

SPECIAL STUDIES

VOLUME 1

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**GOSPEL
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Acknowledgment and Preface

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs and Henry Simmons. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, Ray Hawk and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people. "Outlined" does not imply skimpy—these are full-length books.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen by preachers. How sad!

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie help as much as she could despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches. She moved into eternity on November 25, 2022.

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A STUDY OF EVOLUTION

I. WHAT IS EVOLUTION?

A. The word *evolution* comes from the Latin *evolutio* and means *an unrolling or change*.

1. The word may be used in a good sense: a child growing into an adult; a seed developing into a tree; the changing of the season from summer to fall. We may even speak of "the evolution of the gospel," describing its gradual development by God as he made preparation for its full revelation.
2. The word is used in a bad sense, in reference to a godless theory that rejects the Bible account of creation: "The hypothesis that millions of years ago, lifeless matter acted upon by natural forces gave origin to minute living organisms, which have since produced all living and extinct plants and animals, including man."

B. Evolution is not a science.

1. Science uses very exact terms:
 - a. Hypothesis—a preliminary idea about how something *may* function; not supported by significant evidence.
 - b. Theory—an hypothesis which has progressed to a higher stage by reason of some meaningful evidence, but has not been proved.
 - c. Fact—proved to be true; demonstrated.
2. Evolution is only an hypothesis even though it is commonly called a theory. It is, therefore, only a broad assumption, a slightly-educated guess.
 - a. Evolutionists condemn the Bible for having two spellings for *Noah* (Noah and Noe), but have no difficulty in allowing variations of millions of years to accommodate their theory.
 - b. For ease of expression, we shall refer to evolution as a theory.

II. HOW DID THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION DEVELOP?

A. It is not a result of our advanced knowledge in the scientific age.

1. It did not have its origin with Charles Darwin as is commonly believed.
2. As far back as 588 B.C., Thales expressed his views of an evolving scale of life.
3. Extensive views were expressed by Empadocles (493-435 B.C.); he believed that plants and animals were not produced simultaneously. He figured that plants came first, and then animal life. He suggested a *survival of the fittest* theory.
4. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) believed in a slow transition from the imperfect to the perfect, and that man stood at the top of one long continuous ascent.
5. There were others among the ancients who also held similar views.

B. In the dark ages, the high hand of Catholicism became synonymous with religion and the Bible.

1. With the Renaissance, men began to rebel against what they thought was Christianity. In the midst of this rebellion, the modern ideas of evolution were developed.
 2. The first man to suggest a relatively complete theory of evolution was Chevalier de Lamarck (Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, 1744-1829). He gave four assumptions (*postulates*):
 - a. "Life by its own efforts tends continually to increase the volume of everything which it possesses and to increase the size of its parts up to a limit which life itself determines." [This describes the growth process].
 - b. "The formation of a new organ is the result of a new need which has arisen and continues to be felt by the organism." [This is faulty. It means that a worm wanting eyes could develop them; and even we could develop eyes in the back of our heads merely by wishing for them].
 - c. "The extent of development of organs and their power of action is proportional to their use." [This is acceptable; a blacksmith's muscles are developed by use].
 - d. "All changes occurring during the lifetime of an organism are transmitted to its offspring by the process of reproduction." [This is usually called the inheritance of acquired characteristics. It was
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disproved by Weismann, a champion of Darwinism, who cut off the tails of 22 generations of mice and found that the tails of the descendants were no shorter than those of a similar group whose tails had not been cut off].

3. The second important theory was given by Charles Darwin (1809-1882).
 - a. In 1831, he began a 5-year voyage around the world. He studied, read and made trips into many islands and countries. After his return home, he spent 10 years studying and re-working his notes. From these notes, he developed his ideas of the origin of the species, and published his book in 1859.
 - b. His theory is arranged under several assumptions and conclusions:
 - 1) First postulate: Variation. Individuals of the same species differ.
 - 2) Second postulate: Over-production. In most cases far more individuals are born than can possibly survive to maturity.
 - 3) First conclusion: Struggle for existence. The individuals that are to survive must compete with other members of the same species.
 - 4) Third postulate: Survival of the fittest. In this struggle for existence those individuals will survive which are best fitted for their environment.
 - 5) Fourth postulate: Inheritance of favorable characteristics. Fit individuals pass their fitness on to their descendants.
 - 6) Final conclusion: New species arise by the continued survival and reproduction of the individuals best fitted or adapted to the particular environment.
 - c. Analysis of Darwin's postulates.
 - 1) First postulate: There is variation among individuals of a species. Almost every human has differences from the rest.
 - 2) Second postulate: In most species, there are more offspring produced than can survive. A female codfish produces about 6 million eggs in a single season. Yet the codfish population stays about the same. This shows the wisdom of God's plan. The over-abundance of eggs furnishes food for others, while continuing the line.
 - 3) First conclusion: Instead of fighting over the food supply, they often cooperate in obtaining it. Starvation is rarely a cause of death among wild animals.
 - 4) Third postulate: This is not always the case, for many survive merely by chance. Predators usually take the weak, old, and sickly for their prey.
 - 5) Fourth postulate: Somatic characteristics (such as the blacksmith's muscles) are not inherited; they are characteristics obtained by environment. Germinal characters are those which are determined by the genes and chromosomes (inherited).
- C. When studying evolution, it is important to know that it has a history of change and instability.
 1. Most biologists today accept evolution in some form. Their views are frequently different.
 2. A form of the theory may have predominance for a period of time, but later is modified to accommodate new arguments.
 3. Darwin's original view demanded many millions of years for the supposed changes and developments to occur. In our time, another branch of the theory has argued, with success in gaining supporters, that the changes took place quickly.
 4. What is accepted and firmly believed today, may be completely discarded tomorrow.

III. WHY IS EVOLUTION BELIEVED BY SO MANY?

A. Many people accept evolution just to be in step with modern thought.

1. Henry Morris: "Furthermore, the writer is convinced, from having discussed the subject with hundreds of people, that the main reason most educated people believe in evolution is simply because they have been told that most educated people believe in evolution. Very rarely is such a person able to do more than repeat a few stock 'evidences for evolution,' and almost never has he given any really serious consideration to the question of their real implication" (Quoted by Williams, *The Other Side of*
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Evolution, p.5).

2. Bales and Clark: "Evolution is taken for granted today and thus it is uncritically accepted by scientists as well as by laymen. It is accepted by them today because it was already accepted by others who went before them and under whose direction they obtained their education....So widely accepted is the doctrine of evolution that it is received by each oncoming generation for the simple reason that each generation finds that evolution is a part of the scientific world outlook in which it is reared" (Quoted by Williams, p.5).
 3. Thomas Dwight: "How very few of the leaders in the field of science dare to tell the truth as to the state of their own minds! How many feel themselves forced in public to do lip service to a cult that they do not believe in" (Quoted by Williams, *The Other Side of Evolution*, p.5).
- B. Some believe in evolution because they are severely anti-religious.
1. Arthur Keith: "Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it because the only alternative is special creation, and that is unthinkable!" (Quoted by Williams in *The Other Side of Evolution*, p.6).
 2. T. H. Huxley: "It is clear that the doctrine of evolution is directly antagonistic to that of creation. Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to believe the Bible" (ibid., p.6).
 3. The 3rd Annual Report of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism said: "Evolution is atheism" (ibid.).
 4. Theodore Schwarze: Evolution is "accepted by scholars and scientists because it categorically denies the word of God, which they hate" (ibid.).
 5. James Bales: "If one is acquainted with the background of Darwin and other evolutionists in the nineteenth century, he will realize that they accepted evolution not because scientific evidence proved it, but because they had rejected the idea of creation by God, and had determined that all must be explained naturally" ("Evolution and the New Inquisition," p.8; a tract, quoted by Williams, p.6).
 6. Creation is the only alternative to evolution. Since many people refuse to accept the Bible, they are compelled to turn to evolution.
- C. Many people are taught it in school, and never question it.
1. Most science textbooks are written by evolutionists and therefore teach evolution. Each succeeding generation becomes more indoctrinated than the former.
 2. One who rejects evolution is looked on as an ignoramus; any serious scientific work done by such an individual is held up to ridicule by his contemporaries.
 3. Just as the second and succeeding generations brought up under Mohammedanism never questioned their *native* religion, so those who grow up under evolution seldom see reason to question it.
- D. Many are driven into evolution and atheism by so-called Christians.
1. There is a great number of people in Italy who look at Catholicism and say, "If this is Christianity, I do not want anything to do with God or the Bible."
 2. The great religious division that exists has driven many away from religion into infidelity. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 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 17:20-21). Religious division promotes unbelief.
- E. Many do not want to admit any personal responsibility to God, therefore they reject God and his Word.
1. People want to be free from all responsibility in moral affairs, to do what pleases them.
 2. They develop a false sense of security, which many will not discover to be fatal until it is too late. "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10-12).

IV. ARGUMENTS USED BY EVOLUTIONISTS.

A. Similarity of structure of comparative anatomy.

1. This is a comparison of certain structures in different organisms.

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- a. A man, a giraffe, and a whale have seven cervical vertebrae. The wing of a bat, the forefoot of a dog, the arm and hand of a man, and the flippers of a whale have a similar structure.
 - b. It is assumed by the evolutionists that all living things having these similarities descended from a common ancestor.
2. Is it true that similarity of structure in the various forms of life is evidence that we all came from a common ancestor? No!
- a. They do not claim that some animals which have definite similarities descended from a common source.
 - 1) The worm and the snake are remarkably alike in many ways, but no claim is made to a common ancestor for these two beings.
 - 2) The bird and bee have wings and can fly, but no common ancestry is asserted.
 - 3) The platypus has a bill and webbed feet, but evolutionists do not claim that it has a common ancestry with the duck.
 - 4) The Tasmanian wolf and the dog are very similar in skeletal structure. But the Tasmanian wolf carries its young in a pouch; the dog does not.
 - 5) The evolutionist picks and chooses the similarities he wants, and ignores or tries to explain away the similarities that might prove too much. The argument is meaningless, therefore, since some animals in some respects are similar, but in other ways are very dissimilar.
 - b. Similarity does not prove evolution. Two men may resemble each other, but that does not mean they are brothers, or that they are even related.
3. The truth of the matter of comparative anatomy is that it shows evidence of a **common Creator**, instead of a common ancestor.
- a. If a certain system serves a certain species well, why would not God have made use of a similar system in other species?
 - b. It is only natural that the living things which were to inhabit the same earth would be so made as to have some characteristics in common.
 - c. Why should we think that God would have to make everything completely different?
- B. Vestigial organs.
1. Vestigial organs are those parts of a living being for which no function has been discovered. The argument asserts that as a certain species developed through the ages, there were some organs which were useful at some point, but because of the changing circumstances, are no longer needed.
 - a. Thus, the wings of an ostrich or kiwi are claimed to be vestigial. In the human body, organs like the appendix, coccyx bones, the tonsils, ear muscles, etc., are said to be vestigial.
 - b. Evolutionists argue that these organs once served useful purposes, but through evolution they lost their usefulness, and gradually deteriorated. They theorize that these organs are just leftovers from useful organs in some ancestral predecessor
 - c. When this argument first appeared, it was claimed that there were hundreds of vestigial organs in the human body, and many thousands in the animal world.
 - 1) But as knowledge increased, the number of these *useless* organs decreased.
 - 2) Many biology textbooks no longer use the vestigial organ argument.
 - d. The whole argument has a basic flaw: While there are some organs in men and animals that appear to be useless, it is a gross mistake to claim they are useless without having been thoroughly examined.
 - 1) John Klotz said: "Besides, the fact that a function has not been demonstrated for an organ is no real evidence that it has no function. It is quite possible that these structures have a function that has not yet been discovered. For many years the endocrine glands—glands of internal secretion, such as thyroid, the pituitary, and adrenals, which pour their products into the blood stream—were regarded as vestigial organs. They could be seen and described anatomically, but no function was known for them. Today, of course, we know that these structures are very
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important for life" (*Genes, Genesis, and Evolution*, pp.132f).

