very important fact that these operation occur instantaneously and simultaneously by saying "conversion is followed by justification ." This statement evidences that he does not see nor understand the importance of this detail.

**2. What does Thiessen claim as the glory of the Protestant Reformation?**

Ans pg 362 Thiessen claims the glory of the Protestant Reformation is its restoration of the doctrine of justification back to a Scriptural position. But he quickly acknowledges that the reformers did not grasp the other 4 aspects of salvation nor the doctrine of sanctification. Another reminder that the reformers were fine as far as they went, but did not go far enough. Thiessen seems to remain ignorant that there were believers that were ever estranged from 'The Holy Church' that had never lost the doctrine of justification, ergo all his hopes and glories are in the Protestant Reformers and a Reformed Augustinian Theology.

**3. What are the three “things involved in justification”?**

Ans pg 363 The things involved in justification are 1) the remission of the penalty of sin, 2) the restoration to favor and 3) the imputation of righteousness.

**4. How did Catholicism intermix justification and sanctification and how do believers delineate them?**

Ans pg 364 “The Roman Catholics define justification as the remission of sin and infusion of new habits of grace.” Thus justification is treated as a subjective experience, and not as an objective relationship. ... Reformers insisted that justification is something different from sanctification; that the former is a declarative act, setting forth the sinner's relation to the law and justice of God, the latter an efficient act changing the inward character of the sinner.

**5. “How can man be just with God?” give Thiessen's four methodologies.**

Ans pg 364-366 Thiessen points out that the method of justification is 1) not by works of the law (Rom 3:20); 2) justification is by the Grace of God (Titus 2:5,7) (although he leaves off Mercy as Calvinist always do) 3) it is by 'the Blood of Christ' (Rom 5:9); and 4) It is by faith (Rom 3:26-30)

**6. How could a theologian write about justification and not contrast Rom 4:1-4 with James 2:24?**

Ans pg 365 NOT A true theologian with an open Bible could not write about justification without contrasting Romans 4:2-3 “For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed

God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” with James 2 “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” This long standing 'contrast' (called out by some as 'conflict' or even 'contradiction') is a long standing horror to Protestants and Reformed Theologians. It is not surprising that Thiessen does not address it or even breath about it. It is easily resolved with the understanding that in Romans 4, God is addressing the declarative act that saves us, while in James 2 He is addressing the changes that will accompany a saved individual. Justification is defined both as a declarative act and as a substantiating of a statement or thing, Romans uses the former, James the latter.

**7. How is it clarified that faith is the condition of our justification, not the meritorious ground of it?**

Abs pg 366 Clarifying that faith is the condition of our justification not the meritorious ground of it, Thiessen quotes Hodge “We are not justified on account of our faith, considered as a virtuous or holy act or state of mind... Faith is the condition of our justification “ and goes on to clarify “it is not 'for' faith that we are justified, but 'by' faith. Faith is not the price of justification, but the means of appropriating it.” pg 366

**8. Reformed Augustinian Theologians who do not think of man as body soul and spirit, cannot comprehend 'quickenings' and use instead 'regeneration;' contrast the two.**

Ans pg 369 The Bible says “and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins:” ... “And so it is written The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” (Eph 2, 1Cor 15) While 'regeneration', used only twice in the Bible (Matt 19:28 and Tit 3:5), speaks of the new birth in man, 'quickenings' used 14 times in the OT and 11 times in the NT, speaks expressly of the new life put into man wherein his spirit is made alive at conversion. Thiessen and his reformed theology cronies, not believing that man is body, soul AND spirit, cannot comprehend nor even acknowledge that “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom 8:11) (cf John 5:21, 6:23, Rom 4:17, 8:11, 1Cor 15:36, 45, Eph 2:1, 5, Col 2:13, 1Pet 3:18)

**Q&A From Chapter 31 Union With Christ and Adoption pg 370-376**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 370-376 ( r )

**1. What are 4 analogies related to the union of the believer with Christ?**

Ans pg 370 Earthly relationships provide analogies of the union of the believer with Christ. These include 1) union of a building with its foundation; 2) the union between husband and wife; 3) the union between the vine and the branches; 4) the union between head and body; and 5) the union between Adam and his descendants.

**2. Give 7 verses which puts the believer “in” Christ.**

Ans pg 370 John 14:20, Rom 6:11, 8:1, 2Cor 5:17, Eph 1:4, 2:13, Col 2:9-10 ... Joh 14:20 “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” Ro 6:11 “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Ro 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” 2Co 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.” Eph 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:” Eph 2:13 “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Col 2:9 “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Col 2:10 “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

**3. Thiessen never addresses the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, instead how does he mix this up with the union of Christ?**

Ans pg 370 When a Reformed Theologian refuses plain Scripture about the spirit of man, the bias that he is only body and soul impacts much of his understanding of soteriology. Thiessen does not even address the in dwelling of the Holy Spirit but uses some of these key verses to establish the union with Christ instead. These verses speak of being indwelt by the spirit of God. “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God

dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” (Rom 8:9-10) “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” (John 14:20) “ ... yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Gal 2:20) “Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;” (Col 1:27) But Thiessen mixes them in with his analysis of our union with Christ.

**4. Bias is an ugly thing in theology; how does Thiessen get it all over the method of our union with Christ?**

Ans pg 372 Although Thiessen approaches some of the operations that occur at conversion, his premeditated bias to hold to Origen and St. Augustine philosophy whereby God chose before the foundation of the world the individuals that would be saved, taints his every outlook and investigation of soteriology. His lack of consideration for the indwelling Spirit of God stems from his tenacious grip on the dichotomy of man instead of the Biblical trichotomy, and that error stems from his refusal to accept the plenary inerrancy of Scripture. (Thiessen contends that 1Then 5:23 documents what “Paul seems to think” (pg 227) rather than what God regards as inerrant infallible verbally inspired truth.) Thiessen's hold to philosophy and rejection of inerrancy prevents his exploration of the Biblical truth of 'quickening' and restricts him to examination of 'regeneration' instead. And now without one time mentioning our baptism into the body of Christ (1Cor 12:13) or our baptism with the Holy Ghost (Luke 3:16) Thiessen has the audacity to say “Strange as it may seem, the Scriptures have little to say directly on this subject” of how this union between Christ and the Christian is established! Bias does indeed produce blindness. He goes on to say “This union originated in the purpose and plan of God. Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world” Eph 1:4 ASV (Read IN CONTEXT this verse says “According as” [NOT “Even as” ASC,ESV, NOT “Just as” NAS, and certainly NOT “For he” NIV] “He (God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ) who hath chosen us” (us believers NOT Abraham, Isaac, Jacob or any other OT saints who

“having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for US, that they without US should not be made perfect”, us believers NOT unbelievers who might someday believe, us believers NOT individuals on some fictitious Augustinian contrived 'election list' fictitiously made up before the foundation of the world!, BUT us believers who have received and are IN CHRIST, the ELECT ONE) (that is the ONLY 'us' that fits in this verse and are chosen) “before the foundation of the world,(in the Bible there are only 5 things chosen before the foundation of the world, and here it is believers who get into Christ, and NOT unbelievers who might, or OT saints who received not the promise) “that we“ (the believers IN Christ, NOT unbelievers who are not yet in, NOR unregenerate ones on some fictitious 'election list') “should be holy and without blame before him (God the Father) in love.”

In context and in English here, believers that are placed IN Christ were chosen to be holy, NOT that individuals would be so chosen to be placed IN Christ. Such a careful in context rendering of this verse is necessitated by the Bible's 'whosoever will may come' consideration, the free will responsible decision making attribute of man consideration, and the wholly errant Augustinian philosophy that God chose individuals for salvation and places them on some contrived 'election list' supposedly made up before the foundation of the world.

**5. How could, and why would, Thiessen address our union with Christ without mention our baptism into the body of Christ?**

Ans pg 370 NOT I have little idea.

**6. While evidencing no knowledge of or reference to the epistle of 1John, God's dissertation on the consequence of our union with Christ, what does Thiessen list as these consequences?**

Ans pg 372 While demonstrating no knowledge of or reference to God's dissertation on the consequences of our union with Christ detailed in 1John, Thiessen lists consequences of 1) the union with Christ means eternal security, 2) the union with Christ means fruitfulness, and 3) the union with Christ means endowment for service. These are things accomplished in the life of a believer but

accrediting them just to the union with Christ is likely quite narrow and inconsiderate of his quickening, which more so ensures our eternal security, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which more so ensures produces fruit.

**7. Is our adoption into the family of God a last place doctrine of Paul?**

Ans pg 373 The marvelous revelation that we are adopted as sons of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ and accepted into the beloved is belittled and maligned by Thiessen with his horrible opening sentence “The doctrine of adoption is purely Pauline, and we give it the last place” If indeed “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” then there is no “purely Pauline” doctrine and this doctrine of adoption is not at the bottom of my bucket!

**8. List 4 ways that Thiessen horribly butchers the doctrine of adoption.**

Ans pg 373-374 Thiessen attempts to systematically cover soteriology but mixes up operations that occur in 'so great salvation' (Conversion, Justification, Quickening, Indwelling, and Baptism Into Christ) with results that are produced. Adoption is a result of salvation that he tries to include as an operation and in so doing he butchers this tremendous illustrative revelation of our new position. He first calls this a “purely Pauline” doctrine when it is indeed a Bible doctrine. Second he establishes that this must be a doctrine because a word for it occurs 5 times in a Greek NT. A doctrine is not systematically established based on the number and location of occurrences of some Greek word! This is shallow and non-systematic. Thirdly when this produced position is treated as an operation instead of a result, Thiessen attests that it (the adoption) produces “deliverance from the law” where in actuality our adoption is the result of His justification which more so delivers us from the law. Lastly he douses this tremendous doctrine of adoption, our new position in Christ, with his twisted Reformed Augustinian Theology he states “Before (God) ever began with the Hebrew race, yes, before creation, He predestined

us to this position.” (pg 373) Thiessen and Reformed Theologians will always carry such bias into their Bible reading and rendering, and will never attain a truly systematic theology nor ever capture a doctrine of soteriology.

**Q&A From Chapter 32 Sanctification pg 377-384**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 377-384 (r )

**1. What three things does Thiessen determine to examine concerning our sanctification?**

Ans pg 377 Thiessen covers sanctification as a “continuation of salvation” separate from the “beginning of salvation” and determines to examine 1) the definition of sanctification, 2) the time of sanctification and 3) the means of sanctification (pg 377)

**2. What is the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia's definition of sanctification and Thiessen's broadening of it?**

Ans pg 377-378 The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia's definition of sanctification is “The hallowing of the Christian believer by which he is freed from sin and enabled to realize the will of god in his life.” (pg 377) and Thiessen 'broadens' this definition as “a separation to God, and imputation of Christ as our holiness, purification from moral evil, and conformation to the image of Christ.”

**3. What 4 things are in Christ 'made unto us' in 1 Cor 1:30?**

Ans pg 378 “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us 1) wisdom, 2) and righteousness, 3) and sanctification , and 4) redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

**4. Clarify the 4 'elaborations' of Thiessen's definition of sanctification.**

Ans pg 378-379 Thiessen 'elaborates' 4 things from his broadened definition of sanctification . 1) Separation to God presupposes separation from fulfillment. 2) Christ is made unto us both righteousness and sanctification. 3) Purification from moral evil is, in reality, but another form of separation . And 4) Conformation to the image of Christ is the positive aspect of sanctification .

**5. Clarify Thiessen's 3 time elements in sanctification.**

Ans pg 380-383 Thiessen clarifies that sanctification is both an

act and a process with three distinct time elements being: 1) The initial act of sanctification wherein the moment man believes on Christ he is 'sanctified' positionally. 2) A process of sanctification continues throughout life wherein "when the believer is wholly dedicated to God, process in sanctification is assured." and there is 3) a complete and final sanctification when we see Christ.

**6. Rather than degrade God's wording of "be ye perfect" how does Thiessen deal with errant teaching of "sinless perfection"?**

Ans pg 381 Thiessen carefully retains our sinless perfection status without following after the errant doctrine of sinless perfection by clarifying that there is a positional perfection and a experiential sanctification where in we are being conformed to the image of Christ in an ongoing process.

**7. How does Thiessen show three parts of our salvation to demonstrate a coming complete and final sanctification?**

Ans pg 383 To demonstrate the coming complete and final sanctification Thiessen says "we have been saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, are being saved from the power of sin and will ultimately be saved from the very presence of sin, i.e. this is a complete and final sanctification."

**8. How does Phil 2:13 clarify the means of sanctification?**

Ans pg 384 Thiessen clarifies that "there are two parties that have to do with man's sanctification, God and man," but he and the Scripture makes it clear that Christ is the whole means of our sanctification via Phil 2:13 "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Although there are two parties involved, it is clear He alone is the means of our sanctification.

### **Q&A From Chapter 33 Perseverance pg 385 - 391**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 385 - 391 (r )

**1. How does Thiessen's chapter title and opening argument tarnish the argument of eternal security?**

Ans pg 385 Thiessen's title "Perseverance" and opening clause "The Scriptures teach that all who are by faith united to Christ, who have been justified by God's grace and regenerated by His

Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but certainly persevere therein to the end” leads one to believe that eternal security is attained by the saints perseverance rather than God's endowment of eternal life. The picture comes to mind of a saint trying to hold onto his faith and thus “endure to the end,” when in actuality it is God who gave him his eternal life and is holding the saint in his eternal hand. Perseverance is just the wrong word.

**2. How strange is it that Thiessen uses Isa 14:24 as a proof text for decrees, election and perseverance?**

Ans pg 385 When you consider how very badly Thiessen took Isa 14:24 out of context to establish that God decreed everything that happens,<sup>69</sup> it is unfortunate that it is his lead in argument to prove the eternal security of the believer which he has misnomered the perseverance of the saints. He also here implies that Job 23:13 “But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.” has some bearing on eternal security. He seems to think mans perseverance is directly tied to God's decrees and God's mind being made up and unchangable. How very twisted this reformed theology gets when it holds first and foremost to the election of individuals for their salvation.

**3. What are Thiessen's 4 proofs for the doctrine of perseverance?**

Ans pg 385 Thiessen's 4 proofs for the doctrine of perseverance are 1) The purposes of God, 2) the mediatorship of Christ, 3) God's continued ability to keep us, and lastly, finally, and as if leastly, 4) the nature of the change in the believer. In reality his last reason, the nature of the change in the believer, wherein he is given 'eternal life' and promised that he 'will never perish', is the only of the 4 that establishes the eternal security of the believer.

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<sup>69</sup> Isa 14:24 “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.” is used by Thiessen with no consideration of its context, i.e. finishing the sentence God says “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.” making this a very specific application and not a reference to an eternal infinite plan that Thiessen is seeking.

**4. How does Thiessen allege the mediatorship of Christ provides proof of perseverance of the saints?**

Ans pg 386 Thiessen aptly uses Romans 5:8-10 to establish that God will continue what he started. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 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.”

**5. In “The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination” what does Boettner call “perversity”, “error”, and “absurd”?**

Ans pg 387 In “The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination” Boettner calls one saying 'that God could NOT take a falling away Christian out of the world, “perversity” and that God would permit His children to defeat His love and fall away he calles “error”, and “absurd.”

**6. How does Boettner muck up the nature of the change in the believer with his leanings toward the dichotomy of man?**

Ans pg 388 The quickening Spirit that quickens our spirit ensures that we will NEVER die, but that doctrine gets mucked up when one believes that man is only material and immaterial, as in body and soul, with no spirit. Boettner says “Regeneration is a radical and supernatural change of the inner nature, through which the soul is made spiritually alive, and the new life which is implanted in immortal.”(pg 388) Reformed Theologians, like Thiessen and Boettner use the regeneration of man rather than the quickening of man and they never really address the spirit that is in man because of their errant doctrine of the dichotomy of man.

**7. What 4 objections to their doctrine of perseverance of the saints does Thiessen address?**

Ans pg 388-391 Thiessen addresses 4 objections to his doctrine of perseverance; 1) Perseverance induces laxness and indolence; 2) Perseverance robs man of his freedom; 3) That Scripture teaches the opposite of perseverance , and 4) that there are to many warnings about the act of falling away.

**8. Is it ironic that Thiessen defends perseverance from those contending for the free will of man?**

Ans pg 389 It is not really ironic that Thiessen defends his doctrine of perseverance from those contending for the free will of man. It is ironic that he cannot see how Bible believers use the free will of man to reject his doctrine of election of individual souls, yet they do understand eternal security while holding to that free will of man.

### **Q&A From Chapter 34 The Means of Grace**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 392-399 (r )

#### **1. What are the two “institutions which God has ordained to be the ordinary channels of grace”?**

Ans pg 392 Thiessen says that the Word of God and prayer “indicate those institutions which God has ordained to be the ordinary channels of grace.”

#### **2. What is meant by “channels of grace”?**

Ans pg 392 By 'channels of grace' Thiessen, via Hodge, means “the supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit to the souls of men.”

#### **3. What 13 things are listed to characterize the Word of God and which one would you drop to make the count 12?**

Ans pg 392-393 The Word of God is a 1) Hammer, 2) a Critic (trying to imply 'discerner' from Heb 4:12 but they dared not use a King James Bible word), 3) a Mirror, 4) a Laver, 5) a Seed, 6) the Sun, 7) the Rain & Snow, 8) a Food of Milk or Bread or Strong Meat, 9) Honey, 10) Gold, 11) a Lamp, 12) a Sword, 13) a Fire. Of these 13 I would drop Sidney Collett's 2nd one 'A Critic', as it was an ill attempt to delve into Heb 4:12 through a ecumenical modernist's Bible and capture a Greek word 'kritikos' only used one time in the Holy Bible.

#### **4. What is the Word of God, this channel of grace, a 'Means To'?**

Ans pg 399-394 In Thiessen's coverage the Word of God is a means to Salvation and a means to Sanctification, but I hope and expect this was not meant to be an all inclusive list.

**5. Thiessen is trying to express the necessity of the breath of God on the spirit of man when he says “Though the Word has the 'requisite efficiency', the soul does not have the 'requisite**

**susceptibility' until wrought upon by the Spirit of God”, what two ingredients are missing from his doctrine to word this dilemma.**

Ans pg 393-394 Reformed theologians, and especially Thiessen, have painted themselves into a corner when it comes to explaining how the Word of God is the means of salvation and sanctification. How can Job 32:8 “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” apply when they have denied that there is a spirit in man and they have limited the inspiration of God to some nonexistent original autographs? The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, from a babe Timothy knew “the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” and we are born again “not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” Thiessen and Reformed Theologians have only dried ink and lost original autographs and do not have the living, i.e. 'quick' Heb 4:12, inspired, i.e. 'breathing breath' 2Tim 3:16, Job 32:8, Scriptures. No spirit and no living breathing Scriptures forbids their explaining or ever understanding how the breath of God can move on the spirit of man. I feel pretty bad for Thiessen in this chapter, he has made a real conundrum.

**6. Prayer changes things. What are the 3 areas Thiessen tries to introduce about prayer and how does the second disembowel the other two?**

Ans pg 395-397 Prayer changes things and Thiessen, holding his doctrine of decrees, must contend that it does not. He covers the nature of prayer, the relation of prayer to providence, and the method and manner of prayer, but his coverage of the second area disembowels the other two. He tries to hide his conundrum in God's foreknowledge with the argument that “God foreknew what each man would do in respect to prayer, and embraced that fact in His foreordination.” So prayer does not change things for the Reformed Theologian.

**7. Prayer changes things and despite Thiessen's conundrum with his decrees of God what does he say of it in his introduction?**

And pg 395 Before Thiessen paints prayer as immaterial because

of his doctrine of decrees, he points out that “No one can read the Bible without being impressed with the large place given to prayer in its pages.”

**8. Prayer changes things. What does Thiessen list as the Scriptural method and manner of prayer?**

Ans pg 397-399 The Scriptural method and manner of prayer includes consideration of 1) the addressee in prayer, 2) the posture in prayer, 3) the time spent in prayer, 4) the place of prayer, 5) decorum in prayer and 6) the condition of the heart in prayer. All this is great consideration but a Reformed Theologian who thinks everything is all decreed out, and that individuals are chosen and elect for salvation before the foundation of the world, is the very last person you should go to to learn about prayer that changes things.

**Detailed Chapter Outlines – TH503 Systematic Theology**

**III**

Part VI Soteriology

Chapter 21 The Purpose, Plan, and Method of God

Chapter 22 The Person of Christ: Historical Views and Pre-Incarnation State

Chapter 23 The Person of Christ: The Humiliation of Christ

Chapter 24 The Person of Christ: The Two Natures and the Character of Christ

Chapter 25 The Work of Christ: His Death – Importance and Misinterpretation

Chapter 26 The Work of Christ: The Work of Christ: His Death – Its True Meaning and Extent

Chapter 27 The Work of Christ: His Resurrection and Ascension

Chapter 28 Election and Vocation

Chapter 29 Conversion

Chapter 30 Justification and Regeneration

Chapter 31 Union With Christ and Adoption

Chapter 32 Sanctification

Chapter 33 Perseverance

Chapter 34 The Means of Grace

**Outlines of Chapter 21 The Purpose, Plan, and Method of God  
pg 275-282**

pg 275-282 (r 199-205)

- I. The Purpose of God
  - A. In Human Nature
    1. a knowledge of God,
    2. and of Sin
    3. and of a needed sacrifice
  - B. In the Scripture
    1. the law
    2. and the prophets.
- II. The Plan of God
  - A. The Revelation of God's Plan
    1. the means by which salvation is to be provided
    2. the objectives that are to be realized
    3. the persons that are to benefit by it
    4. the conditions on which it is to be available, and
    5. the agents and means by which it is to be applied.
  - B. The Outline of God's Plan
    1. Thiessen must needs include one of the 5 Presbyterian TULIP points.
    2. According to Thiessen's "Salvation was provided ... more particularly for the elect, those who will believe on Christ and walk in his way."
    3. This aligns with the Presbyterian TULIP model's 3<sup>rd</sup> point of Limiting the atonement for only 'the elect' and not having it available to 'the whosoever will' as the Bible clearly implies.
- III. The Methods of God
  - A. Thiessen's threefold object of a preparation time for salvation is
    1. to disclose to man the true nature of sin and the 'depth of depravity' to which he had fallen
    2. to reveal mans powerlessness to save himself, and
    3. to teach man that forgiveness and restoration are possible by substitutionary sacrifice.
  - B. In the Past: Thiessen, provides that the methods of God

change and in the past there was an

1. Edinic Period, where the environment was most perfect, this aligns with C. I. Scofield's dispensation of innocence;
  2. an Anti-Deluvian Period where conscience now became active, aligns with Scofield's dispensation of conscious;
  3. a Post-Deluvian Period, wherein God asked Noah to institute human government, aligns with Scofield's 3<sup>rd</sup> dispensation of human government;
  4. a Patriarchal period wherein God made a covenant with Abraham, which aligns with C. I. 's dispensation of Promise; and
  5. a Period of Mosaic Law that Thiessen calls a covenant of works (taken directly from the old Reformed Covenant Theology) which aligns with Scofield's 5<sup>th</sup> dispensation of Law.
- C. In the Present :Thiessen then describes the present method of soteriology as the Church period,
1. (interestingly enough he avoids the use of the word grace, although the Covenant Theology leans on it heavily)
  2. this aligns with Scofield's 6<sup>th</sup> dispensation of Grace.
- D. In the Future: He then speaks of a future method in the Kingdom Period,
1. which aligns with the 7<sup>th</sup> and final dispensation of Scofield's notes, the Kingdom Age.
  2. Thus Thiessen seems to hold an interesting position striving to hold onto Reformed Theologies Calvinism, but departing from their Covenant Theology and embracing Dispensationalism

### **Outlines of Chapter 22 The Person of Christ: Historical Views and Pre-Incarnation State pg 283-288**

#### **I. The Historical Views**

- A. The Ebionites: are from 2<sup>nd</sup> century Jewish believers who retain Mosaic ceremonies and as Nazareans and

Judaizers they both deny Christ's divine nature thinking it incompatible with monotheism.