- 2) Just because we do not know the function of a particular organ does not mean it is useless. Some organs serve a significant purpose during infancy, but are not very important to an adult. The spleen produces red corpuscles before birth, but not in an adult normally. In cases of severe hemorrhage it may resume this function until the emergency is over.
 2. The appendix.
 - a. Evolutionists claim the appendix is useless, but many medical men are convinced that the appendix is a useful organ. Although the specific function of the appendix is not known for certain, several suggested functions have been put forth: that it secretes fluids for lubricating purposes; provides digestive juices; manufactures white blood cells; is of special importance during the embryonic and infancy stages (therefore, doctors are reluctant to perform an appendectomy on an infant).
 - b. When an appendix is removed, it may be that its function is taken over by some other organ, thus no discernible effect is seen.
 - c. It is reasonable to believe that with more study, scientists will learn that the appendix has a special function and will be able to show what that function is.
 3. The coccyx (or caudal vertebrae).
 - a. Some evolutionists believe this is the remains of the tail of some distant ancestor of man. They say it is useless to man today.
 - b. But it is not useless. It is part of the backbone column and is known to be the connecting point for several muscles. It also aids in sitting and gives support to internal organs when a person is standing. It is not a vestigial organ.
 4. Outer ear muscles.
 - a. We are told that these muscles are useless since man cannot *wiggle* his ears.
 - b. But while they may not serve the normal function of muscles, they are useful in providing a means for blood to get to the ear and lessen the danger of freezing.
 5. Tonsils.
 - a. At one time, tonsils were considered to be prime examples of useless organs. Since they could be removed without affecting the body, it was assumed they had no useful purpose.
 - b. During early childhood, children are prone to put just about anything into their mouths. Some kind of protective device is needed. The tonsils protect against infection. Doctors now want people to keep their tonsils as long as possible.
- C. Mutations.
1. Mutations are sudden, prominent changes in plants and animals from one generation to the next; this change is caused by changes in the genes.
 - a. Two obvious examples are seedless oranges and hornless cattle.
 - 1) Another is the Ancon sheep. "...In the latter part of the eighteenth century there appeared in a purebred New England flock of sheep a lamb with very short, bowed legs. This lamb was bred and gave rise to the Ancon breed of sheep."
 - 2) These changes do not support evolution, for the seedless orange is still an orange; the Ancon sheep is still a sheep; the hornless cow is still a cow.
 - b. The evolutionist needs transmutation—a mutation that crosses over the barriers between kinds of animals, which is impossible!
 2. Mutations are very rare. The chances of it occurring in the second generation is fantastic; in the third generation—beyond belief.
 - a. The seedless orange cannot reproduce itself without man's help. The Ancon sheep with its short legs would quickly recede and disappear without man's care.
 - b. Most mutations are doomed to death or else cannot produce offspring.
 3. Henry Morris: "The number of uncounted billions upon billions of favorable mutations required to develop the amazing variety and intricate complexity of the present organic world out of some
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hypothetical primitive common ancestor is beyond our powers to calculate or even to imagine" (see Williams, p.38).

D. Fossils.

1. The geological record is the only source of historical evidence. It provides the only possible avenue for proof of evolution. What does this record say?
 - a. Evolutionists claim it supports their theory: "Since fossils record life from age to age, they show the course life has taken in its gradual development. The facts that the oldest rocks bear only extinct types of relatively small and simple kinds of life, and that more and more complex types appear in successive ages, show that there has been a gradual development or unfolding of life on earth" (Carl Dunbar, see Williams, p.39).
 - b. This sounds good for evolution, but it is contradicted by the facts!
 - 1) "The fossil record contains no evidence of a 'gradual development' of life, and the so-called 'oldest rocks' contain only 'extinct types' of animals life, but also remains of animal types which are still living today" (ibid.).
 - 2) "'No matter how far back we go in the fossil record of previous animal life upon the earth we find no trace of any animal forms which are intermediate between the various major groups of phyla...since we have not the slightest evidence, either among the living or the fossil animals, of any intergrading types following between the major groups it is fair supposition there never have been any such intergrading types'" (ibid., pp.39f).
 - c. If evolution were true, it is obvious that a record of a gradual development of plants and animals would be recorded in the form of fossils. But we have no need to fear the fossil record for it does not prove evolution, but rather shows that evolution did not take place.
 2. A fossil is defined as "any hardened remains or traces of plant or animal life of some previous geological period, preserved in rock formations in the earth's crust."
 - a. The science that deals with the life of past geological periods is called *Paleontology*.
 - b. Fossils were formed when the bodies of plants and animals were covered, and through petrification, the hard parts of them were fossilized.
 - c. Reconstruction of these forms of life is very difficult. Many attempts were made to reconstruct the mammoth from information furnished by fossils. These different "models" were very dissimilar, and were proved to be wrong when an entire mammoth was found in Siberia, preserved in ice.
 3. Fossils appeared suddenly in the geological record, during the Cambrian period.
 - a. If evolution is correct, there would be a gradual change in the animals, but the first animals were fully developed, and there is no progression of change.
 - b. Many scientists have tried to find pre-Cambrian fossils of primitive forms of life, but without success.
 - c. Even **if** they could show some change in these animals, it would not necessarily prove anything, for variations occur within a species.
 - 1) There are many variations within the dog family. What a case an evolutionist could make if he could find skeletal remains of the Chihuahua, poodle, Great Dane, St. Bernard, etc., and no one knew these were all contemporaries!
 - 2) There are variations with the horse family: pony, donkey, mule, horse.
 - d. The fossil record shows no missing links. Darwin: "Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely-graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory. The explanation lies, as I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record" (*Simple Studies in Christian Evidences*, p.87). But more than 100,000 different species of fossils have been found and classified. If evolution is true, surely there would be some evidence in all these for the theory!
 4. The fossil record disproves evolution.
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- a. Fossils found deep in the earth's crust are the same as the living organisms.
 - 1) The coelacanth was thought to be extinct for as long as 120 million years. Since 1937, several living specimens of this fish have been caught. There is no evidence of change between the fossil and the real fish.
 - 2) The dawn redwood was thought to have been extinct for 20 million years, until an entire grove of them was found in China in 1944. No change!
 - 3) Other supposedly extinct forms have also been found, some thought to have been extinct for as long as 500 million years. Again, no changes were apparent.
 - b. Coral polyps. The bodies of these little animals have collected and form coral reefs. It takes an innumerable number of them to make up a single lump. The oldest of these are like the most recent—they have not changed.
 - c. A moss agate (a semi-precious stone) formed around a mosquito in the ancient past. The mosquito is identical to those we have today.
 - d. Fossilized algae have also remained unchanged.
 - e. Ants, preserved in amber from long ago, show no change.
 - f. These evidences have undoubtedly been preserved by God to disprove an ungodly theory that seeks to banish the Creator from his own universe.
5. Men started out with the assumption that evolution is true, and have tried to fit the fossil record to the theory. What if we start out with the assumption that all big rocks evolved from little rocks? We could then arrange a series of rocks, beginning with a small one and increase each one following in size, and claim our theory has been proved. This is what evolutionists have done when they started out with the wrong assumption.
- E. Geographic distribution of plants and animals.
1. The problem stated:
 - a. Except for the earthworm and the ant, there is no plant or animal even approximately universal in its distribution over the earth.
 - 1) The animal life of Australia are peculiar, in the main, to that continent.
 - 2) Islands in the oceans contain plants and animals found no where else.
 - 3) Eighty-three percent of the plants of Hawaii are peculiar to that place; one species of violet is found only on a few square yards.
 - 4) Ninety-six percent of the reptiles of the Galapagos Islands are found only there.
 - 5) No bears are in Africa; no snakes are in New Zealand and Hawaii.
 - 6) Some insects are found in only one (or a few) cave.
 - 7) North and South America have large mammals that are quite different.
 - b. Evolutionists believe that these facts are evidence for evolution. They claim that ancient forms of life got to the particular areas and after the course of evolution took place, the present forms came into being.
 - c. They also say that the flood could not have happened, for how could the air-breathing animals have reached the distant parts of the earth from the ark?
 2. What about the flood?
 - a. Some people claim it was only **local**, and that the plants and animals around the earth were unaffected by it. But this flatly denies the Biblical account.
 - b. The Bible shows that the flood was universal, and that all air-breathing life not on the ark died. All present life that breathes air came from those in the ark. How then could they have gotten to the rest of the earth?
 3. Plants.
 - a. No problem, for they could have been perpetuated by their seeds being carried by water, or by having lain dormant until the flood receded.
 - b. Their seeds could also have been spread by wind and birds.
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4. Animal life.
 - a. The normal spreading of animals is as follows: as the population increases, the search for food widens, thus the animals make their way into other areas.
 - b. What about the animals in North and South America? The ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat in Armenia. From there, the animals multiplied and spread throughout the earth.
 - 1) It is commonly believed that at one time a land bridge connected Asia with North America; North and South America are connected so animals could have migrated southward.
 - 2) With the Bering Strait closed by the land bridge, "the cold waters of the Arctic would have been prevented from coming south, and the Japan current would have curved around the coastline farther north than today. The washing of these shores by the warm waters of this current would have produced a dry-land route that even tropical forms could have used" (*The Genesis Flood*, p.86).
 - 3) This would open up the way for travel to all lands except Australia.
 - c. What about Australia?
 - 1) The East Indies even now form a fairly continuous bridge to Australia.
 - 2) Could there not have been, in ancient days, a continuous bridge there?
 - d. Even without the land bridges, it would have been possible for even large animals to have crossed wide expanses of sea. "In times of flood large masses of earth and entwining vegetation, including trees, may be torn loose from the banks of rivers and swept out to sea. Sometimes such masses are encountered floating in the ocean out of sight of land, still lush and green, with palms twenty to thirty feet tall. It is entirely probable that land animals may be transported long distances in this manner. Mayr records that many tropical ocean currents have a speed of at least two knots; this would amount to fifty miles in a day, 1000 miles in three weeks" (*The Genesis Flood*, p.85).
 - e. The evolutionist is faced with the need for land bridges.
 5. The distribution of plants and animals did not take place by some haphazard phenomena. In their distribution, one can see the working of God as he brings it about for the good of his greatest creation, man.
- F. "Horse Evolution."
1. Evolutionists point to the *history* of the horse as a strong "proof" of evolution.
 - a. "It is generally admitted that only one in several million horses has survived the hazards of fossilization, solution in rock, removal by erosion, and failure to be found" (Klotz, p.191).
 - b. Therefore, the *history* of the horse can hardly be regarded as even partially complete.
 2. The horse, they claim, evolved from a small, rodent-like mammal about the size of a fox. It had four toes on its front, and three toes on its rear, feet. It was supposed to have evolved through many links until it became the 1-ton horse of today.
 3. Answers:
 - a. The horse is a European animal. Yet the fossils which are used to trace the modern horse's development came from a variety of places. Most of the supposed ancestors are from the new world with fossils found in the old world and South American interspersed.
 - b. The skeleton of a horse has a splint bone which extends as a kind of a brace to the back of the leg between the knee and hock. It is found on all four legs.
 - 1) This is an evidence of design and intelligence in the creation of these animals. The same principle is followed in man: the large bone of the leg (tibia) is braced by the smaller bone (the fibula).
 - 2) The evolutionist cannot accept this view so he tries to explain the splint bone by saying it is the remnant of a once useful part of the horse's body, his side toe. To say this, they must ignore the presence of this same kind of splint bones possessed by the horse's oldest *ancestor*, Eohippus.
 - 3) Somehow, we are told, those *side toes* shrank and moved to the rear of the leg to form a brace.
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But *Eohippus* had the side toes, **plus** the splint bones.