- B. The Gnostics: deny the reality of Christ's human body (Docetae) or deny his real body was material, or consider that Jesus and Christ were distinct (Cerinthians)
  - C. The Arians: are followers of Arius, an Alexandria Egypt presbyter of 280 AD, who opined that Christ was the first of created beings, through whom all other things are made, ... including time..
  - D. The Apollinarians: denied the integrity of the human nature of Christ because of the difficulty in conceiving how two complete natures can be united in one life and consciousness.
  - E. The Nestorians: follow Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, deny the real union of the divine and human natures in Christ, implying a twofold personality in Christ, making him simply indwelt by God. Nestorius was deposed and banished in 431 AD.
  - F. The Eutychians: followers of Eutyches who considered Christ so deified that it was not of the same human nature as ours. Opposite of Nestorians.
  - G. The Orthodox View: "In one person Jesus Christ there are two natures, a human nature and a divine nature, each in its completeness and integrity and these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby. ... Orthodox doctrine forbids us either to divide the person or to confound the natures."
- II. The Pre-Incarnate Christ
- A. In the eternal past Christ was with God, and indeed he was God, and
  - B. the term 'the Angel of Jehovah' "seems in the Old Testament with hardly more than a single exception, (Hag 1:13) to designate the pre-incarnate Logos, whose manifestation in angelic or human form foreshadowed His final coming in the flesh."

- C. Sixteen of these references are Gen 16:7-14, 22:11-18, 31:11,13, Exod 3:2-5, 14:19, 1Cor 10:4, Num 22:22-35, Jud 6:11-23, 13:2-25, 1Chron 21:15,18, 1Kings 19:5-7, 9-18, 2Kings 19:35, Zech 1:11, 3:1.

**Outlines of Chapter 23 The Person of Christ: The Humiliation of Christ pg289-298**

- I. The Reason for the Incarnation
  - A. To Confirm God's Promises
  - B. To Reveal the Father
  - C. To Become a Faithful High Priest
  - D. To Put Away Sin
  - E. To Destroy the Works of the Devil
  - F. To Give Us an Example of Holy Life
  - G. To prepare for the Second Advent
- II. The Nature of the Incarnation
  - A. He Emptied Himself
  - B. He was Made in the Likeness of Men

**Outlines of Chapter 24 The Person of Christ: The Two Natures and the Character of Christ pg 299-311**

- I. The Humanity of Christ
  - A. He Had a Human Birth
  - B. He Had a Human Development
  - C. He Had the Essential Elements of Human Nature
  - D. He Had Human Names
  - E. He Had the Sinless Infirmities of Human Nature
  - F. He is Repeatedly Called a “Man”
- II. The Deity of Christ
- III. The Two Natures in Christ
  - A. The Proof of Their Union
  - B. The Nature of Their Union
    - 1. It is not Theanthropic
    - 2. It is Personal
    - 3. I included Human and Divine Qualities and Acts.
    - 4. It Insures the Constant Presence of Both Humanity and Deity.
- IV. The Character of Christ
  - A. He was Absolutely Holy

- B. He had Genuine Love
- C. He was Truly Humble
- D. He was Thoroughly Meek
- E. He was Perfectly Balanced
- F. He lived a Life of Prayer
- G. He was an Incessant Worker

**Outlines of Chapter 25 The Work of Christ: His Death – Importance and Misinterpretation pg 312-320**

- I. The Importance of the Death of Christ pg312
  - A. It is Foretold in the Old Testament
  - B. It is Prominent in the New Testament
  - C. It is the Chief Purpose of the Incarnation
  - D. It is the Fundamental Theme of the Gospel
  - E. It is Essential to Christianity
  - F. It is Essential to Our Salvation
  - G. It is of Supreme Interest in Heaven
- II. Misinterpretations of the Death of Christ pg 315
  - A. The Accident Theory
  - B. The Martyr Theory
  - C. The Moral Influence Theory
  - D. The Governmental Theory
  - E. The Commercial Theory

**Outlines of Chapter 26 The Work of Christ: The Work of Christ: His Death – Its True Meaning and Extent pg 321-330**

- I. The Meaning of Christ's Death pg321
  - A. It is Vicarious
  - B. It is Satisfaction
    - 1. It Satisfies the Justice of God.
    - 2. It Satisfies the Law of God.
    - 3. It is Involved in Atonement.
    - 4. It is Involved in Propitiation.
    - 5. It is Involved in Reconciliation.
  - C. It is a Ransom
- II. The Extent of Christ's Death pg329
  - A. Christ Died for the Elect
  - B. Christ Died for the Whole World

**Outlines of Chapter 27 The Work of Christ: His Resurrection  
and Ascension pg 331-340**

- I. The Resurrection of Christ pg 331
  - A. The Importance of Christ's Resurrection
    1. It is the Fundamental Doctrine of Christianity.
    2. It has an Important Part in the Application of Salvation.
    3. It is Important as a Polemic for Miracles.
  - B. The Nature of Christ's Resurrection
    1. It Was an Actual Resurrection.
    2. It Was a Bodily Resurrection.
    3. It Was a Unique Resurrection.
  - C. The Credibility of Christ's Resurrection
    1. The Argument from Testimony.
    2. The Argument from Cause and Effect.
      - a) The Empty Tomb
      - b) The Lord's Day
      - c) The Christian Church
  - D. The Results of Christ's Resurrection
    1. It Attests Christ's Deity.
    2. It Assures of the Acceptance of Christ's Work.
    3. It Has Made Christ Our High Priest.
    4. It Provided for Many Additional Blessings.
- II. The Ascension of Christ pg 338
  - A. The Scriptures Teach the Ascension of Christ
  - B. Objections to the Ascension of Christ
- III. The Exaltation of Christ
  - A. Things Embraced in the Exaltation of Christ
    1. He was Crowned with Glory and Honor.
    2. His Receiving a Name That is Above Every Name.
    3. His Enthronement at the Right Hand of the Father
    4. His Appointment as Head of the Body, the Church
    5. He serves it as High Priest.
    6. Indeed All Things Have Been Put Under His Feet.
  - B. Results of the Ascension and Exaltation of Christ
    1. He is now not merely in Heaven but present

- everywhere
2. He has led captivity captive.
  3. He has entered upon his His priestly ministry in heaven..
  4. He has bestowed spiritual gifts upon His own.
  5. He has poured out His Spirit upon His people.

## **Outlines of Chapter 28 Election and Vocation pg 343-351**

### I. The Doctrine of Election

#### A. The Definition of Election

1. Election and Foreknowledge
2. Election and Predestination

#### B. The Proof of This View of Election

1. Because Election is Based on Foreknowledge
2. Because Christ died for All Men
3. Because of the Justice of God
4. Because It Inspires Missionary Activity

#### C. Objections to This View of Election

1. The Simpler Objections
  - a) Certain men have been given to Christ
  - b) Except the Father Draw him
  - c) God works both to will and to do
  - d) God chose Jacob rather than Esau
2. The More Difficult Objections
  - a) As many as were ordained to eternal life believed
  - b) Salvation originating in the choice of God and all of grace
  - c) Repentance and Faith are the gift of God
  - d) IF Predestination is not unconditional and complete then God's whole plan is suspect

### II. The Doctrine of Vocation

#### A. The Persons Called

#### B. The Object of the Call

#### C. The Means of the Call

1. He calls through the Word directly
2. He calls by His Spirit

3. He calls through His Servents
4. He calls by Providential Dealings

**Outlines of Chapter 29 Conversion pg 352-361**

- I. The Element of Repentance
  - A. The Importance of Repentance
  - B. The Meaning of Repentance
    1. The Intellectual Element
    2. The Emotional Element
    3. The Volitional Element
  - C. The Means of Repentance
- II. The Element of Faith
  - A. The Importance of Faith
  - B. The Meaning of Faith
    1. The Intellectual Element
    2. The Emotional Element
    3. The Voluntary Element
  - C. The Source of Faith
    1. The Divine Side
    2. The Human Side
  - D. The Results of Faith
    1. Assurance
    2. Good Works

**Outlines of Chapter 30 Justification and Regeneration pg 362-369**

- I. The Doctrine of Justification pg 362
  - A. The Definition of Justification
    1. The Remission of the Penalty
    2. The Restoration to Favor
    3. The Imputation of Righteousness
  - B. The Method of Justification
    1. It is Not by Works of the Law
    2. It is by the Grace of God
    3. It is by the Blood of Christ.
    4. It is by Faith
  - C. The Result of Justification

1. There is the remission of the penalty
  2. There is the restoration to God's favor
  3. There is the imputation of Christ's righteousness
  4. There is heirship
  5. There is being filled with the fruits of grace
  6. Saved from wrath
  7. Assured glorification
- II. The Doctrine of Regeneration
- A. The Meaning of Regeneration
  - B. The Necessity of Regeneration
  - C. The Means of Regeneration
    1. The will of God
    2. The Death and Resurrection of Christ
    3. The Word of God
    4. The Ministers of the Word
    5. The Holy Spirit
  - D. The Results of Regeneration
    1. Overcomes temptation
    2. Different attitude
    3. Certain Privileges
      - a) Supply of needs
      - b) revelation of the Father's will
      - c) of Keeping
    4. Heir of God and Joint heir with Jesus Christ

**Outlines of Chapter 31 Union With Christ and Adoption pg  
370-374**

- I. The Believer's Union with Christ
  - A. The Nature of This Union
    1. The Scriptural representations
      - a) Believer is IN Christ
      - b) Christ is IN Believer
      - c) Christ and the Father is IN the Believer
      - d) Believer is partaking in Christ
      - e) Believer is partaker of the divine nature
      - f) Believer is one spirit with the Lord
    2. The Negative Side: what the union is not.

3. The Positive Side: what this union is.
    - a) It is as spiritual union
    - b) It is a vital union
    - c) It is a complete union
    - d) It is an inscrutable union
    - e) It is a dissoluble
  - B. The Method of This Union
  - C. The Consequences of This Union
    1. Eternal Security
    2. Fruitfulness
    3. Endowment for service
- II. The Believer's Adoption
- A. The Definition of Adoption
  - B. The Time of Adoption
    1. An act in eternity past
    2. At the time of believers accepting
    3. Fully realized at coming of Christ
  - C. The Results of Adoption

**Outlines of Chapter 32 Sanctification pg 377-384**

- I. The Definition of Sanctification
  - A. Separation to God
  - B. Imputation of Christ as Our Holiness
  - C. Purification from Moral Evil
  - D. Conformation of the Image of Christ
- II. The Time of Sanctification
  - A. The Initial Act of Sanctification
  - B. The Process of Sanctification
  - C. Complete and Final Sanctification
- III. The Means of Sanctification

**Outlines of Chapter 33 Perseverance pg 385-391**

- I. Proof of the Doctrine
  - A. The Purpose of God
  - B. The Mediatorship of Christ
  - C. God's Continued Ability to Keep Us
  - D. The Nature of the Change in the Believer

- II. Objections to the Doctrine
  - A. That It Induces Laxness and Indolence
    - 1. Laxness in Conduct
    - 2. Indolence in Service
  - B. That It Robs Man of His Freedom
  - C. That the Scriptures Teach the Contrary
  - D. That There are Many Warnings

**Outlines of Chapter 34 The Means of Grace pg 392-399**

- I. The Word of God pg 392
  - A. It is a Means of Salvation
  - B. It is a Means of Sanctification
- II. Prayer
  - A. The Nature of Prayer
  - B. The Relation of Prayer to Providence
  - C. The Method and Manner of Prayer
    - 1. The Addressee in Prayer
    - 2. The Posture in Prayer
    - 3. The Time of Prayer
    - 4. The Place of Prayer
    - 5. Decorum in Prayer
    - 6. The Condition of the Heart

## **Appendix What Is Covenant Theology**

J. Ligon Duncan

Covenant theology is the Gospel set in the context of God's eternal plan of communion with his people, and its historical outworking in the covenants of works and grace (as well as in the various progressive stages of the covenant of grace). Covenant theology explains the meaning of the death of Christ in light of the fullness of the biblical teaching on the divine covenants, undergirds our understanding of the nature and use of the sacraments, and provides the fullest possible explanation of the grounds of our assurance.

To put it another way, Covenant theology is the Bible's way of explaining and deepening our understanding of: (1) the atonement [the meaning of the death of Christ]; (2) assurance [the basis of our confidence of communion with God and enjoyment of his promises]; (3) the sacraments [signs and seals of God's covenant promises — what they are and how they work]; and (4) the continuity of redemptive history [the unified plan of God's salvation]. Covenant theology is also an hermeneutic, an approach to understanding the Scripture — an approach that attempts to biblically explain the unity of biblical revelation.

When Jesus wanted to explain the significance of His death to His disciples, He went to the doctrine of the covenants (see Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, 1 Corinthians 11). When God wanted to assure Abraham of the certainty of His word of promise, He went to the covenant (Genesis 12, 15, and 17). When God wanted to set apart His people, ingrain His work in their minds, tangibly reveal Himself in love and mercy, and confirm their future inheritance, He gave the covenant signs (Genesis 17, Exodus 12, 17, and 31, Matthew 28, Acts 2, Luke 22). When Luke wanted to show early Christians that Jesus' life and ministry were the fulfillment of God's ancient purposes for His chosen people, he went to the covenants and quoted Zacharias' prophecy which shows that believers in the very earliest days of 'the Jesus movement' understood Jesus and His messianic work as a fulfillment (not a 'Plan B') of God's covenant with Abraham (Luke 1:72-73). When the Psalmist and the author of Hebrews want to show how God's redemptive plan is ordered and on what basis it unfolds in history, they went to the covenants (see Psalm 78, 89, Hebrews 6-10).

Covenant theology is not a response to dispensationalism. It existed long before the rudiments of classical dispensationalism were brought together in the nineteenth century. Covenant theology is not an excuse for baptizing children, nor merely a convention to justify a particular approach to the sacraments (modern paedocommunionism and baptismal regenerationism). Covenant theology is not sectarian, but an ecumenical Reformed approach to understanding the Bible, developed in the wake of the magisterial Reformation, but with roots stretching back to the earliest days of catholic Christianity and historically appreciated in all the various branches of the Reformed community (Baptist, Congregationalist, Independent, Presbyterian, Anglican, and Reformed). Covenant theology cannot be reduced to serving merely as the justification for some particular view of children in the covenant (covenant

successionism), or for a certain kind of eschatology, or for a specific philosophy of education (whether it be homeschooling or Christian schools or classical schools). Covenant theology is bigger than that. It is more important than that. “The doctrine of the covenant lies at the root of all true theology. It has been said that he who well understands the distinction between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, is a master of divinity. I am persuaded that most of the mistakes which men make concerning the doctrines of Scripture, are based upon fundamental errors with regard to the covenant of law and of grace. May God grant us now the power to instruct, and you the grace to receive instruction on this vital subject.” Who said this? C.H. Spurgeon — the great English Baptist preacher! Certainly a man beyond our suspicion of secretly purveying a Presbyterian view of the sacraments to the unsuspecting evangelical masses. Covenant theology flows from the trinitarian life and work of God. God’s covenant communion with us is modeled on and a reflection of the intra-trinitarian relationships. The shared life, the fellowship of the persons of the Holy Trinity, what theologians call *perichoresis* or *circumincessio*, is the archetype of the relationship the gracious covenant God shares with His elect and redeemed people. God’s commitments in the eternal covenant of redemptive find space-time realization in the covenant of grace.

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from <http://www.fpcjackson.org/resources/apologetics/> accessed 20 Oct 2010

## **Appendix Covenant Theology**

From [http://www.theopedia.com/Covenant\\_theology](http://www.theopedia.com/Covenant_theology)

Covenant Theology (or Federal theology) is a prominent feature in Protestant theology, especially in the Presbyterian and Reformed churches, and a similar form is found in Methodism and Reformed Baptist churches. This article primarily concerns Covenant Theology as held by the Presbyterian and Reformed churches, which use the covenant concept as an organizing principle for Christian theology and view the history of redemption under the framework of three overarching theological covenants: the Covenant of Redemption, the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. These three are called "theological covenants" because although not explicitly presented as covenants, they are, according to covenant theologians, implicit in the Bible.

In brief, Covenant Theology teaches that God has established two great covenants with mankind and a covenant within the Godhead to deal with how the other two relate. The first covenant in logical order, usually called the Covenant of Redemption, is the agreement within the Godhead that the Father would appoint his son Jesus to give up his life for mankind and that Jesus would do so (cf. Titus 1:1-3).

The second, called the Covenant of Works, was made in the Garden of Eden between God and Adam and promised life for obedience and death for disobedience. Adam disobeyed God and broke the covenant, and so the third covenant was made between God and all of mankind, who also fell with Adam according to Romans 5:12-21.

This third covenant, the Covenant of Grace, promised eternal blessing for belief in Christ and obedience to God's word. It is thus seen as the basis for all biblical covenants that God made individually with Noah, Abraham, and David, nationally with O.T. Israel as a people, and universally with man in the New Covenant. These individual covenants are called the "biblical covenants" because they are explicitly described as such in the Bible.

Covenant theology as a refinement of Reformed theology is evident among early Scottish theologians. For example, see *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland, Chiefly of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (1872) passage: "The old theology of Scotland might be emphatically described as a covenant theology."

From [http://www.theopedia.com/Covenant\\_theology](http://www.theopedia.com/Covenant_theology)

## **Appendix Replacement Theology**

from [http://www.theopedia.com/Replacement\\_theology](http://www.theopedia.com/Replacement_theology)

Replacement Theology or Supersessionism is the traditional Christian belief that Christianity is the fulfillment of Biblical Judaism, and therefore that Jews who deny that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah fall short of their calling as God's Chosen people.

Supersessionism, in its more radical form, maintains that the Jews are no longer considered to be God's Chosen people in any sense. This understanding is generally termed "replacement theology."

The traditional form of supersessionism does not theorize a replacement; instead it argues that Israel has been superseded only in the sense that the Church has been entrusted with the fulfillment of the promises of which Jewish Israel is the trustee. This belief has served not only as the explanation for why believers in Christ should not become Jews, but is also the reason that Jews are not exempted by the Christian churches, from the call of the Gospel to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation from sin and from the penalties due to sin.

In recent times, the doctrine of supersessionism has been blamed for mistreatment of the Jews in the past. Some liberal Protestant groups have therefore formally renounced supersessionism, affirming that Jews and other non-Christians have a valid way to find God within their own faith, which breaks from historic Protestant teaching. Dispensationalism affirms that salvation is only through faith in Christ, and that Jews fall short of obtaining the kingdom of the promised Messiah, unless they are converted to Christianity. However, in their view, a future mass conversion will result in the restoration of the nation Israel prior to the Millennium, apart from the church dispensation. This anticipation of a future role for the ethnic and geo-political nation of Israel in the plan of God, apart from the Church, is what is meant by some dispensationalists who style themselves as rejectors of "supersessionism" or "replacement theology", and thus they are using the terms in a way that is distinctive to their expectation of future events.

from [http://www.theopedia.com/Replacement\\_theology](http://www.theopedia.com/Replacement_theology) accessed 20 Oct 2010

## **Appendix Covenant Theology Versus Dispensationalism**

### **A Matter of Law Versus Grace**

By Bob Nyberg

Volumes have been written explaining the teachings of both covenant theology and dispensationalism. This brief paper is not intended to define these systems of interpretation. In fact, it's assumed that the reader already understands the basic tenets of dispensationalism. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that covenant theology places the believer under Old Testament law.

#### **A Bit of History**

In order to understand the development of covenant theology, we need to take a brief look at church history.

Some covenant theologians would have us believe that their belief system was that of the founding fathers of the early church. They try to make a case that dispensationalism is a mere infant when compared to the grand old scheme of covenant theology. However, the truth of the matter is that systematized covenant theology is actually of recent origin. Cornelius Van Til, a covenant theologian, admits, "the idea of covenant theology has only in modern times been broadly conceived." Louis Berkhof, another covenant theologian, wrote, "In the early Church Fathers the covenant idea is not found at all." Dr. Ryrie points out:

It [covenant theology] was not the expressed doctrine of the early church. It was never taught by church leaders in the Middle Ages. It was not even mentioned by the primary leaders of the Reformation. Indeed, covenant theology as a system is only a little older than dispensationalism. That does not mean it is not biblical, but it does dispel the notion that covenant theology has been throughout all church history the ancient guardian of the truth that is only recently being sniped at by dispensationalism.

Covenant theology does not appear in the writings of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, or Melancthon... There were no references to covenant theology in any of the great confessions of faith until the Westminster Confession in 1647, and even then covenant theology was not as fully developed as it was later by Reformed theologians. The covenant (or federal) theory arose sporadically and apparently independently late in the sixteenth century.

Yet having said all this, much of the erroneous teachings of covenant theology can find its roots centuries earlier.

For the first three centuries the predominant belief of the early church was that Jesus Christ would literally return to the earth to reign for a thousand years. A number of historians have documented this belief of the early church Fathers. The evidence is indisputable. However, around 170 A.D. certain factors began to undermine the belief of Christ's literal return to establish a physical earthly kingdom.

The book of Revelation written by the Apostle John ends with the Lord Jesus declaring, "Behold, I come quickly (20:20)". About a hundred years had passed and this promise had yet to be fulfilled. Obviously, something was wrong! Some

church leaders in Asia Minor decided to reject the book of Revelation from the canon of scripture. They may have reasoned that this supposed declaration by Jesus must somehow be false. In actuality there were a number of factors that influenced them in their decision to reject Revelation from the canon of scripture:

- o A certain group of Christians had taken their premillennial beliefs to an unhealthy extreme. Therefore anyone who believed that Jesus would return to establish a literal kingdom upon earth was viewed with suspicion.

- o Many early Christians taught that Christ would soon return and crush the Roman power that was ruling the empire. Some of the leaders of the early church felt that it would be better to sacrifice their premillennial belief rather than face more intense persecution.

- o There was also a strong anti-Semitic spirit in the eastern church. The thought of Christ regathering Israel to their land was an abomination to them.

- o A new method of Biblical interpretation known as Alexandrian theology greatly changed the view of scripture. Origen (185-254) and other scholars in Alexandria developed a system of Biblical interpretation based on allegory. Origen and his contemporaries were greatly influenced by pagan Greek philosophy. They tried to integrate this into their theology. According to Greek philosophy all physical matter was inherently evil. Therefore the idea of a literal earthly, millennium with physical blessings could only be erroneous. This allegorical or spiritualizing method of interpretation allowed these theologians to read almost any meaning they desired into the Bible. Thus they were able to do away with a literal return of Christ to establish a physical earthly millennial kingdom.

All of these factors set the stage for the rejection of premillennialism. In the early days of his Christian faith Augustine (354-430) was premillennial. However, through time he abandoned the idea of a literal return of Christ to establish a physical kingdom on earth. He used this new allegorical method of interpretation to explain away the literal return of Christ and thus amillennialism was born. In his book, *The City of God*, Augustine taught that the Universal Church is the Messianic Kingdom and that the millennium began with Christ's first coming. When the church lost the hope of the imminent return of Christ it plunged headlong into the dark ages. The seeds of false interpretation bore fruit giving rise to Roman Catholicism and a works-based religion. Augustine's amillennial teaching continued to be the standard view of organized Christendom until the 17th century. Occasionally premillennial groups challenged that doctrine through out the dark ages, but they were a small voice compared to the powerful Roman Catholic church.

On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. One of the primary factors that caused him to break away from the Roman Catholic Church was his understanding of *Sola Fide*—the doctrine that man is justified by faith alone without works. Through Luther and the reformers, God restored the doctrine of salvation by grace back

to His true church. The reformers understood grace in regard to salvation, but for Christian living they fell into the Galatian error of works. They knew that they couldn't keep the law in order to gain salvation, but the law became the rule for living the Christian life. Little did they realize that sanctification is also by grace.