- c. As evolution tries to trace the horse through the various ages of time, they ignore several fossils which have a closer resemblance to the modern horse than do the ones on which they rely. During the Pleistocene period there existed true horses which are conveniently overlooked.
- d. According to the theory, an animal evolves from a smaller, simple in design being through the ages until he acquires a larger, more complex form. It comes as a surprise to many to learn that some of the earlier and older forms of *horses* are greater in size than those at the end of the line.
 - 1) Hypohippus (25 million years ago) is as large as a Shetland pony; Hipparion (10 million years ago) is smaller. Miohippus is larger than its descendants (35 million years ago).
 - 2) Eohippus had 18 ribs; Orohippus dropped to 15; and Pliohippus increased to 19.
- e. More than a dozen different pedigrees (trees) of horse evolution have been suggested, and evolutionists are not agreed on which one is correct. A biology book might use one of these *trees* and fail to mention it is rejected by others who favor another tree.
- f. Very little resemblance exists between Eohippus and the modern horse.
- g. Fossil remains have been found of true horses which are rarely mentioned by evolutionists (*Equus nevadensis* and *Equus occidentalis*). The latter roamed the western US and was contemporary with the sabre-tooth tiger. "How can you show the evolution of a four-toed, rodent-like animal, the size of a cat, into the horse, that weighs a ton, if there was a true horse eating grass side by side with the Eohippus that was just starting in to evolve into a horse thirty million years later?....It is apparent to the most unlearned that the case collapses: If the creature that evolved out of a tiny ancestor millions of years after that ancestor died out, really lived with that ancestor...the supposed demonstration becomes a joke" (*The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Science*, pp.112f).

G. "Evolution of man."

1. Darwin taught that man came from monkey: "The Simiadae then branched off into two great stems, the Old-World and New-World monkeys; and from the latter, at a remote period, man, the wonder and glory of the universe, proceeded" (Williams, p.41).
 - a. A great *gulf* separates man and monkey; there are a great many differences, including the nose, chin, thumbs on the feet, etc.
 - b. Something must be found by which to bridge this gap. These bridges are called "missing links." Evolutionists have turned to the fossil record to find these missing links, the so-called prehistoric man.
 - c. During the past century, a number of these links have been *found*. It is said that the total of these remains would fit into a large casket.
 - d. Textbooks contain information about these finds. Reconstructions of these remains are made from a very few fragments. They demonstrate a vivid, prejudiced imagination, reminiscent of the reconstructions of the mammoth. The average person is not aware that the anthropologists themselves are not in agreement as to the significance and accuracy of these discoveries.
2. Java Man (*Pithecanthropus Erectus*, or *Homo erectus*).
 - a. Discovered in 1890 on Java by Dubois, it consisted of a skull cap, lower jaw with three teeth, and a thighbone. They were dated to 500,000 years ago.
 - b. The thighbone was found 50 feet away from the other bones, casting doubt that it even belonged to them.
 - c. The findings are so inconclusive that more than a dozen different opinions are held as to the meaning of these fragments. Dubois believed them to be remains of gibbons. Others believe the teeth are from an orangutan. The brain capacity was estimated at 914cc, about the size of a small pygmy. How can we know it is not from a small person or a child? The *proof* is not convincing; even the dating is based on an assumption.
3. Australopithecus.
 - a. The reconstruction of this specimen was made from an almost complete fore section of a skull

- with 24 teeth, and most of the brain case. Two other forms similar to the first were found, but furnished very little information.
- b. Some anthropologists classify these fossils as pygmies, others classify them as giants, while others see no connection between these and modern man.
4. Peking Man (*Sinanthropus*).
 - a. Discovered in 1922, it consists of only a few teeth. Later a jaw and portions of several skulls, etc., were found.
 - b. These fossils are of humans, not sub-humans.
 5. Heidelberg Man.
 - a. This discovery was made in 1907 and consisted only of a lower jaw with teeth. Anthropologists differ as to the significance of this discovery.
 - b. At first it was dated to 750,000 years, but later reduced to 375,000 years.
 - c. One scientist showed that the skull of a modern Eskimo has the same appearance and peculiarities.
 6. Piltdown Man (*Eoanthropus*).
 - a. This discovery consisted of several skull fragments and a tooth. For 40 years it was thought to be one of the most significant discoveries in the fossil record.
 - b. Its age was estimated to be between 1 million and 200 thousands years.
 - c. In 1953, it was announced that Piltdown man was a hoax! The jaw fragment and tooth belong to an ape; the tooth had been filed and stained to indicate age.
 7. Nebraska Man (*Hesperipithecus*).
 - a. Another proved hoax.
 - b. The only part found was one tooth. After the evidence had been accepted and widely acclaimed, the tooth was discovered to be from a peccary (a pig).
 8. Neanderthal Man.
 - a. Discoveries began to be made in 1856 in the Neanderthal valley of Germany. At first, only a skull cap was found, but later other parts were unearthed.
 - b. This race was widely scattered as evidenced by the fact that the remains were discovered in various parts of Europe.
 - c. Great controversy rages at the significance. The remains are definitely human.
 - d. Later examinations of Neanderthal remains indicate that he was as tall as those who found him and that he had a greater brain capacity than modern Europeans. The original reconstruction of Neanderthal was made from a diseased specimen. He was afflicted with arthritis.
 9. Cro-Magnon Man.
 - a. Found in France, it consisted of a skull and a few bones. Four other remains were later discovered.
 - b. The forearms are longer in proportion to his upper arms, similar to Negroes. Controversy has raged over his relation to modern man.
 - c. His skull capacity is a little larger than modern man, a fact that does not harmonize with evolution. He was not a sub-human, but was man.
 10. *Zinjanthropus Boisei*.
 - a. This was billed as the oldest fossils of prehistoric man. Four hundred skull fragments were found in 1959 by L.S.R. Leakey. Some said they were at least 1,700,000 years old, and were definitely pre-human, and that the textbooks would have to be rewritten.
 - b. Five years later, Leakey changed his mind and decided the fossils were not from an ancestor of man at all. Others have deducted that the remains were of an ape.
 - c. The following information accompanied by a picture appeared in the *Sun-Democrat*, Paducah, Ky., Nov. 15, 1972, p.8A: "New look at old skull .. Here is a closeup view of the prehistoric skull found by Richard Leakey near Lake Rudolph, Kenya. Gaps have been filled in with plastic. Leakey last week announced the find and said he believes it is 2.5 million years old which would make it the oldest complete skull of early man ever found. Leakey said the shape of the brain case is
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remarkably suggestive of modern man and unlike the heavy and protruding eyebrow ridges of skulls of early man." It is remarkable that the "oldest complete skull of early man ever found" looks so much like modern man, so much so that we wonder if there is any difference at all!

- d. Note: What about the age and dating processes of fossils, especially those of "old men?" Fossilization does not necessarily take an extremely long time. Pompeii was destroyed by a volcano about 2000 years ago. Some of the remains of its inhabitants have been fossilized. Not long ago, a Mexican sombrero was found fossilized. Fossilization can occur in just a century or so. Dating processes are based on assumptions; they are not reliable beyond a few thousand years. [It has been reported that a fossil is dated by the age of the rocks around it; when asked how they knew the age of the rocks, they say by the age of fossils in them].

V. PROBLEMS THAT EVOLUTION FACES.

A. The origin of life.

1. Some have theorized that the first life on earth came from another planet. But how did it get here? Where did the life on the other planet come from? Klotz says that most biologists have rejected this theory.
2. Some have theorized that the right combination of substances occurred that produced the first living cell. With this cell, life on earth began and rapidly multiplied until it produced all living beings. If so, why does not the same process still occur? Why cannot it be duplicated today? Why cannot men produce life?
3. They argue: "Something cannot come from nothing, therefore something always was." This we admit, but what was that *something*? (Cf. *There is a God in Heaven*, pp.233f). The only alternatives are mind and matter: which was the first? Evolutionists say matter; we say Mind (God). We who believe the Bible know that mind (intelligence), i.e., God, existed first. Evolutionists say that matter existed first (therefore, life came from lifeless matter). Which is more logical? "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God" (Heb. 3:4).

B. The origin of protein.

1. Protein is formed by living substances; and living organisms cannot exist without protein. One cannot exist without the other. How did protein come into being?
2. Which is easier, to blindly accept some complicated theory that in no way can be proved, or to accept the Bible's statements that God created all things? The Bible can be proved to be a supernatural book.

C. The Second Law of Thermodynamics.

1. "The two most basic and certain of all laws of modern physical science are the first two laws of Thermodynamics. The first law of Thermodynamics is the law of energy conservation, affirming that although energy can be converted from one form to another, the total amount remains unchanged—energy is neither being created nor destroyed at the present time." What was the original source of energy? Evolutionists can only speculate. Those who believe the Bible point to God as the source. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).
2. "The second law states that, although the total amount remains unchanged, there is always a tendency for it to become less available for useful work" (*The Genesis Flood* p.222). This means that the universe is running down. Stars burn out and cool; metal rusts; wood decays; man grows old and dies; light and heat are radiated and dissipated.
 - a. Psalms 102:26: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed."
 - b. 1 Peter 1:24: "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."
3. Evolution teaches that there is a tendency toward a higher degree of organization; instead of the clock winding down, it is winding up. The theory of evolution conflicts with the second law of thermodynamics.

D. There are no intermediate life forms.

1. The evolutionists speak of *missing links*. Why are there not some of these links still around? They are even missing in the fossil record.
2. These links are truly **missing!**
- E. The migration of birds.
 1. Why do they migrate, often for thousands of miles? Why do they often follow the same general route year after year? Why do they go to the same locations?
 2. Who furnished them with their navigational equipment and taught them how to navigate?
- F. The necessity of perfection.
 1. Spiders are dependent on their web-making ability in order to survive. How did the *early* spiders live if their web-making component was not functional yet?
 2. The honey bee depends on its honey-making ability to survive. Among the many things needed by the bee in making and storing honey, and in reproducing its kind, is the *pollen baskets* it has. In going from flower to flower, pollen collects on the hairs of the bee's legs, and is stored in these baskets located on the hind legs. How did the bee survive before the baskets were formed?
- G. The complexity of living things.
 1. No one entertains the idea that the steel, glass, rubber, etc., could ever combine by chance and produce a car. An automobile is an example of intelligent planning and design. It is a complex mechanism.
 2. "But living protoplasm is infinitely more complex than any machine" (Klotz, p.515).
 3. The human brain is an amazing example of complexity. Even with the sophisticated technology of today, nothing remotely approximating the human brain can be produced by human ingenuity, and it is certain it could not have been produced by chance!
- H. The balance of nature.
 1. Unless the population of smaller beings is kept in check, they would soon fill up the earth so that no life could exist.
 - a. A single housefly can lay as many as 500 eggs in one season. If left unchecked, the descendants of that one fly would number, at the end of one season, two hundred quintillion [200,000,000,000,000,000].
 - b. "If all the offspring of a single pair of common houseflies lived to mature and produce, the earth would be blanketed beneath a layer of flies nearly 50 feet deep in less than six months" (Fred J. Meldau, see Williams, p.26).
 - c. The fly is merely one such example among thousands in the insect world.
 2. The amoeba reproduces itself in 90 minutes. If unchecked, it would fill up all known space in five years.
 3. If these or other small organisms were at one time the most highly developed forms of life (that is, no higher forms of life existed to feed on them), all life would have ceased due to their over-production.
- I. Odd creatures.
 1. From what did the Platypus evolve? It has fur like a beaver, webbed feet like a duck, large cheek pouches like a squirrel, spurs with venom like a snake, lays eggs like a bird, and nurses its young like a mammal.
 2. The Praying Mantis is an oddity. Its closest *relative* is the grasshopper, but is so different from it that no evolutionary connection is claimed. From what could it have evolved?
- J. Nascent organs.
 1. "It stands to reason that if animals evolved, and in the process lost various organs, they would have also developed new and more useful organs....But where are these *nascent* organs? There are none in any animals of the fossil record, and there are none in any of the living specimens of today" (Williams, p.21).
 2. Evolutionists have little to say about nascent organs. One claimed in debate, when he was pressed on this issue, that the corns on his toes were nascent organs!

VI. THE FRUITS OF EVOLUTION.

A. A tree may be known by the fruit it produces.

1. Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
2. What fruit does evolution produce? If it is true, there is no standard of morality. The last few generations of young people have accepted evolution, and many have put it into practice; this partially explains the low moral condition of modern America.
3. If the fruits of this godless theory are evil, the doctrine itself is evil.

B. The theory of evolution has served to help destroy morality and ethical conduct.

1. The survival of the fittest doctrine encourages man to become even more inclined to be selfish. Selfishness lies at the heart of most of the world's problems: wars, crime, murder, injustice, terrorism, embargoes, repression, inflation, etc.
2. Hitler *liquidated* millions of people in order to insure that his *Master Race* could survive and prosper. He subscribed to the doctrine of the survival of the fittest—and decided who the fittest were.
3. Communism thrives in an atmosphere of atheism, and evolution is atheism. Karl Marx, originator of communism, drew heavily on Darwin's ideas of natural selection and survival of the fittest. "Since the adoption of the Marxian philosophy, Russia has consistently stressed the hatred of God and all forms of religion; Russia not only denies the existence of God, but makes atheism a necessary premise of the system on which its government is formed" (W.O. Davis, quoted by Williams, p.52).
4. When evolution is accepted there is a tendency to forget about the individual. If man is nothing more than an intelligent animal, there is no room for personal rights and moral values. If evolution is true, what is wrong with everyone doing what pleases him, regardless of the effect on others?
5. If evolution is true, and man is only an intelligent animal, what is the purpose of life? What real difference would exist between man and sheep or swine?

C. Evolution encourages immorality and decadence.

1. One youth said: "If I am the same as dogs and cows then of what consequence are moral standards?"
2. Immoral conduct is on a rampage in our country and generation. Parents, theologians and others wonder why. The answer is evolution. If a person is convinced that he is nothing more than an animal, he will start acting like an animal.
3. There is no morality in a herd of cattle! They are mere brute beasts without any moral capabilities or requirements, but man is higher than the highest beasts, and he bears a responsibility before his Creator to keep himself on a high moral and spiritual plane.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
 - c. Revelation 20:12-15: "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."

D. Evolution encourages unbelief and rebellion against God.

1. There are many who are hardened in sin. They do not wish to acknowledge any personal responsibility to a higher Being. Therefore, they will accept evolution to ease their wounded consciences.
2. Arguments used by evolutionists have wrecked the faith of many Christian young people who were not firmly grounded in the faith.

VII. **WHY CHRISTIANS CANNOT BELIEVE EVOLUTION.**

A. Nine reasons why one cannot accept evolution and be a faithful Christian [Adapted from Williams, pp.54f].

1. The Bible teaches that there was one original man: "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. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed" (Gen. 2:7-8). Evolution implies that there were many men, when they had evolved to the point of being called *men*. To accept evolution is to reject this basic Bible truth.
2. The Bible states that woman was miraculously brought into being when God opened Adam's side and removed a rib, and from it made the first woman (Gen. 2). One cannot believe this scriptural fact and hold to evolution at the same time. One is left to wonder how evolution can even try to account for the existence of woman, since there are marked differences between the sexes.
3. The Bible teaches that man has an immortal soul. But evolution abandons man as a mere beast. If it is asserted that somewhere along the evolutionary road man acquired a soul, where and when and how was it obtained? One cannot believe in evolution and hold to the immortality of the soul.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - b. Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - c. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
4. The Bible teaches that the first plants and animals were created complete. Evolution stands in contrast to this.
 - a. Genesis 1:11-12: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
 - b. Genesis 1:20-25: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
5. The Bible teaches that plants and animals produced after their kind, which is exactly what we now observe in nature (Gen. 1:11-12, 21, 24-25). Evolution, by its very nature, implies that plants and animals must occasionally produce offspring which are not after their kind.
 - a. Genesis 1:11-12: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
 - b. Genesis 1:21: "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the

- waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*."
- c. Genesis 1:24-25: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*."
 6. The Bible represents man to be made in the image of God, and shows man's fall into sin and decadence: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:26-27; cf. Gen. 3; Gen. 6; Rom. 3). According to the Bible, man began at the highest possible moral, spiritual, and intellectual point, and fell to the lowest depths. But evolution teaches that man began as an infinitely small mass of protoplasmic substance, and from this he climbed unaided to the greatest heights. One cannot believe both of these at the same time.
 7. Evolution nullifies the Christian system. If the theory is true, then there was no first man, no fall, no sin, no punishment for sin, and thus no need for man's redemption. This makes void the entire redemptive plan of the gospel for saving man from sin by the blood of Christ.
 - a. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
 - c. 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 8. The Bible teaches that all things were created through Christ. It would be interesting to see how the theistic evolutionist explains the involvement of Christ in evolution.
 - a. John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - b. Colossians 1:15-18: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence."
 - c. Hebrews 1:1-4: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed
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heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

9. In attempting to reconcile the six days of creation with the theory of evolution, the theistic evolutionists encounter problems too numerous to mention.

B. Evolution cannot be harmonized with the Bible account of the origin of the universe and life.

1. There is no reason why any Christian should try to do so.
2. When the theory of evolution has run its course and vanishes, the Bible will still be as true as ever, and the faith of Christians in the Bible will still stand.
3. "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou are judged" (Rom. 3:3-4).

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THE NEW MORALITY

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. This Generation is Confronted by Problems Older Generations in Our Country Did Not Have.

1. Our generation has degenerated into a spiritually crooked and criminal world, to a large degree.
 - a. There is probably more religious error today than ever before.
 - b. There is more crime in our day than ever before in the history of our great country.
 - c. Divorce for any reason, legalized gambling, stealing, fraud, alcohol, illegal drugs: these are increasing problems, threatening our homes, children, schools, and future.
 - d. Political liberalism and corruption is posing a threat to our country and our own safety.
2. The causes of the present dilemma are many, but may be summarized in two categories.
 - a. The rejection of the Bible as the absolute standard in spiritual matters is the primary cause.
 - b. Humanism is the second cause. This philosophy and religion asserts that there is no one to whom we may turn for help; if we are to solve our individual and national problems, we must look to ourselves.

B. Humanism Has These Five Features.

1. Atheism—full-grown humanists reject:
 - a. The existence of God.
 - b. The inspiration, integrity, and authority of the Bible.
 - c. The Sonship of Christ.
2. Evolution.
 - a. Since they reject the Bible, they do not believe in special creation.
 - b. They account for life on the basis of blind evolution.
3. Materialism.
 - a. They do not believe there a God in heaven; they reject the Biblical concept of heaven and hell.
 - b. Satisfying the needs and desires of the flesh is paramount to humanists.
 - c. They think man must depend on his own wisdom, knowledge, and power to provide for himself.
4. Modernism and liberalism in politics and religion (if they have any spiritual leaning).
 - a. They denounce “biblical fundamentalism.”
 - b. In religion, they want very loose and modernistic policies, just as they do in politics.
5. No standard of morality.
 - a. They do not believe there is an absolute standard.
 - b. In their view, each individual has the inherent right to decide such things for himself.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. An Examination of the Basic Views of Morality of Humanism.

1. They think Bible morality is outdated; that there is no absolute truth governing moral conduct or religious belief. Every person is his own lawmaker.
 2. They think that there is no act that is always wrong, as long as *love* is served somehow.
 - a. Lying, stealing, adultery, and such like may be wrong in most cases, but there are situations in which these ungodly acts are the right thing to do (they think).
 - b. They propound the case of a frontier family under attack by Indians. The father hides his wife and children in the cellar beneath a trap door. The Indians capture the man and demand that he reveal the hiding place of his family. The situationists say that to tell the truth would be wrong; to tell them a lie would best serve love and ought to be done. [This will be examined later].
 - c. They relate another situation of a German woman captured and imprisoned when the Russians conquered her country at the end of World War II. Her family was in territory controlled by the West, but she was placed in a concentration camp in East Germany. The only way she could be released and restored to her family was if (1) she became gravely ill, or (2) she became pregnant.
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She enticed one of her guards and became pregnant. When her condition was made known, she was allowed to return to her family, who received her warmly. Her baby was made welcome by the family. The situationists say that love in this case was best served by her committing adultery, not by remaining pure. [This will be examined later].