When the reformers broke away from the Roman Catholic church, they carried a lot of baggage with them. Amillennialism was one such fetter that kept the church in bondage to the law.

You might be wondering, "how does a doctrine about the 'end times' affect the teaching of law and grace?" That's a good question. Augustine and his contemporaries faced a dilemma. It had been years since the Lord Jesus had said, "behold I come quickly." By doing away with the literal return of Christ for His church, Augustine no doubt felt that he was helping God out. After all, if there was no literal return of Christ and no literal millennium, then Christ could be reigning over His spiritual kingdom up in heaven. The literal promises given to Israel in the Old Testament could be spiritually applied to the church. However, applying those promises to the church came at a tremendously high cost. Attached to the promises given to Israel was also the Old Testament law. If the church is "spiritual Israel" then she must also keep the law—if not for salvation, then at least for Christian living.

Anytime man decides to help God out, he just makes trouble for himself. A good illustration of this is found in the account of Chronicles. When king David decided to bring the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem he put it on an ox-drawn cart. But in the law God specifically told Israel that priests were to carry the ark on poles. In 1 Chronicles 13:9-10 we read, "And when they came unto the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God." Uzza paid dearly for trying to help God out. His intentions may have been good, but the results of his efforts were devastating.

Proverbs gives us some very sobering advice about tampering with the Word of God: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar [Prov 30:6]." Concerning the book of Revelation, the Lord Jesus Himself said, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book [Rev 22:18-19]." In all of these warnings, nothing is said about those who would distort God's Word through allegorical interpretation. Augustine's intentions may have been noble when he tried to help God out. He may have felt that amillennialism could help to explain Jesus' statement in Revelation about His soon return, but the results of Augustine's efforts were devastating.

Throughout the Old Testament many so-called religious leaders opposed God's

true prophets. Jeremiah predicted Judah's demise if she kept rebelling against the Lord. The religious elite of that day claimed that he was a traitor. They threw him into a cistern and left him there to die. False prophets opposed Jeremiah's predictions and the result was the Babylonian captivity. These false prophets didn't learn anything from this captivity. They continued to tamper with God's Word which ultimately resulted in 400 years of silence—the Old Testament equivalent of the dark ages.

I'm not equating Augustine with the false prophets of Jeremiah's day. Those false prophets knowingly distorted and opposed God's Word. I don't think that Augustine intentionally tried to distort God's Word. His intentions were noble. Like Uzza, he simply tried to give God a helping hand. Under the dispensation of the law, Uzza lost his life for his noble attempt. But Augustine lived in the dispensation of grace. He did not pay for his noble attempts with loss of life. Never-the-less, the church has paid dearly for Augustine's attempt to steady the solid foundation of Scripture. Just as Israel received her just rewards—400 years of silence—so too the church plunged head-long into the dark ages following Augustine's misguided efforts.

Israel's 400 silent years ended with the bright hope of the birth of Messiah and the promised Messianic Kingdom. But that hope soon dwindled with Israel's rejection of Messiah. The promise of the Messianic Kingdom was put on hold until Israel would be ready to accept her Messiah.

So too, the dark ages ended with the bright hope of the reformation and the rediscovered truth of salvation by grace. But that bright hope was tarnished by the snares of legalism that kept the reformers in bondage. When Martin Luther stepped away from the Roman Catholic church he drug with him the ball and chain of amillennialism's law-based teachings. The Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican reformers rejected premillennialism as being merely "Jewish opinions." They continued to maintain the amillennial view which the Roman Catholic church had adopted from Augustine. J.B. Stoney notes that:

In the Reformation there was, through grace, a great deliverance. The groundwork of Christianity was recovered; namely, justification by faith. But though this was recovered, it was not maintained that the old man was crucified on the Cross, and hence they only refused the exaction of popery, but considered the flesh as still before God. Refusing the exaction was right; but the retention of that on which the exaction could be made, the old man, was and is the weakness of the Reformation.

Miles Stanford also observes that:

The Lutheran Church is an example of ... little birth truth and no growth truth, resulting in legalism, lack of eternal security, and even a charismatic element as well as liberalism. In general, the Reformation-oriented Reformed Churches, with birth truth but little or no growth truth, also reflect this imbalance in their unscriptural application of "the law as the rule of life" for the believer.

Dr. William R. Newell pretty well sums it up when he wrote:

Almost all the theology of the various 'creeds of Christendom' date back to the

Reformation, which went triumphantly to the end of Romans Five, and, so far as theological development or presentation of truth was concerned, stopped there.

The reformation brought back the truth of salvation by grace, but reverted to the law for living the Christian life. This law-grace paradox continued to plague the church until John Nelson Darby and his contemporaries came on the scene in the early 1800's. Darby adopted the literal, historical-grammatical method of Bible interpretation. As Darby studied God's Word in this light, the distinction between Israel and the church seemed to leap off the pages of Scripture before his eyes. He and his contemporaries took the truths of dispensationalism and put them into a more systematized form. God used this to restore to the church not only the imminent, premillennial return of Christ, but also the teachings of grace for living the Christian life.

During the time period between Luther and Darby, covenant theology came into being. Unfortunately, it reflected the "law-based" doctrine of Amillennialism.

Covenant theology was introduced to America primarily through the Puritans. Dispensational theology came to America primarily through Brethren teachers such as Darby and his contemporaries.

#### Covenant Theology and the Law

Dr. Renald Showers defines covenant theology "as a system... which attempts to develop the Bible's philosophy of history on the basis of two or three covenants. It represents the whole of Scripture and history as being covered by two or three covenants." Dr. Ryrie says:

Formal definitions of covenant theology are not easy to find even in the writings of covenant theologians. Most of the statements that pass for definitions are in fact descriptions or characterizations of the system. The article in *Bakers Dictionary of Theology* comes close to a definition when it says that covenant theology is distinguished by "the place it gives to the covenants" because it "represents the whole of Scripture as being covered by covenants: (1) the covenant of works, and (2) the covenant of grace." This is an accurate description of the covenant system. Covenant theology is a system of theology based on the two covenants of works and grace as governing categories for the understanding of the entire Bible.

In covenant theology the covenant of works is said to be an agreement between God and Adam promising life to Adam for perfect obedience and including death as the penalty for failure. But Adam sinned and thus mankind failed to meet the requirements of the covenant of works. Therefore, a second covenant, the covenant of grace, was brought into operation. Louis Berkhof defines it as "that gracious agreement between the offended God and the offending but elect sinner, in which God promises salvation through faith in Christ, and the sinner accepts this believingly, promising a life of faith and obedience."

Some Reformed theologians have introduced a third covenant, the covenant of redemption. It was made in eternity past and became the basis for the covenant

of grace, just described, between God and the elect. This covenant of redemption is supposed to be "the agreement between the Father, giving the Son as Head and Redeemer of the elect, and the Son, voluntarily taking the place of those whom the Father had given him." These two or three covenants become the core and bases of operation for covenant theology in its interpretation of the Scriptures.

Without trying to explain all the details of covenant theology I will simply say that it has many problems:

- o It begins by assuming two (or three) covenants that are never mentioned in Scripture.

- o It tries to unify scripture by saying that Biblical distinctions are merely different phases of the same Covenant of Grace. For example, Berkoff insists that the Mosaic Covenant is essentially the same as the Abrahamic Covenant. Yet, the apostle Paul asserts the distinctiveness of these two covenants in Galatians 3:18. Even a cursory reading of these two covenants reveals that the Abrahamic Covenant was unconditional whereas the Mosaic Covenant had many conditions attached.

- o It denies the distinctiveness of the gospel of grace and the gospel of the kingdom.

- o It denies the distinction between Israel and the Church.

- o It uses a double standard with regard to interpretation of Scripture.

Covenant theologians use the historical-grammatical method of interpretation, except for passages concerning future events. When dealing with passages regarding the future of Israel or the kingdom of God they revert to Augustine's allegorical or spiritualizing method of interpretation.

- o It places the believer under the law.

This last point, in my opinion, is probably the most devastating blow against Christian doctrine and practice. The Galatian error of law and works has plagued the church from its very beginning. Covenant theology has only served to promote this error.

Previously, we noted that the Westminster Confession and the Puritans were two of the primary tools that advance covenant theology. Let's take a look at what one Puritan theologian had to say with regard to the Westminster Confession. Dr. R.L. Dabney [1820-1898], a well-known Southern Presbyterian [Covenant] theologian, brought out the difference between the Puritan's Westminster Standards, and the grace-stand of Luther and Calvin.

The cause of this error [the teaching of assurance of salvation] is no doubt that doctrine concerning faith which the first Reformers, as Luther and Calvin, were led to adopt from their opposition to the hateful and tyrannical teachings of Rome. These noble Reformers... asserted that the assurance of hope is of the essence of saving faith. Thus says Calvin in his Commentary on Romans, "My faith is a divine and scriptural belief that God has pardoned me and accepted me."

Calvin requires everyone to say, in substance, I believe fully that Christ has

saved me. Amidst all Calvin's verbal variations, this is always his meaning; for he is consistent in his error... for as sure as truth is in history, Luther and Calvin did fall into this error, which the Reformed churches, led by the Westminster Confession of Faith, have since corrected. (Discussions of Robert L. Dabney, Vol. I, pp. 215-16)

According to Reformed, Puritan, covenant theology the idea of telling believers that they can know for sure they are saved is a grievous error. The covenant view of assurance is diametrically opposed to what Luther and Calvin taught. Can you know for sure that you are saved? Not according to Dabney, and his covenant friends. The end result is a gospel of works with NO assurance of salvation.

Yes, doctrine in one area will surely affect doctrine in all other areas. When you start mingling Israel and the Church you open yourself up to all kinds of errors. On the surface it might not seem like one's view of future events is important, but when you see the trouble it leads to, I'm inclined to think that it behooves us to avoid the "slough of covenant despond!"

#### Dispensational Theology and the Law

The traditional view of dispensational theology kept Israel separate from the church. It kept the law separate from grace. Yet, in recent years that distinction has become blurred. Small cracks were seen in the dispensational dike about 30 to 40 years ago. Walter C. Kaiser Jr., a non-dispensational theologian, observed:

Somewhere in the decade of the 1960s, one of the most significant developments in dispensationalism took place. It happened so quietly, but so swiftly, that it is difficult to document, even to this day. This is what changed the whole course of dispensationalism: the view that there were two new covenants, one for Israel and one for the church, was decisively dropped. The implications of such a move are enormous, as the events that followed duly testified.

The new covenant was made with "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," yet the church was obviously enjoying the benefits of this same covenant. They drank the "blood of the covenant" in the Lord's Supper, and they had "ministers of the new covenant."

But when Israel and the church were viewed as sharing one and the same covenant, the possibilities for major rapprochement between covenant theology and dispensationalism became immediately obvious. Moreover, that one factor ended the major roadblock in a key hermeneutical rule that dispensationalism had repeatedly stressed in the past: keep Israel's mail separate from the mail that was written for the church. Thus, 2 Chronicles 7:14 ("If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves..."), for example, did not need to be restricted, as had been taught, solely to Israel but could now be addressed to the whole church. On the same bases, the Sermon on the Mount was released from its future kingdom setting for use by the whole body of Christ now.

Today those cracks have turned into a virtual flood as a new brand of dispensational theology has come on the scene. Progressive dispensationalism (which is really regressive in nature) has continued to blur these Biblical

distinctions even more. This new brand of dispensationalism is really a compromise between dispensational and covenant theology.

Within the dispensational ranks we have men like John MacArthur who claims to be a dispensationalist. On the one hand he says:

Dispensationalism is a fundamentally correct system of understanding God's program through the ages. Its chief element is a recognition that God's plan for Israel is not superseded by or swallowed up in His program for the church... And in that regard, I consider myself a traditional premillennial dispensationalist.