3. Here are some statements made by situationists:
 - a. "But if people do not believe it is wrong to have sex relations without marriage, it isn't, unless they hurt themselves, their parents, or others....All situationists would agree with Mrs. Patrick Campbell's remark that they can do what they want 'as long as they don't do it in the street and frighten the horses'" (*Spiritual Sword*, July, 1972, p.24).
 - b. "For me there are no rules—none at all" (*ibid*).
 - c. "The situationist enters into every decision-making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage, and he treats them with respect as illuminators of his problems. Just the same he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside in the situation if love seems better served by doing so....The situationist follows a moral law or violates it according to love's need....Only the commandment to love is categorically good" (*I Believe Because*, p.237).
 - d. "The point is that an evolutionary ethic for man...should be based on man's own nature, on his evolutionary position and significance....It cannot be expected to be absolute, but must be subject to evolution itself and must be the result of responsible and rational choice in the full light of such knowledge of man and of life as we have" (George Gaylord Simpson, *ibid*, p.25).
 - e. "No action is good or right in itself. It depends on whether it hurts or helps people, whether or not it serves love's purposes..." (*Spiritual Sword*, July, 1971, p.45).
4. Some situationists even appeal to Scripture for support of their views. They twist these passages in a misguided attempt to deceive the simple into believing their foolish doctrine.
 - a. One such passage is Mark 2:23-28: "And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
 - b. From the information in this passage they conclude that Jesus was a situationist, and condoned violating Scriptural principles when necessary. Since he did so, we may. [We will examine this passage later].

B. There is Such a Thing as Absolute Truth and Thus an Absolute Standard of Morality.

1. Truth itself is narrow and restricted.
 - a. We must be 100% correct to ring a particular telephone or to open a combination lock. The right numbers are required and they must be used in the right sequence.
 - b. It is not enough that we are sincere in thinking we have used the right numbers in the right sequence when we have not done so; the proper phone will not ring and the lock will not open!
 - c. It does not matter who the person is who tries to ring your number; everyone must dial the same numbers; and the numbers and their sequence do not change daily or with the situation.
 - d. Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
2. Truth is narrow, restricted, and unbendable in natural laws.
 - a. Gravity: It does not matter how sincerely one wishes, gravity will not go away; neither can it be changed to fit our current needs. It does not matter whether an innocent baby or a hardened

- criminal violates the law of gravity: the result is the same.
- b. Chemistry: A deadly concoction will kill an innocent baby as well as a hardened criminal. And the healing properties of chemicals will avail the innocent as well as the sinful. The concoction has the same results daily and universally; it is dependable and unbendable.
 - c. Reproduction: A million grains of corn when properly planted will produce plants of the same kind. None of these seeds will produce a potato or cotton plant. There is no exception.
 - d. These laws of nature remain unchanged; they apply with equal force to everyone. The same is true with spiritual laws.
 - 1) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - 2) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all."
3. God had an absolute standard for man in the Patriarchal Age.
- a. Genesis 4:3-5: "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." Abel offered his sacrifice by faith (Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17); Cain did not. God's word to Cain and Abel was absolute and unchangeable.
 - b. Genesis 38: The Cases of Er and Onan. When they violated the truth, they suffered the consequences.
 - c. Genesis 39:9: "*There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*" If Joseph had agreed to the enticements of Potiphar's wife he would have committed sin against God; sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4). Where there is no absolute standard, there is no sin (Rom. 4:15). Joseph knew more than the situationists; to commit this sin would have caused greater problems than the imprisonment he suffered.
 - 1) Romans 4:15: "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression."
 - 2) Romans 5:13: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."
 - 3) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
4. God had an absolute standard for man in the Mosaic Age.
- a. The Decalogue meant exactly what it said (Ex. 20:1-17). No exceptions were permitted.
 - b. Violators of Moses' Law were punished. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2).
 - c. Numbers 15:32-36: "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses."
 - d. Leviticus 10:1-2: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD."
5. God has an absolute standard for man in the Gospel Age.
- a. Hebrews 2:1-3: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have
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- heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 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*."
- b. Wrongs are specified:
- 1) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 1:18-20: "But *as God is true*, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."
 - 3) Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 4) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - 5) Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:27 says that those contaminated with sin (any sin) will not be permitted into heaven.
- c. The New Testament also spells out positive things which are required of us if we are to have God's approval and blessings. It is not enough that we shun the wrong, we must do the right.
- 1) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:5-7: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
- d. The New Testament has a stricter standard of right and wrong than the Old Testament.
- 1) The Old Testament forbade adultery; the gospel forbids the lustful look: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28).
 - 2) The Old Testament forbade stealing; the gospel requires us to work so that we may give to those in need: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
- e. The New Testament applies to every generation, universally, to the end of time.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 2) We are warned not to make any changes to it.
 - a) Galatians 1:6-9: "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
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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."

- b) Revelation 22:18-19: "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."
- 3) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
- 4) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

C. Christian Conduct is Based on Love.

1. Pertinent passages:
 - a. Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - b. Romans 13:8: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."
2. Man is not able to know what love requires in every situation.
 - a. What one might think serves love might be wrong.
 - 1) Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
 - 2) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - b. Hitler loved Germany, but he caused millions of his people to be killed; many Germans were also slaughtered in his concentration camps by his command; tens of millions of others died in the war he precipitated.
 - c. The theory would give man the right to decide for himself what love requires. Disasters would be multiplied if everyone followed the humanistic standard.
3. We must have a reliable standard to know what love requires.
 - a. God's word details what love requires.
 - 1) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
 - 2) Mark 12:31: "And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - 3) Romans 13:8-10: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, *namely*, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

- 5) 1 John 5:2-3: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
- b. When we obey God, we know we are right and cannot be wrong.
- D. We Can Know That the New Morality is Wrong.
1. Their arguments can be answered.
 - a. Mark 2:23-28: "And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (cf. Matt. 12:1-8; 1 Sam. 21:1-7). Christ replied to his enemies by showing that they were being inconsistent when they justified David's unlawful act and condemned his disciples' action, which he shows to have been lawful and right. Commenting on the parallel passage of Matthew 12:3ff, J.W. McGarvey made the following observations:
 - 1) "Jesus expressly admits that what David did was unlawful; and some have supposed that he here intends to justify it on the ground of necessity, and then to argue that his disciples, though guilty of violating the law of the Sabbath, are justifiable on the same ground. There is no doubt that on this ground David excused himself for eating the showbread, and that the Pharisees did the same for him. But it can not be that he who refused to turn stones into bread when tortured by a forty days' fast, and who said, 'Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,' would approve such a violation of the law as David was guilty of. Neither can it be that he allowed his own disciples while under the law to break the Sabbath. If Christians may violate law when its observance would involve hardship or suffering, then there is an end of suffering for the name of Christ, and an end even of self-denial" (*Commentary on Matthew-Mark*, p.104).
 - 2) "But it is clear that by the Pharisees David's act was thought excusable; otherwise they could have retorted on Jesus thus: Out of your own mouth we condemn you: you class your act with David's; but David sinned, and so do you" (*ibid*).
 - 3) "Now the real argument of Jesus is this: David, when hungry, ate the show-bread, which it was confessedly unlawful for him to eat, yet you justify him: my disciples pluck grain and eat it on the Sabbath, an act which the law does not forbid, and yet you condemn them" (*ibid*).
 - 4) "The priests in the temple were required to offer sacrifice, trim the golden lamps, and burn incense on the Sabbath, and these acts required manual labor. In this case, the general law against labor on the Sabbath was modified by the specific law concerning the temple service. The term 'profane' is used, not because it was a real profanation, but because, being labor, it had the appearance of profanation. The example proves that the prohibition of labor on the Sabbath was not universal, and as it was not, it might not include what the disciples had just done" (*ibid*).
 - 5) "The disciples who ate the grain are compared to the priest in the temple; and the temple with that which led the disciples to the act in question. This was the service which they were rendering to Jesus—a service which sometimes prevented the usual means of providing food. It was their obligation to serve him which was greater than the temple; that is greater than the obligation of the temple service on the priests. If then, the priests were justifiable, much more the disciples" (*ibid*).
 - 6) "That he was Lord of the Sabbath—a fact which his previous works had demonstrated—placed

his conduct in regard to the Sabbath above criticism, and made it really a guide as to the proper way to observe the Sabbath. This remark takes the question outside the range of argument, and brings it within the range of authority. It should be observed that, in this discussion, Jesus sought chiefly to expose the inconsistency of his assailants, and to assert his own divine authority. He reserved to another opportunity a more detailed argument to prove the innocence of acts of mercy on the Sabbath" (*ibid*, p.105).

- b. The pioneer and Indians argument.
 - 1) If the frontiersman told the truth, he would have destroyed his family. If he told a lie, he would be in trouble with the Almighty (Rev. 21:8). What could he do?
 - 2) However, the Indians would kill the pioneer whether he told the truth, told a lie, or said nothing at all. Why not preserve his family and his own integrity by remaining silent about his family? The likelihood of anyone today falling into a similar situation is extremely remote.
- c. The German woman argument.
 - 1) The case shows the weakness of their system. It is an extremely rare and unlikely situation. How many people are apt to face such a dilemma?
 - 2) If such an extremely unlikely situation should develop, it would be the proper thing to do to maintain her honor, integrity, and purity, rather than to taint her soul by sin—even if the cost is the continued separation from her family. It is a case of priority—the Lord or the family; between freedom from sin or confinement by keeping pure.
 - 3) The case fails to take note of the evil effects the woman's actions could naturally bring to the guard himself, on his wife and family, and on the future behavior of the woman's children, in addition to the evil which any sin brings on those who are tainted by it.
 - a) Isaiah 59:1: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
 - b) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
2. We can see its folly by looking at history.
 - a. If an absolute standard of morality is not recognized, confusion and turmoil result. "In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).
 - b. Where Bible morality was rejected, doom resulted. Compare: Sodom; Rome; Greece; Nazi Germany; Tojo's Japan.
 - c. We cannot legalize or wink at sin without being affected. It will grow, multiply, intensify, spread, and destroy. Legalized gambling, for example, contaminates a community in various ways.
 - 1) It takes food from the mouths of the innocent and cover from their heads.
 - 2) It corrupts some law enforcement personnel, judges and attorneys, and the gamblers.
 - 3) It places a greater tax burden on the population to support more police, and finance a greater welfare program.
 - 4) It destroys the principle of work, encourages the something-for-nothing notion, and promotes the downward trend in morality.
 - d. Biblical principles, stated so long ago and proved by countless specific cases, are still true.
 - 1) Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
 - 2) Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people."
3. The New Morality is simply the Old Immorality! Modernists in our modern world like to change names and words, to deceive the simple—and themselves.

III. CONCLUSION.

A. What Can We Do?

1. First, tend to our own immediate situation.
 - a. We must control our own selves, by keeping ourselves pure in thought, word, and deed.

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- b. We can train and restrain those under our influence: our children and grandchildren; we can urge morality in our entire family and encourage it among our friends.
 - c. We must trust in God's providence to deliver us from evil.
 - 1) Matthew 6:13: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."
 - 2) 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
 - 3) Philippians 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
 2. We can try to influence others in the way of truth.
 - a. By exalting God and his word.
 - 1) God wants the best for us. A mother restricts the activities of her children, not for the purpose of demonstrating her authority, but in the best interests of her little ones.
 - 2) God places some restrictions and requirements on us, but these are all in our best interest. "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. 12:11).
 - 3) God's word is timeless and powerful. "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" (Heb. 4:12). "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:24-25).
 - b. By setting the proper example for the world: be consistent with our claims as children of God.
 - c. Do what we can to retain good civil laws and oppose unrighteous laws in every scriptural way.
 - d. Develop strong elders, deacons, teachers, and preachers who will stand for and uphold the truth.
 - e. Insist on faithful preaching and teaching of the word.
 - 1) 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 4:1-5: "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."
- B. The Gospel Plan of Salvation Demonstrates God's Wisdom.
1. By receiving (hearing) the gospel, we demonstrate our honesty.
 2. Believing the gospel changes the object of our love: before faith, we loved self and the world; after faith is established in our hearts, we center our love on Christ and heaven.
 3. In repentance, we sincerely regret our sinful past, and determine not to repeat those sinful actions.
 4. In confessing Christ before God and men, we show our courage and commitment.
 5. In baptism, we show our faith and willingness to be obedient to God in order to be saved.
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Difficult Passages

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Bible contains some statements that are difficult to understand.

1. 2 Peter 3:15-17: "And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness."
2. Why does Bible have difficult statements? Because it is God's word! The Bible is the mind of God revealed to man in man's language. How could an infinite Being express his thoughts so that finite man could comprehend?
 - a. Could you explain how electricity works to a 2-year-old? How could a 10-year-old child explain to a 70-year-old how to operate a computer?
 - b. The problem is not in God's inability to express the information clearly, but in man's limited ability to comprehend.

B. The Bible was produced by infinite wisdom.

1. Some things are hard, but we can know what is essential.
 - a. John 7:17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or *whether* I speak from myself" (ASV).
 - b. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - c. 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
 - d. 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ..."
2. We must study the Bible and reflect on what it says. We are warned to use care lest we make a wrong application (cf. 2 Peter 3:15-17).
 - a. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not *to go* beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - b. Revelation 1:3: "Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand."
 - c. God's word deals with the great plan by which he seeks to save man. It is his eternal plan, which was not developed lightly; it is not intended to be shallow.
3. No man can fully probe and grasp every detail God included in his revelation.
 - a. The Bible is a divine production; it is truly the Word of God! His plan of the ages!
 - b. To try to quickly grasp all that is in the Bible would be no less difficult than trying to empty the Tennessee River with a cup.
 - c. But we have the God-given requirement to do the best we can to learn as much of it as possible; our eternal destiny depends on learning and doing all that we can.
 - 1) In cutting grass from a lawn, a child might use his hands to pull weeds—he can only do a small part of the work; an older boy might push a mower—he can do much more of the work; another might can drive a large machine—he does the best job.
 - 2) In studying the Bible, we know that not all is written on the same plane; some things a child can grasp (cf. stories; Good Samaritan; David and Goliath); but other parts are a challenge to the greatest scholar (Romans; Job; Revelation).
 - 3) The best students of the word are those who spend much effort and time, sincerely probing the depths of the Scriptures; others are able, due to time or educational limitations, only to study

and grasp basic material in the Scriptures.

4. We must not allow our inability to understand a difficult passage to drive us away from studying it.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. Genesis 4:16-17: Who did Cain marry?

1. Cain knew his wife; they began to raise a family, apparently quite a large one. He built a "city" and named it after his son, Enoch. This is not the Enoch of Jude 14 and Genesis 5:21-24. "The construction of a city by Cain will cease to surprise us, if we consider that at the commencement of its erection, centuries had already passed since the creation of man, and Cain's descendants may by this time have increased considerably in numbers; also, (city) does not necessarily presuppose a large town, but simply an enclosed space with fortified dwellings, in contradistinction to the isolated tents of shepherds; and lastly, the words (he was building) merely indicate the commencement and progress of the building, but not its termination" (Keil, p.116).
2. Genesis 3:20: "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."
 - a. Eve is affirmed to be the mother of all living. She was not the mother of fish or fowls; she did not produce dogs or cats; no insect or reptile could be her offspring. She is the mother of all living human beings.
 - b. Adam provided a name for his wife. *Eve* means "living." She was appropriately named for she became the mother of all other human beings. This answers the question as to where Cain later got his wife: he married a sister [or niece?]. There would not be the danger then as we have now in marrying a close relative. God would protect them initially from these dangers. The verse emphasizes again that Adam and Eve were the first pair (cf. Acts 17:26).
3. Genesis 5:1-3: "This *is* the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."
 - a. The propagation of the race did not commence until after Adam and Eve were put out of the garden. This is a brief recapitulation of the preceding events which serves to introduce the real purpose of the chapter: the history of the descendants of righteous Seth. In the preceding chapter, Moses had detailed briefly the sordid history of ungodly Cain and his descendants. The two great lines of humanity continued until the Flood in which all were destroyed except Noah and his immediate family, who were of Seth's line.
 - b. How many children did Adam and Eve have? There is no way we can know. We have heard of women who have produced more than twenty children; perhaps Eve could have had much more than twenty.

B. 1 Corinthians 15:29: Baptism for the dead.

1. Verse 29: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" [Guy Woods described this verse as being (in his view) the second most difficult verse in the New Testament, with 1 Peter 4:6 being the most difficult].
2. The Mormon Church practices "baptism" in behalf of certain dead people who died in disobedience to that command.
 - a. "It is rather well-known that the 'Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints' (Mormons) appeals to this passage in order to support their doctrine of *vicarious baptism*, i.e., the baptism of a living person, with the benefits of the rite (i.e., remission of sins) being transferred to another person — already deceased. According to B.H. Roberts, the major historian of the Mormon Church, Joseph Smith, Jr., founder of the LDS movement, wrote: 'A man may act as proxy for his own relatives . . . we may be baptized for those whom we have much friendship for . . .' (B.H. Roberts, ed., **History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints**, Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press,

- 1950, VI, p. 366). In 1959, Stephen L. Richards, First Counselor in the First Presidency of the Salt Lake Church wrote: ‘All men are equal before the law and all are to have the opportunity, even the dead, to accept the Gospel and receive the promised blessings, but all must know and understand, and the dead who have gone on into the spirit world without knowledge of the Gospel are to be hereafter given an election to embrace it through vicarious works done for them by their descendants and other friends in the brotherhood of the Church. This work is done within the Temples provided for that purpose (**About Mormonism**, Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1959, p. 11)’ [Wayne Jackson, Christian Courier Website].
- b. But Ezekiel 18:20 does not permit “proxy obedience.”
 - 1) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - 2) Ezekiel’s plain statement repudiates the doctrine. The sins of the disobedient pertain only to **his** own soul; and the righteousness of the obedient pertains only to **his** soul. The soul that sins shall die [be separated from God]; the soul that obeys shall live [be in fellowship with God].
 - 3) If one could perform an act of obedience for the benefit of a dead person, why could not an act of wickedness be done to the detriment of a dead person?
 - 4) Each individual will stand before the judgment bar of Christ to be judged according to the way he lived on earth (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12). No one will be judged for another’s obedience or disobedience—only for his own.
 - c. The Parable of the Ten Virgins depicts two classes of individuals who await the end of time and the return of Christ. The wise ones were fully prepared for his coming; the foolish ones were not. They “slept” (died: Dan. 12:2; 1 Thess. 4:13-17), and were found unprepared at the Lord’s return. Those who were prepared could not share their righteousness with the unprepared. The eternal state of each was unchangeably fixed.
 - d. In the report the Lord gave of Lazarus and the wicked rich man (Luke 16:19-31), the rich man was told that it was impossible for one to move from the place of comfort where Abraham and Lazarus were, to the place of torment where the rich man was kept. A great gulf was “fixed” between the two places. “Significantly, the verb that is rendered ‘is fixed’ in the Greek New Testament, is a perfect tense, passive voice form. The perfect tense suggests that the boundary is permanent, and the passive voice indicates the barrier was ‘fixed’ by an extraneous force, namely God. Heaven has decreed that once a person dies, his station in eternity is permanent. It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this there is nothing but judgment (Heb. 9:27). If one could leave the realm of the condemned and enter the domain of the saved, might not the reverse theoretically be true as well?” [Jackson, *ibid.*].
 - e. This makes the Mormon doctrine impossible.
3. New Testament baptism has several requirements, which show the Mormon baptism for the dead doctrine to be religious error [Bales, *Christian Contend For Thy Cause*, pp.137f].
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NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM	BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD
Repentance: Acts 2:38; 17:30	No Repentance
Washing: Eph. 5:26-27; Heb. 10:22	Body of Recipient Not Washed
Baptism in Own Behalf: Acts 2:38; 22:16	Baptized in Another's Behalf
Living Person: Mk. 16:15-16	Dead Person Not Baptized
Faith: Mk. 16:15-16; Jn. 8:24; Heb. 11:6	No Faith Required
One-time Act (No info. to the contrary)	Living person baptized more than once

4. The above chart shows that the practice of baptizing for the dead is so different from New Testament baptism that it requires another baptism altogether. But Ephesians 4:4-5 affirms that there is only one extant baptism. Thus, baptism for the dead is without scriptural authority, and is wrong.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not *to go* beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - b. 2 John 9: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (ASV).
5. What is the *baptism for the dead* named in the verse? What do we know?
 - a. We know that a dead unbeliever cannot believe, and thus baptism cannot help his soul.
 - b. We know that once a person dies, his eternal destiny is forevermore sealed: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:11-12).
 - c. We know that baptism by proxy is no more profitable than faith or repentance by proxy.
6. What is the meaning of Paul's statement? Several solutions have been suggested. [See Woods, *Questions and Answers*, pp.115-118]:
 - a. Some have thought that *the dead* refers to Christ; that baptism is done in behalf of Christ. This view has the verse saying: "Why were you baptized for Christ, if Christ did not rise from the dead?" Woods points out, however, that the Greek text uses the plural form of *dead*, literally "the dead ones."
 - b. Another view understands baptism to be a figure of speech, used in reference to the sufferings the first century saints underwent (cf. Matt. 20:22-23). This view would have Paul's argument to be: If there is no resurrection from the dead, why is it that we are required to suffer and die in service to Christ? "This view violates the rule of exegesis that words ought to be given their usual and ordinary sense, unless the passage and the context in which they occur require a figurative interpretation, which is certainly not the case here, since there is no statement indicating that the element of the baptism was suffering" (Woods, p.117). Also, the next verse uses this argument as an additional reason to believe in the resurrection; Paul would not have repeated the argument.
 - c. Another view suggests that there were some ignorant members of the church in Corinth who actually practiced baptism in behalf of certain individuals who had died in unbelief, and that Paul alludes to the practice here in an attempt to get them to accept the doctrine of the resurrection. This position is based entirely on an assumption; there is no evidence of any such group or any such practice in the first century. It would be strange (as well as misleading) for Paul to use such an argument without refuting the error it encompassed. Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) mentioned such a group in Corinth which practiced vicarious baptism; but if this is Paul's idea, he did not rebuke