But on the other hand he states:

There is a tendency, however, for dispensationalists to get carried away with compartmentalizing truth to the point that they can make unbiblical distinctions. An almost obsessive desire to categorize everything neatly has led various dispensationalist interpreters to hard lines not only between the church and Israel, but also between salvation and discipleship, the church and the kingdom, Christ's preaching and the apostolic message, faith and repentance, and the age of law and the age of grace. The age of law/age of grace division in particular has wreaked havoc on dispensationalist theology and contributed to confusion about the doctrine of salvation.

It's no wonder that Dr. MacArthur advocates the works oriented gospel known as Lordship Salvation. He refuses to recognize the difference between the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of grace. He blurs the distinctions between Israel and the church... between law and grace... between discipleship and salvation. As you read through the writings of Dr. MacArthur, you will see that the majority of authors he quotes are Puritan, Covenant, Reformed theologians. His theology has definitely been tainted by the law. Dr. Newell rightly observed:

It is a harmful perversion of the truth of God to teach (as did the Puritan theologians) that while we are not to keep the law as a means of salvation, we are under it as a 'rule of life.' Let a Christian only confess, 'I am under the law,' and straightway Moses fastens his yoke upon him, despite all his protests that the law has lost its power. Men have to be delivered from the whole legal principle, from the entire sphere where law reigns, ere true liberty can be found.

There are numerous doctrines and practices that are eroding the foundations of dispensational theology. Men such as Dr. MacArthur and Dr. Charles Stanley would lead us to believe that as Christians we have no sin nature. They tell us that our problem lies in the fact we have residual bad habits that are left over from when we were sinners. By ignoring the sin nature in us, they are merely putting a "Band-Aid" over the real problem. They deal with symptoms and not the cause. They would try to utilize the law in order to keep the flesh under control. They resort to the world's system of "behavior modification" to deal with a spiritual problem. They leave Christians wallowing in Romans chapter 7 with no hope of reaching Romans chapter 8. Dr. MacArthur has followed the slippery path right behind his so-called progressive friends and the myriad of others who would mix law with grace.

One of the most depressing articles that I came across was an exposition of Romans chapter 7 written by A. W. Pink, a covenant theologian. According to him, Romans 7 is the normal Christian life. We can never hope to gain the victory found in Romans 8 during our lifetime. This is the hope that law-based religion holds out to you and me.

I've attempted to show the pitfalls and dangers of embracing a law tainted doctrine. Yet, even those of us who promote the teachings of grace have a morbid propensity to slip back into the law in our own Christian life. For instance, we receive a material blessing and begin to wonder what we did to deserve it. Or when something bad happens to us we wonder what evil we did to deserve it. We naturally think that somehow we must merit God's blessings. Or we think that our failures result in demerit in the eyes of God. This type of mentality comes from the law—not grace.

The way we treat each other also reveals our failure to understand and appropriate grace. Sometimes we feel that we should only give grace where grace is due. But grace that is deserved is not grace—it's merit. It's a good thing that God doesn't just give us grace when we deserve it. We'd be in big trouble if that were true!

When bank-tellers are taught to tell counterfeit money from real they are given genuine currency to handle. By knowing the real, they will be able to see the false. Only a solid understanding of grace will keep us from being ensnared in the tangled web of law-based covenant theology.

End Notes:

1. Cornelius Van Til, "Covenant Theology," in *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1955), 1:306
2. Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (second revised and enlarged edition; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1941), 211.
3. Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism, Revised and Expanded* (Moody Press: Chicago, 1995), 185.
4. Renald E. Showers, *There Really is a Difference! A Comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology* (The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc: Bellmwr, NJ, 1990)
5. Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism, Revised and Expanded* (Moody Press: Chicago, 1995), 183-184.
6. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. "An Epangelical Response" in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church-The Search for Definition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 369.
7. John R. MacArthur, Jr. *The Gospel According to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 25.
8. *Ibid.*

Bob Nyberg's Home Page

<http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/dispensationalism01.html> accessed 20 Oct 2010



## **Critique of Geisler's 2002 Soteriology**

Norman L. Geisler wrote a tremendous single volume, 1600 page book that he called “Systematic Theology.” It is an unabridged compilation of “everything ever believed about God” from an “evangelical” point of view. The thesis of this effort, in contrast to Geisler's effort, is to systematically layout everything revealed by God in sixty-six books, 1,189 chapters, of his revelation. That is less effort, involving less research than what was undertaken by Dr. Geisler. His work is exceptional reference material, but his premise that truth is determined by what the majority of orthodox theologians believed is dangerous and often fickle.

Geisler's extensive documentation contains eleven chapters on soteriology and begins, “As to the origin of salvation, there is universal agreement among orthodox theologians.”<sup>70</sup> He then goes on to define “The Origin of God's Decrees,” “The Nature of God's Decrees,” “The Order of God's Decrees,” “The Sequence of God's Decrees,” and “The Results of God's Decrees.” Such an introduction affirms the Roman and Reformed dogma in Geisler's effort. Orthodox theologians supposed, in the Westminster Confession, that God decrees everything that happens in life. Such a supposition is based on what a majority of theologians believe about how God operates, but not on what God directly reveals in his Word. In the Bible God ponders the thoughts of man, and he allowed actions of Abraham, Moses, Joash and Hezekiah et al. to change what he intended to do.<sup>71</sup> A salvation study that begins supposing that God has decreed everything that happens, is destined to end in Protestant and Reformed well worn trenches, not in a systematic analysis of what God revealed in his Holy Writ. As would be expected for an ecumenical compilation of theology, Geisler tip-toes through the T.U.L.I.P.S.

Geisler's work does have saving graces. He is thorough, and when a Protestant Evangelical doctrine contradicts clear Bible teaching he, at times, exposes it. His chapter 67 contains thirty

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. pg 813.

<sup>71</sup> Genesis 18:22-33, Exodus 32:10-14, 2Kings 13:14-19, 2Kings 20:1-7.

pages documenting evangelical opinions about infants and heathens receiving results of salvation. In forty pages of chapter 68, he evaluates “The Condition for Salvation,” which is actually the conditions for receiving salvation. Therein he states, “The most controversial of all the conditions set forth by the Church of Christ is its insistence that water baptism is a necessary condition for receiving salvation. Before addressing the texts it uses to support this position we will look at the plain biblical teachings affirming that baptism is not necessary for salvation.”<sup>72</sup> Geisler, as I said previous, has his moments.

For a Bible student that has a sound Biblical systematic theology, Norman Geisler's “Systematic Theology” is a good reference book. But for the Bible student that does not have a solid KJV foundation for what God has revealed to man, reading Geisler will quickly gender instability whereby a student is awash in learned opinions of orthodox theologians using ecumenical, sometimes Evangelical, bible translations which express what scholarly men think God meant to say. Geisler is thorough at documenting what orthodox theologians believed, but such Roman bias makes it dangerous for the Bible student striving to determine absolute Bible truth.

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72 Ibid. pg 1011.

### **Critique of Chafer's Volume III Soteriology Introduction**

It is distressing to lay Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's third volume of Systematic Theology, entitled Soteriology, on my desk beside Dr. Cambron's single volume of "*Bible Doctrine*," or beside Dr. Bancroft's volume of "*Elementary Theology*." Both Baptists capture the heart of Soteriology in pages while Dr. Chafer does not even present a shadow of the subject in his whole volume.

Cambron uses 23 pages in a thorough coverage, and Bancroft uses 50 in an unabridged coverage, while Chafer has 396 pages, that is 33 pages a week for a twelve week college quarter, wherein, in those pages, he never addresses justification, never describes conversion, never mentions quickening, writes not one paragraph on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and carefully steers clear of ones Baptism (that is complete immersion) into the Lord Jesus Christ. These five essentials to So-Great-Salvation, all expounded clearly, continually and completely in Scripture, in Cambron's work, and Bancroft's work, are not even or ever addressed in 396 pages of a volume called Soteriology by neo-evangelicalism. Analysis of how such an incompetent 396 communique could seep from Dallas Theological Seminary is crucial, and unfortunately it is herein ground breaking. The hypercritical content of this work is centric to comprehending that Evangelicalism, which has not strayed far from Rome and swallowed Reformed Theology, is a caustic leaven which has permeated Christendom.

Many strongly disagree with this assessment. Christian Book Distributors (consider that their motivation is to sell books) says that Chafer has "an unabridged systematic theology of unparalleled scope."<sup>73</sup> Reporting that Chafer defines systematic theology as "the collecting, systematically arranging, comparing, exhibiting and defending of all facts concerning God and His works from any and every source."<sup>74</sup> They report that Walter Elwell calls Chafer's work "the definitive statement of dispensational theology." and Charles

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73 From [www.ChristianBook.com](http://www.ChristianBook.com) accessed Dec 2013

74 In making such a brash definition Chafer unwittingly puts Aristotle Saint Augustine and Saint Aquinas on equal ground with Holy Scriptures and in writing his seven volume work he actually does. Woe!

Ryrie says “Though scholarly in the true sense of the word, this work can also be read and understood by those not formally trained in theology.”<sup>75</sup> Such comments make one suspect a massive evangelical cover-up is in place. Chafer's own definition of systematic theology reveals his purposeful departure from The Holy Bible as theology's sole source, or even its primary source! What he ends up with, in considering “any and every source,” is not “unabridged” it is diabolical.

## **Dallas Theological Seminary President successor Praises Chafer's Work**

Of course Dr. John F. Walvoord, (1910-2002) Dr. Chafer's successor at Dallas Theological Seminary, showered his predecessor's work with great praise. He says of Chafer's eight volume work, “Never before has a work similar in content purpose, and scope been produced.”... it is “Remarkably Biblical... appeal is constantly to Biblical authority rather than to philosophy, tradition or creed.” Dr. Walvoord, himself considered the worlds foremost interpreter of biblical prophecy, and a most prominent evangelical scholar of his generation,<sup>76</sup> said of Dr. Chafer's third volume, “The contribution of President Chafer in the field of Soteriology has been hailed as the most important of all his theological works.”<sup>77</sup>

There is little doubt of Dr. Walvoord's sincerity or integrity in this declaration, but it needs to be highlighted again that when Chafer writes four hundred pages on Soteriology and never addresses a soul's justification, a soul's quickening, a soul's conversion, and/or a soul's indwelling and baptism into Christ, then the most important theological work of the Protestant/Evangelical community is bankrupt of all Biblical doctrine.

Dr. Walvoord himself confesses to the fault, when he acknowledges Chafer's first section on Soteriology deals with Christ's offices, his sonship, his hypostatic union and his sufferings. Therein we find no mention of Christ's substitutionary

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75 Ibid.

76 From [www.walvoord.com](http://www.walvoord.com) accessed Dec 2013

77 Ibid.

death, burial, and resurrection. Dr. Chafer's second and third sections deal with the doctrine of election, not the doctrine of salvation. His fourth and fifth sections concern the work of God and one's eternal security not the So-Great-Salvation referenced in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And the last section covers the terms of salvation, "a section which is most practical and helpful", says Dr. Walvoord. In reality this last section only deals with four terms of salvation 1) Repent and Believe, 2) Believe and Confess, 3) Believe and be Baptized, and 4) Believe and Surrender. Nowhere in 400 pages does Dr. Chafer spell out what the Bible says must be 'believed', nowhere does he spell out what the Bible calls the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Yet for all its hollowed emptiness Dr. Walvoord still says "The volume on Soteriology, if it stood alone, would in itself assure the author a place among notable writers of Christian Doctrine."<sup>78</sup> That is inconceivable. Dr. Chafer never writes about justification, conversion, quickening, indwelling or baptism into Christ! And yet this Evangelical continues "There is no volume in the field of Systematic Theology which approaches (Chafer's Third Volume) in Biblical insight, spiritual comprehension of the saving work of God, and unabridged treatment of the great work of God in salvation."<sup>79</sup>

Was it emphasized enough that Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Third Volume entitled "Soteriology" never addresses justification, never describes conversion, never mentions quickening, writes not one paragraph on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and carefully steers clear of one's baptism, i.e. complete immersion, into the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet the whole of the Protestant/Evangelical world cries out that this is the very best they could ever attain. Ergo it is cried out here that the Protestant/Evangelical world is completely bankrupt when it comes to describing and defending or contending for and comprehending God's So-Great-Salvation. Reformed Theology, Scholarly Philosophy and Modernist Liberal Apostasy has rendered the whole of the Evangelical World completely bankrupt when it comes to Preaching, Comprehending,

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78 Ibid.