- this dangerous doctrine. Some in Corinth denied the resurrection, which the apostle refutes; why would he refute this error, and leave the equally dangerous doctrine of proxy baptism unrebuked?
- d. Others think that the verse means: If there is no resurrection from the dead, why are we baptized to keep up the ranks of the believers (replace those saints who have died)? But this would have been a weak argument, one that assumes the prime reason for baptism is simply to keep the church supplied with members. The purpose of baptism is to save souls from the guilt of past sins so that they can be prepared for heaven.
 - e. Some in Corinth denied the resurrection of the dead; this denial undermined their own baptism. "To prove the resurrection of the body, Paul alluded to their baptism. Baptism is a picture of a burial *and a resurrection*; some of them were now denying a resurrection of the body; what then, of their baptism? It portrayed that which they now questioned! Why were they baptized for (*huper*), with reference to, the state from which they would come forth by resurrection, if there be no resurrection? Their view actually nullified their baptism!" (Woods, p.116). The passage, therefore, ties the doctrines of baptism and resurrection together with an unbreakable knot. This seems to be the correct understanding of the passage (1 Cor. 15:29).
7. Brother Woods states: "It should be noted that the passage appears in a context where the subject under consideration is the resurrection of the body. Whatever I Cor. 15:29 teaches, it is with reference to the resurrection of the body—not baptism! It thus adds to our knowledge of the resurrection—not baptism" (p.116).
- C. Understanding the greater works of John 14:12 is difficult.
1. John 14:12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."
 2. First, notice that the text does not say they would work greater miracles.
 - a. What greater miracles could be done than those the Lord worked? He stilled a great storm with a simple rebuke; he fed 5000 men with a small amount of food; he restored withered limbs; he raised the dead.
 - b. One miracle is no greater than another; one might be more impressive to human thinking than others, but all miracles were manifestations of divine power.
 3. The Lord stated that they would do greater works—because he went to his Father.
 - a. Having our names written in heaven is greater than having the power to cast out demons: "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:19-20).
 - b. Showing love is greater than performing supernatural works.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 12:31: "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."
 - c. The feeding of the 5000 was a great miracle, but providing the lost with the bread of life is more important: "I am that bread of life" (John 6:48).
 - d. The resurrection of Lazarus was great, but it is more important to be freed from the guilt of sin: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).
 4. The purpose of miracles was to confirm the word of God, but no miracle could save a soul.
 - a. Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto
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- salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
- b. Hebrews 4:12: "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."
 - c. James 1:21-25: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
5. Our Lord was limited to working only with the Israelites during his public ministry (Matt. 15:24), but we have the privilege of working with mankind all over the world! The "greater works" we do involves taking the full revelation of the gospel, with its power to save people from every kind of sin, in every place.
- D. Biblical statements regarding the earth appear difficult to some.
1. Passages:
 - a. Psalms 78:69: "And he built his sanctuary like high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath established for ever."
 - b. Ecclesiastes 1:4: "*One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever."
 2. One generation succeeds the former generation: "*One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever" (Eccl. 1:4). There is a continual changing of the people who inhabit God's footstool. "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel" (Judg. 2:10).
 - a. What you and I see as individuals is only the tiniest particle of time, for our lives are short and encompass only a minute fraction of human history (Jas. 4:13-14). But God inhabits eternity, and is eternal; he was there at the beginning, he is present throughout time; he will be present at the end of time. He sees it all, and knows all.
 - b. Materialists abuse the final clause, asserting that in it is found proof of their theory that the earth was created at the beginning, never to be destroyed! This conclusion is in direct contradiction to the plain statement in 2 Peter 3:10ff that the earth will be destroyed, burned up, dissolved at the coming of Christ. It also fails to notice the fact that "for ever" does not always mean "eternal." Jonah was in the sea "for ever" (Jonah 2:6). The word, according to lexicographers, means "the fullness of the time required." That time might be for eternity, or in other contexts, for a relatively short period of time. The earth will be present until the time appointed for it is fulfilled, which will occur at the Lord's second coming. The earth will be here until the last generation has run its race.
 3. Psalms 78:69: "And he built his sanctuary like high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath established for ever."
 - a. "David indeed erected only a tent for the ark, but a temple was then designed and prepared for, and finished by his son; and that was, (1.) A very stately place. It was built like the palaces of princes, and the great men of the earth, nay, it excelled them all in splendour and magnificence. Solomon built it, and yet here it is said God built its, for his father had taught him, perhaps with reference to this undertaking, that except the Lord build the house those labour in vain that build it, Ps 127:1, which is a psalm for Solomon. (2.) A very stable place, like the earth, though not to continue as long as the earth, yet while it was to continue it was as firm as the earth, which God upholds by
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- the word of his power, and it was not finally destroyed till the gospel temple was erected, which is to continue as long as the sun and moon endure (Ps 89:36-37) and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail." [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
- b. The relative durability and firmness of the earth is used to emphasize the durability of the temple—it would not be a temporary edifice like the tabernacle was. *It is not affirming that the earth would exist eternally.*
 - c. Again, the word **forever** means, not that the earth is eternal, but that it would stand for the fullness of the time God intended it to exist.
4. Genesis 8:22: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."
 - a. The plain implication of the statement is that the earth will one day come to an end.
 - b. God hereby resolved to continue the earth's seasons until the end of the earth. Implied in the statement is the fact that the earth will cease to be at some future date.
 - c. In the meantime we have God's unconditional promise of the continuation of the seasons.
 5. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - a. The statement here shows at least two things: the earth is not eternal and the Lord's words are unshakable. In nature, the universe and the earth seem to be the most stable and permanent of all. But the Lord affirmed that these would not always be (Cf. 2 Pet. 3:10; Heb. 12:25-29). Paul described material things as temporal and the things which cannot be seen as eternal (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Genesis 8:22 implies that the earth will have a limited history ("while the earth remaineth").
 - b. Just as surely as his words will never have an end, just that certain will the end of Jerusalem come as he had explained in the context. They could depend on his pronouncements regarding the overthrow of the city of Jerusalem.
 6. 2 Peter 3:8-14: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." No amount of twisting and denying can remove from this plain affirmation that the earth will be burned up and dissolved when the Lord returns!
- E. Romans 9:12-13: Did God actually hate Esau?
1. Romans 9:12-13: "It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."
 - a. A sectarian preacher wrote "John 3:16" on a blackboard, and then said he knew one that God did not love! He cited this passage: "Jacob have I love, but Esau have I hated."
 - b. The Bible says God hated Esau, but in what sense? It was certainly not in the sense the man claimed! He loved Jacob more only in the sense that he chose him for the greater role.
 - c. Acceptance of a creed or confession will color one's interpretations of the Bible: The Calvinist creed asserts that the number of the saved and the number of the lost are so fixed that neither can be increased nor diminished." Their conclusion is that God hated Esau, and consigned him to an eternity in Gehenna; and that God loved Jacob, and programmed him to an eternity in Heaven.
 2. The text says that the elder shall serve the younger and that *Jacob have I loved*, and *Esau have I hated*.
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The two statements are used together, but they were originally given about 1500 years apart; the first was stated even before these twins were born (Gen. 25:20-24); and the second was given many centuries after the death of these two men (Mal. 1:1-3). Compare: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

3. Genesis 25:20-23: "And these *are* the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren: and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it be* so, why *am* I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger."
 - a. She conceived (vs. 21) and soon became dismayed when there was a violent struggle within her. The Lord told her some remarkable things: she was to bear twins, they were boys, each would produce a nation, the nation of the younger would be stronger, and the nation of the older would serve the nation of the younger. Esau did not serve Jacob personally, but his descendants served the descendants of Jacob. The prophecy pertained more to their nations that to the two boys.
 - b. *Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated*—this was written centuries after they both were dead. Thus, the nation of each is meant; he loved Jacob in that he chose him and his lineage through which to send the Messiah and therefore blessed and preserved them.
4. Malachi 1:1-3: "The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? *Was* not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness."
 - a. If Israel had not been out of line, there would have been no need for this message. But since their return to the land from captivity, they had wandered from the paths of holiness, and had stumbled over the problems that arose. Returning to the land of promise, they doubtless thought that their problems were over, that God would now bless them gloriously, and that the Messiah might be coming before long. But their struggles must continue, despite having returned to the land of their fathers. God would supply what they could not provide for themselves, but there would be many hardships they must learn to bear, and many problems they must solve.
 - b. With their many problems and discouragements, the Israelites had become despondent and full of doubt. "If God loved us, why are we facing these difficulties? Why does he not remove them with a wave of his hand?" At the first of this oracle, God reaffirms his love for Israel.
 - 1) The objection placed in the mouths of the Jews is, "Wherein hast thou loved us?" When someone gets into trouble, it may appear to him that God has deserted him, that if the Lord had loved him, he would not be facing the difficulties before him.
 - 2) God's reply is: "Was not Esau the brother of Jacob? And yet I loved Jacob." God made a choice between these two twins as to which would be the forerunner of the nation he was to build from Abraham's descendants. He chose Jacob and rejected Esau. The fact is, that God loved both of these brothers. But he loved Jacob more in the sense that he chose him for the purposes he intended to fulfill.
5. The Bible sometimes uses "hate" in the sense of "to love less."
 - a. This is seen in the case of Jacob's feelings for Rachel and Leah.
 - 1) Genesis 29:30-31: "And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years. And when the LORD saw that Leah *was* hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel *was* barren."
 - 2) Jacob "hated" Leah only in the sense that he loved Rachel more than he loved Leah.