79 Ibid.

and Contending for the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel is indeed 1) Conversion, by Repentance and Faith, 2) Justification, Declared, 3) Quickening, where once I was dead, 4) Indwelling wherein we are the tabernacle of God, and 5) Compete Immersion in Christ, whereby we forever have a position in Christ.

## **Troublesome Independent Fundamental Baptist's Leaning Toward Chafer**

As troubling as the Evangelical failures are they were well predicted. Indeed the whole point of the Fundamental departure of the last century was one of separation from such an apostate condition. Neo-Evangelicalism refused the fundamentalist position and had as its premise that separation from the reformers apostasy and their Reformed Theology was to drastic a measure, choosing rather a coexistence in their apostate circles. There was never any doubt about where such compromise would land the neoevangelical. Like “Christian Rock Music” their lyrics were carefully chosen but there was never any question about where their melody came from. If one dare call such stuff a melody at all. What then, might be the position of the Fundamentalist who 100 years ago avowed separation from such apostasy?

Dr. Cambron, Theologian of Tennessee Temple Baptist Seminary, staunchly affirmed that the doctrine of Salvation is captured in the five ingredients fore mentioned. Dr. Bancroft, Theologian of Bible Baptist Theological Seminary, affirmed exactly the same. Neither frittered away a single paragraph of their Soteriology trying to figure out what God had decreed, or who was elect for what before the foundation of the world. They captured the doctrine of salvation very Biblically, very exactly, and very succinctly. But look where we have sunk in the last 50 years of that Fundamental century.

An Independent Fundamental Baptist Pastor with a Masters from Pensacola Christian College, and a Doctorate from Bethany Theological Seminary, reveals that “Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Systematic Theology is the single greatest Systematic Theology

ever written.”<sup>80</sup> This self acclaimed “Doctrinal Expositor” wrote of Dr. Chafer's Soteriology, “(Chafer's) desire to be 'Biblical' in his Systematic Theology requires (that) he surround his system to the text of Scripture. He is to be highly commended for that.” This well trained Independent Fundamental Baptist Preacher further heaps ten paragraphs of praise onto Dr. Chafer's Soteriology because it tears the “L” right out of T.U.L.I.P.<sup>81</sup> Any Baptist praise for even T.U.I.P should be disconcerting. The whole Presbyterian, Reformed, Calvinistic, Covenant Theology, Replacement Theology is fraught with diabolical error and T.U.L.I.P. Is only the ugly “tip of the iceberg.” Taking the “L” out to T.U.L.I.P. is like taking Purgatory out of Catholicism. It might deliver a crippling blow to an errant system, but the lie still limps along without major effect. An Independent Fundamental Baptist praising Chafer's 400 pages of Soteriology which does not even address a soul's conversion, justification, or quickening is a powerful indicator of a serious compromise and dangerous blindness. The giant of Neoevangelicalism defies the Salvation of God, and it needs to be reiterated: “Is there not a cause?”

Correspondence with Dr. DaveT is included here:

## **Dr. DaveT's Comments & Response**

Subject: Pastor Ed Rice is forwarding an email to you

From: Pastor Ed Rice

<PastorRice@GSBaptistChurch.com>

Date: Thu, February 06, 2014 2:06 pm

To: Dr. Dave T. <email@gmail.com>

Dave, I talked about you and your love for Dr.

Chafer's work in this report and wanted to ensure you got a courtesy copy. It will be published in Systematic Theology, and in my written report for credit at LBTS.

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80 David Txxxxxx's [www.DoctorDaveT.com/Chafer\\_Systematic\\_Review.html](http://www.DoctorDaveT.com/Chafer_Systematic_Review.html) accessed 12/14/2013

81 Total Depravity; Unconditional Election; Limited Atonement; Irresistible Grace; Perseverance of the Saints

Theology Working Group,

Subject: RE: Pastor Ed Rice is forwarding an email to you

From: "Dr. David Txxxxxxx" <dave@xxxxxxx>

Date:2/6/2014 3:28 PM

To: "Pastor Ed Rice"

<PastorRice@GSBaptistChurch.com>

Hi, Pastor Rice,

Thanks for the note. A couple of errors you may want to correct:

- 1) you have misspelled my name.
- 2) Chafer includes an entire article on Justification in Vol 7.
- 3) Chafer includes multiple chapters on Election in Vol 3.
- 4) a search on the word "quicken" returned 30 results in the Chafer systematic theology.

You should fact check other faulty assumptions. If your grade depends on the accuracy of your statements, you will be glad you did. Thanks for including me with a giant like Walvoord. That is very flattering indeed, although I will confess I do not belong in such rarified air.

Dave

Dr. David Txxxxxxx

Dear Dr. Dave T.,

When John Bunyan's Pilgrim wandered from the straight and narrow path he was assigned, and it was pointed out how far off he strayed, how awful the mire, and how deep the upcoming pit, his first and natural tendency was to justify his error.

I have quite well fact checked my declaration. Your hero might well have written of justification in his final volume titled "Doctrinal Summarization" but in so doing he violates good organization by including in summary

something that is found nowhere else in the body of his work. The fact is his whole volume on Soteriology never addresses justification, and I have quite clearly declared the fact.

John Calvin's 1536 magnum opus, "The Institutes of the Christian Religion"<sup>82</sup>, the Presbyterian's 1618 Synod of Dort,<sup>83</sup> and Lewis Sperry Chafer's 1948 volume on Soteriology inexplicably tie salvation to election and predestination. The fact is the Holy Bible does not. The fact is I have well introduced this momentous blunder, even labeling it a diabolical error, and the body of my critique of Chafer's Soteriology provides ample proof of such my introductory declaration. Chafer's multiple chapters on Election in Vol 3 fully support my argument, and your announcing it as important does not justify your error, it only muddies the mire.

There are no faulty assumptions in this introduction to my critique of Chafer's Soteriology. The fact that he speaks of 'quickenings' somewhere in the bowels of his Systematic Theology, cannot justify his bankrupt volume on Soteriology that does not bring it up. When it is pointed out that the Neo-Evangelical giant, Dr. Walvoord and an Independent Fundamental Baptist, Dr. Dave T. are wallowing around in the same pit of diabolical error it is not flattery. It is presented here as an alarming manifestation of the grossest compromise. Prayerfully, I trust you will see how far you are strayed from the straight and narrow and get back in the battle for truth.

The fact that your name was misspelled is the only error left standing. Because of my embarrassment for you I shall not fix that error, I will eliminate its reference all together. I trust this correspondence finds you turning back from Chafer's winding path and making your way back to the Cross of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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82 Freely available at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/>

83 See Darby's extensive development of history in R.L. Dabney "The Five Points of Calvinism"

Pastor Edward Rice

The breakout of Chafer's emphasis in Volume III on Soteriology is shown in his table of contents and the weighted average of coverage each chapter holds, as follows:

- Chap 1 Introduction to Soteriology 3-10 2% of vol 3
- Chap 2 The Person of Christ 11-34 6%
- Chap 3 Introduction to the Sufferings of Christ 35-54 5%
- Chap 4 Things Accomplished by Christ in His Sufferings and Death 55-115 15%
- Chap 5 The Sufferings and Death of Christ in Types 116-126 3%
- Chap 6 Biblical Terminology Related to Christ's Sufferings and Death 127-130 1%
- Chap 7 Theories False and True of the Value of Christ's Death 131-164 9%
- Chap 8 The Fact of Divine Election 165-177 3%
- Chap 9 The Order of Elective Decrees 178-182 1%
- Chap 10 For Whom Did Christ Die? 183-205 6%
- Chap 11 The Finished Work of Christ 206-209 1%
- Chap 12 The Convicting Work of The Spirit 210-224 4%
- Chap 13 The Riches of Divine Grace 225-266 11%
- Chap 14 Introduction to the Doctrine of Security 267-272 2%
- Chap 15 The Armenian View of Security 273-312 10%
- Chap 16 The Calvinistic Doctrine of Security 313-339 7%
- Chap 17 The Consummating Scripture 340-354 4%
- Chap 18 Deliverance From Reigning Power of Sin and Human Limitations 355-363 2%
- Chap 19 The Believer Presented Faultless 364-370 2%
- Chap 20 The Terms of Salvation 371-395 6%

**Critique of Chafer's Vol. III Soteriology Chap. II**

For all that has been said about what Dr. Chafer did not include in a volume on Soteriology, something needs to be said in critique of what he did include. The heart of what Chafer has to offer any discussion of Soteriology is found in his fourth chapter

entitled; “Things accomplished by Christ in his Sufferings and Death.” As was stated previous, Dr. Chafer has no skeleton, i.e. no structured organization, to add meat to, but any miniscule pickings of “meat” are found in this chapter.

Dr. Chafer's chapter 2 is completely misplaced. Parts of this chapter might find outline space in Christology, but even there, Chafer's trite outlining methods and his verbosity makes the chapter very undesirable. It is disquieting to say that a chapter on the person of the Savior could be totally discarded. It is indeed totally misplaced. But it is also observed that the first sentence of the letters to the Hebrews has more about the Saviour than does this misplaced chapter by Chafer. He tries to use catchy outlines, like; “Son of God, Son of Man, Son of David and Son of Abraham,” but such preachable outlines can not excuse the responsibility levied on the Systematic Theologian. Dr. Chafer is not systematic in any sense of the word. He has displayed no ability to outline a topic in a logically structured manner. He displays no talent here for separating a “system” like Christology or Soteriology in a confining border and then dealing with each “subsystem” separately. In this volume Chafer has so intermixed other “subsystems” of information that he did not include any “Soteriology” at all. Chapter 2 exemplifies this blunder. It should be in his Christology.

Stepping thus away from the subject of Soteriology to critique what Dr. Chafer calls “The Person of the Saviour” we can only establish his purpose late in this chapter. It is not in his verbose introduction, but in his third section, with the catchy title “The Sonships of Christ”, his lead sentence intimates this purpose. “As a further step in the general investigation into who the Saviour is...” Upon discovering this purpose, twenty pages into the chapter, it was disturbing to find only three marginal notes that this author had scratched into the margins of Chafer's twenty pages. They were (1) “Not on topic, (2) “trite play on words” and (3) “Bla, Bla, Bla.” This was disturbing because on the topic “general investigation of who the Saviour is,” nothing whatsoever should be labeled “Bla.” And yet, there you have it. Despite a noble effort to pull out a specific sentence that illustrates Chafer's profundity of

wordiness in capturing bla, bla, bla. All examples examined were, well, excuse the pun, rather bla.

Dr. Chafer herein again demonstrates a propensity for verbose, passive, run on sentences, but struggling to look past this communication flaw, struggling to come up with the gist of what he may be driving at, the total bankruptcy of Evangelical Theology is all the more manifest. This founder of Dallas Theological Seminary broke from the Fundamentalist concept of Separation and waded right into the middle of 70 plus denominations. There he worded and worded and worded 8 volumes that captured what all 70 believed. He worded and worded and worded to ensure not one old bird got their feathers ruffled. He worded and worded and worded some more, until precious few could even comprehend what his main point was. He mixed in a lot of Greek but no exegesis. In this chapter he had to include the “Hypostatic Union” of Christ to be recognized as “most scholarly.” Eight volumes containing over 2000 pages is labeled as unabridged Systematic Theology. This author calls it very wordy, passively written, tip-toeing. It is truly awful.

Fundamentalism is now visiting the bankruptcy found in Chafer's neoevangelical theology. This author's whole book “The Biblical Doctrine of Election and Predestination<sup>84</sup>” might well be repeated here to refute Dr. Chafer's staunch position. Half of this author's Master Thesis entitled “Reformed Theology's Reformations Are Not Producing a Biblical Systematic Theology<sup>85</sup>” would equally expose Dr. Chafer's gross error.

### **Critique of Chafer's Vol. III Soteriology Chap. III - VII**

For all that has been covered in this critique of Dr. Chafer's Soteriology, most has thus far centered on his total lack of content. He has manifest the total bankrupt condition of the Neo–Evangelical movement concerning the subject of So – Great – Salvation. In these next chapters, however, Chafer leaves off his

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84 [http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/elect/election\\_predest\\_man.pdf](http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/elect/election_predest_man.pdf)

85

[http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/seminary/master\\_thesis/thesis\\_reformed.pdf](http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/seminary/master_thesis/thesis_reformed.pdf)

demonstration of bankruptcy and goes headlong out avenues of spurious error.

The Roman Catholic basis of Soteriology can be framed in suffering. Your sin is only purged, and your own righteousness is only secured in penance and in suffering. They allege that their Latin Vulgate Bible, the corrupted Latin translation from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, states their concept clearly, "Except ye 'do penance' ye shall all likewise perish." If you, with your beads, and penance perhaps suffer enough in this life you go to heaven. If not, you go to purgatory, where you or your loved one may suffer sufficiently to get your soul to heaven.

Jesus' sufferings are our superb example, they say. He attained perfect righteousness because of his great sufferings, they say. If you suffer and sacrament enough in this life you might attain eternal life in heaven, they say. If someone obviously excelled in suffering and sacrament, excelled by so much that a Roman Pope recognizes the excess, he can declare that person a saint. These declared Roman Catholic Saints surely have some handmade righteousness left over and they may use some of the excess righteousness for your needs if you just pray to them.

With that doctrine embedded deep in this author's Italian blood, one can not imagine how quickly or vehemently his blood boils when Dr. Chafer, the neoevangelical theologian, founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, which caters to 70+ denominations, spends 33% of his volume of Soteriology covering the importance of Christ's Sufferings and 0% of the volume talking about justification by faith. When the 70+ denominations broke away from Roman Catholic Soteriology, they did not make a clean break. It is repulsive that Dr. Chafer kept an exaggerated emphasis on the sufferings of Christ in order to appease those denominations which carried that theme from their Roman Catholic heritage. Dr. Chafer's exaggerated, verbose explanations never rebuke the Roman analogy that we must likewise suffer to attain righteousness.

One must ask, why does Chafer fail to speak against this Roman Catholic doctrine about suffering? And one must answer that it is related to his desire to appeal to 70+ denominations that

sprang from the “Holy Roman Church”. Chafer dare not admit that it is an apostate “Holy Roman Church”, and those denominations which carry forth her doctrine are also apostate.

When Dr. Chafer does interweave some remarkable truths about Christ into such a brazen compromise of Soteriology, it is too little too late. His verbose-run on- passive style makes it obvious that one would be far better off reading the book of Hebrews from their Holy Bible and gleaning these truths from God himself. In chapter VII, “Theories False and True of the Value of Christ's Death”, Chafer adds a capstone to his arch of folly. The false concept that the scientific method can be used to determine valid theology seeps from Protestant Systematic Theology books. Here Chafer tries to present 'theories' wherein after much testing and philosophy, the truth may be found. After testing one's hypothesis it becomes a theory, after years of testing and evaluation a theory becomes a law. When in time, no one can debunk or refute the “law,” it is presumed to be the truth. Such a method is fine for Kepler determining the laws of planetary motion, but for Chafer to resort to some listed theories in a scientific method for determining the truths is utter folly. There is no value in Chafer's theories, when one holds in their lap the inspired, inerrant Word of God. His use of theories only enables Chafer to continue to tip toe in and out of the 70+ denominations he must appease.

### **Critique of Chafer's Vol. III Soteriology Conclusion**

In light of this present distress, it is worthy, at this point in a critique to abandon criticisms of Lewis Sperry Chafer's work and pursue an actual systematic theology about soteriology. This tactic is recommended even for those more interested in John Calvin's errant theology of Divine Election. This author has two books that delineate that error, and they contain no soft-shoe, just a straight forward presentation of the facts. An effective Systematic Theology Volume on So-Great-Salvation might still be written, but it will not be found in any Protestant library, and never found in a neo-evangelical pen. The next section of this critique holds a

reasonable draft/beginning-outline for such a worthy endeavor.

Recall from this author's criticisms of previous Systematic Theologies that such must first be "Systematic". Systematic does not mean thorough nor, as Chafer supposes, unabridged. Chafer, Geisler, even Strong, Hodge, Shedd, and sometimes Thiessen, tried to capture unabridged every thing that man has ever believed about God. Their definition of "Systematic" treated theology as a science. Theology is revelation. And systematic means having a planned effective strategy for exploring every fiber of that Revelation. A retired Systems Engineer's approach to "Systematic Theology" is far more effective than the theologian who attempts to use the scientific method, with its hypothesis tested into some theory that still needs to be somehow proven. Systematic has always implied the breaking down of the whole into understandable systems for a more thorough analysis. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer epitomizes the building up of hypothesized theory into a voluminous unabridged run-on consideration. Examine briefly a better tack.

## Critique of Arthur W. Pink's "Present Day Evangelism"

Arthur Pink's pre 1952 book "Present Day Evangelism"<sup>86</sup> has as its thesis that present day evangelism has overstepped his doctrine of the Sovereignty of God, his doctrine of God's Sovereign Election, his doctrine of the Total Depravity of Man, and his doctrine of Christ's Limited Atonement. (cf Chapter 1. The Grand Design of God, pg 20.) Pink totally misses God's assertion that we (born again believers) are the "special and immediate intervention of God" (pg 22) He misses that God's Holy Spirit indwells us, and that God's command to "go into all the world and preach the gospel" is not limited by the Old Testament verse "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech 4:6)

Pink's contention that the untrained (i.e. non-Clergy) novice witnesses (ch 3 pg 40-42) are mucking up evangelism by believing and repeating Acts 16:31 reveals his true reformed, reformationist heart beat. Only Clergy (and priests?) can interpret these clear gospel Scriptures properly. They must be "weighed, interpreted, and applied in accord with their context, and that calls for prayerful consideration, careful meditation, and prolonged study." (pg 45) By Clergy? Really? Arthur here contends that only Clergy should be expounding his carefully sculpted Sovereign Grace, and salvation by the election of souls. Pink perceives that the misled "present day evangelists"... "tells his hearers that salvation is by grace and is received as a free gift, that Christ has done everything for the sinner, and that nothing remains but for him to 'believe', to trust in the infinite merits of His blood. " For Arthur Pink this is cardinal error, and this simple gospel message is strongly contested by this staunchly Calvinist, Puritan, Covenant Theologian who calls Dispensationalism "modern pernicious error."

Pink accuses that such a simple gospel message is tarnishing the holiness and sovereignty of God. Although Dr. Pink brings to

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86 Arthur W. Pink, "Present Day Evangelism," from <http://www.chapellibrary.org/literature/epub-reader/?fldCode=pdev> accessed 24 Jan 2013, and 10/25/2018.

bear a needed emphasis on repentance and the Lordship of Christ, his staunch rejection is that people, possibly people not even chosen before the foundation of the world, are being told to “receive Christ as personal Saviour”, and this reacts negatively to all that Arthur Pink holds dear in his misguided Covenant Theology. Curious book. Curious entrapment to Reformed Theology's errors. Incidentally, rat poison is 99% good stuff.

## Chapter 7 Soteriology Conclusion

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? Heb 2:3-4<sup>87</sup>*

Salvation is the miraculous rescue and restoration of a wholly lost estate. Man's broken relationship with his Creator is the wholly lost estate, and only the Lord Jesus Christ, who said *I am the way the truth and the life, no man cometh to the father but by me (John 14:6)*, can rescue and restore that estate. Indeed, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts4:12)*. Salvation first began to be spoken by the Lord when he told Nicodemus *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:15)*. And it was confirmed unto us by the apostles, John concluding *“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:30-31)*. And God bear them witness as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Truly for the student of God's Word, so great salvation is worthy of extended study and analysis.

In this section on soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, through the eyes of Dr. Cambron and his doctrine book we have examined the doctrine of repentance and faith, the doctrine of regeneration, justification, and sanctification and then the doctrine of adoption, redemption and prayer. A solid doctrinal position is essential to a strong Biblical systematic theology. In chapter 3 we explored the alterations of modernist ecumenical bibles which

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<sup>87</sup> Holy Bible.

alter, for ecumenical modernists, the Biblical doctrine of salvation. In chapter 4 an extensive coverage of the error of Calvinism is delineated, drawn directly from Dr. Fielder's book, and in chapter 5 we cover how the instantaneous occurrence of five ingredients of genuine salvation, conversion, justification, quickening, indwelling, and immersion into Christ, focuses a light on errors in many of the man made models for salvation. A critique of other systematic theology works then exposes some of the gross misunderstandings and miscommunications about so great salvation. Finally Calvinism's assertion that God chose souls for salvation and souls for hell fire before the foundation of the earth, and Arthur Pinks strong defense of such a philosophy is refuted.

This marks a solid beginning for a good systematic study of soteriology, but it is only a beginning, soteriology being a major theme of God's holy revealed Word.

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## About the Author

Pastor Ed Rice is a retired USAF Systems Engineer surrendered to be a Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Saved in 1960 at the age of eight he grew up tutored in the Scriptures through Tuscorora Baptist Church in Addison NY, where he married his high-school sweetheart Beverly Cook Rice. Drafted into the military off of the dairy farm in 1972, Ed and Bev Rice raised 3 boys while serving as a Missile Technician in the USAF. After completing a USAF AECPP bootstrap program he graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in electrical engineering and was commissioned in the USAF where he served until 1995 as a systems engineer and weapons integration specialist at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and Rome Laboratories, Rome NY. He finished his Masters degree in Electrical Engineering through The Air Force Institute of Technology in 1990.

After being commissioned as a USAF officer in 1982 he pursued his systems engineering work in several classified research and development programs. While moving around the USA in his twenty three year military career he was a youth pastor and associate pastor in Independent Baptist Churches near his station. In 1995 he became Captain Rice, USAF retired, and surrendered to be a Baptist Pastor.

In 1998 he took the senior pastorate at Good Samaritan Baptist Church, in Dresden, New York where he pursued his theological studies at Louisiana Baptist Theological Seminary. At LBU Pastor Rice received his second masters degree in 2013, and his PhD in 2017. His son Michael is US Army retired living near Fort Hood Texas, Shane is an Independent Baptist Missionary pastoring Chiesa Biblica Battista, Mazara Del Vallo, Italy, and Matthew is serving our Lord Jesus Christ near Hamilton NY. Capt Rice has spent seven years teaching math and science with the ABeka Christian High School Curriculum, and seven years teaching college mathematics, a love of his life, at community colleges near his church.

Dr. Rice's staunch belief in the preserved accuracy of the inspired Scriptures and his extensive background in systems engineering make him uniquely qualified to assemble "A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."

## **Personal Testimony of Pastor Edward Rice.**

I was saved in 1960 at the age of eight. My father and mother were saved and founding members of Fellowship Baptist Church in Gang Mills New York. In 1958 my dad, Levi O. Rice, an agnostic, was invited by Cecil Palm to be a founding member of that church; both of my parents were born-again-saved two weeks later. My mother, Doris was converted from Roman Catholicism, and became a Christian. She stopped her Roman penance and practiced Bible repentance, stopped praying to Mary and called upon the Lord Jesus Christ to save her. She was thus converted from Roman Catholicism to the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone needs converted from something. Mom and Dad were now born again, and two years later I was saved in revival services with Evangelist Dale and Opel Linbaugh. Opel cut the flannel graph burden of sin off little Christian's back in her Pilgrim's Progress presentation, and I was born-again-saved before it hit the basement floor. In 1995 I retired from the USAF as a systems engineer and became an ordained Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 18:3). Being converted is quite like a new birth, Jesus said so. If you have not been converted you should trust Christ today, and you must tell him that that is your intent. (see Romans 10:9-13).