- b. This is seen in the case of the Lord's requirement for his disciples to "hate" their relatives.
 - 1) Luke 14:26: "If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."
 - 2) Matthew 10:37-39: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."
 - c. Jacob did not hate Leah, he simply loved her less than he loved Rachel. One who loves his parent more than he loves Christ is said to hate Christ. He hates him only in the sense that he loves him less than he loves the parent.
 - d. It is clear that God does not hate any man, in the sense of having an active ill-will against a human being. It is impossible for God to hate any person, and it is certain that he would not require us to hate anyone. Indeed, he issued many warnings against our allowing any degree of hatred to reside within our hearts or to be expressed in our words or lives.
 - 1) Matthew 5:43-48: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
 - 2) Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - 3) Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 4) 1 John 4:20-21: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."
 6. The lesson of Romans 9:12-13: God had the right to make a choice between Jacob and Esau. Their personal salvation was not at stake; the choice determined which of the two boys would be the ancestor of the nation of Israel and the Messiah. God chose Jacob. God had earlier chosen Isaac over Ishmael; he later chose Judah over the other eleven sons of Jacob to be the tribe through which the Messiah would enter the world.
 - a. Romans 9:10-14: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."
 - b. Eventually, the Edomites were absorbed by the Nabataeans (Arabs), and by 100 A.D. had lost their identity as a separate people. The history of Edom, with which the Israelites were doubtless familiar, showed conclusively that God had indeed loved Jacob (and his descendants).
 - c. God did not hate Esau; he expressed greater love for Jacob in choosing him to be the one through
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- whom Israel was developed. Furthermore, the statement of Malachi 1:2-3, and cited by Paul in our text, did not have application to Jacob and Esau as individuals; it was stated in reference to their respective descendants: Israel and Edom. God did not hate Edom; he showed more love for Israel in that he chose them to be the special nation through which he would send the Redeemer.
- d. God had decreed that Israel would continue as a separate nation, while other nations of those ancient times would cease to exist. "For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11).
 - e. God never decided the eternal fate of any man separate from that man's free choice. To do otherwise would place him in direct violation of his own word: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).
- F. Romans 2:14-15: What law were the Gentiles under during the Mosaic Age?
1. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Rom. 2:14-15).
 - a. What law did the Gentiles have while the Law of Moses applied to the Israelites? It follows that they were some kind of law, or else there was no possibility that they could commit sin.
 - 1) Romans 4:15: "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression."
 - 2) Romans 5:13: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."
 - 3) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - b. We remember that during the centuries between the creation and the giving of the Mosaic Law, God dealt with men through the heads of the various families—a period of time which we call the Patriarchal Age. The great moral principles that were bound on the patriarchs continued on down through time until the death of Christ. These precepts were bound on the Gentiles. The New Testament replaced both the moral code of Patriarchy and the written code of the Mosaic Law.
 - 1) God gave Adam and Eve a negative law, forbidding their eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; they were also required to dress and keep the Garden of Eden: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:15-17)..
 - 2) Cain and Abel were given instructions regarding worship (Gen. 4: Heb. 11:4; cf. Rom. 10:17).
 - 3) When Cain murdered Abel, God pronounced the proper penalty upon him; his killing his brother constituted a transgression—even though there was no written law; obviously he was amenable to a law that forbade murder.
 2. Nine of the ten commandments (Exod. 20:1-17) embody principles of truth that are prominent parts of the gospel, and which have always been bound by God on all people.
 - a. The first of the ten forbade Israel from having any other gods before them. This is an eternal truth, bound upon Adam, Noah, Abraham, and all others, regardless of when they live.
 - b. The second forbade Israel from making graven images (idols). It has never been right for any man to have religious images; these would divert attention away from God to mundane icons.
 - c. The third forbade Israelites taking God's name in vain. This also is an eternal principle; it has never been right for any one to thus use God's name.
 - d. The fourth commandment bound the keeping of the Sabbath on the Israelites. This command was never directed to Adam, Noah, Abraham, or anyone else who lived during the Patriarchal Age; it
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- has not been bound upon anyone living during the Christian Age; it was bound only upon Israel. This is the only commandment of the ten which is not eternal in scope.
- 1) Exodus 34:27-28: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 5:15: "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."
 - 3) Romans 7:1-7: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. 7 What shall we say then? *is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."
- e. The fifth commandment required the Israelites to honor their parents. This eternal precept has always been required, for there has never been a time when God allowed men to dishonor those who brought them into the world.
 - f. The sixth commandment is a prohibition against murder. While the text says, "Thou shalt not kill," the Lord showed that the intent of the law was to forbid murder: "He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder..." (Matt. 19:18). Cain violated this eternal law when he slew Abel; he was punished for this violation. When Noah exited the ark, God stated plainly that murderers were to be severely punished: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6).
 - g. The seventh commandment forbade adultery. It has always been contrary to God's will for anyone to commit adultery. It is true that God overlooked certain violations during ancient times, but now he requires repentance of every offender: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).
 - h. The eighth commandment forbade stealing. It was as wrong for one who lived during the age of the Patriarchs to steal, as it was for an Israelite [who lived under the Mosaic Law] to steal; it is as wrong for one to steal under the Christian Age. This is also an eternal precept.
 - i. The ninth commandment forbade bearing false witness. It was wrong for anyone who lived under the Patriarchal Age to bear false witness; it was wrong for the Jews to do so; it is wrong for every one who lives today to do so. This is also an eternal precept. "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
 - j. The tenth commandment prohibited coveting. Here is another eternal principle; it was true before the Mosaic Law was given; it was true under patriarchy; it is true in the Christian Age.
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PATRIARCHAL Principle	MOSAIC Code	CHRISTIAN Principle
Worship God	No Other Gods	Worship God: Jn. 4:24
No Images	No Graven Images	No Idols: 1 Jn. 5:21; Col. 3:5
No Vain Swearing	No Vain Swearing	No Swearing: Jas. 5:12
No Special Day	Keep Sabbath	No Sabbath
Honor Parents	Honor Parents	Obey Parents: Eph. 5:1-2
Not Murder	Not Murder	No Hatred: Mt 5:21-22; 1 Jn. 3:15
No Adultery	No Adultery	No Lust: Mt. 5:27-28
Not Steal	Not Steal	Not Steal: Eph. 4:28
Not Lie	Not Bear False Witness	Not Lie: Col. 3:9
No Covetousness	Not Covet	Not Covet: Eph. 5:3

3. These nine principles were bound in the oral code of Patriarchy; they have been bound in the written revelations of the Law and the Gospel. Adam, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the Ninevites and many others, were amenable to these precepts. When the gospel came, all men everywhere are amenable to it (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 17:30-31; 1 Tim. 2:4-5).
 - a. The good things which the Jews did in following the inspired revelation of the Law of Moses, the acceptable Gentiles did by living in harmony with the principles of rightness, that is, by following those precepts which were obviously right. Cain violated the principle that forbids murder; he knew he was guilty even though God had not given any direct written injunction prohibiting murder (as far as we can know).
 - b. When the Gentiles, who lived prior to the giving of the gospel, followed these moral principles to the best of their ability and light, they were acceptable to God. When they violated these same principles, they were unacceptable to God. The light they followed or failed to follow was by nature (by common sense and wisdom); the Jews did so according to revealed light (the inspired word of God).
 - c. The Gentiles who lived in harmony with the light they had, and the Jews who followed the Law of Moses as well as they could, were acceptable to God. The Gentile operated by nature; the Jew operated by revelation; but neither was perfect in his obedience. The Jews were governed by the Mosaic Law; the Gentiles were governed by the moral principles that have always been true.
 - d. The Jew had the written Law; the Gentile had an inner law governing the basic issues of life. By virtue of the greater and more perfect nature of his rule of faith, the Jew bore a heavier responsibility (cf. Jas. 3:1). But his life could be on a higher plane, and his blessings would be on a sure foundation. The Gentile, having only a general light at best (cf. Acts 17:30), could not be as closely judged in particulars as was his Jewish counterpart. But his relationship with God would not be on as high a plane, and his understanding might be deficient and vague.
4. How did the knowledge of right and wrong enter man? Some think that it is inborn in us as part of our makeup. But more likely, this inner knowledge was instilled in us through teaching.
 - a. In Eden, Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship with God, obtaining guidance directly from the Almighty. Following their sin and expulsion from the Garden, and the rapid increase in the number of human beings, the knowledge of the moral precepts faded with each generation, until

- finally there was a great apostasy.
- b. Noah and his immediate family walked in the light of God's will, but after the flood when men began to multiply again, their knowledge of his will once more faded from memory, and the conditions noted in Romans 1:18-32 developed.
 - c. However, during these times of departure from God, there was still some degree of knowledge alive in each person. It is hardly likely that any person will reach such a low level of degradation in which there is no glimmer of light, or no awareness of the rightness of some things and the wrongness of other things. "And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake" (Gen. 20:11). It appears that the absence of the "fear of God" was not anticipated by Abraham. It is implied, therefore, that in many places there was some degree of fear for God during that ancient time.
 - d. That awareness was originally inculcated into the minds of Adam and Noah by teaching, and passed on to succeeding generations by some method of teaching. It cannot be proved that it was imparted at the beginning as a natural part of our physical machinery. But man is distinguished from the beasts by having an eternal spirit and by possessing intellectual and emotional capabilities. Using these powers, man could be taught right precepts, which he could pass on to the following generation, thus keeping some measure of that original information alive. Man's inquisitive nature and power to perceive can lead him to search after God.
 - 1) Acts 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
 - 2) Acts 17:22-29: "Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, *Ye* men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Why did the pagans worship? They had some knowledge of God; their knowledge of his will had vanished, but they still retained an awareness of God's existence, and sought to honor some supreme Being. Has there ever been a prominent society or civilization that did not have some kind of religious system?
 - 3) Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." They are without excuse who deny the reality of God! They are certifiably foolish (Psa. 14:1).
5. When those Gentiles followed (to some degree) those eternal principles which were made part of the Mosaic Law, it was as if the Law of Moses had been written on their hearts. They kept those precepts, not because they had read the Law, but because they perceived the rightness of doing them.
- a. The consciences of those described bore witness, either accusing or excusing them. This is the character and work of the conscience: to accuse or excuse. The conscience is a witness of that which the individual does. The conscience will urge its owner to act in harmony with what he is convinced is right, then afterward, his thoughts will defend and commend his actions.
 - b. When the mind of a man is instructed in righteousness, he knows what is right and wrong in a given situation; if he acts out of harmony with what he earnestly believes to be right, his
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conscience afflicts him for his error. If he had acted in accord with what he believes to be right, his conscience would have commended his action. The conscience is not the component of our heart that receives instruction; it is the part that condemns or commends our actions. It is the intellectual part of the heart that is taught.

- c. When the conscience has been ignored and abused for a period of time, its voice is effectively stifled. In that state, it is hardened and unfeeling.
 - 1) Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
 - 2) Romans 1:21: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
 - 3) Ephesians 4:18: "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."
 - 4) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

G. 1 Peter 3:18-22 is not an easy passage to grasp.

1. 1 Peter 3:18-22: "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. 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: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."
 2. Christ died for our sins; there is no other sacrifice for sin. Christ was offered once for all time; the price he paid for man's sins was sufficient; he will never need to die again; no other sacrifice is possible or necessary: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
 - a. Hebrews 10:26: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."
 - b. He was put to death in the flesh—he died physically; he was made alive by the Spirit; by this same Spirit he preached. When did Christ preach to the spirits in prison? How? Why?
 3. The Holy Spirit was with the prophet Isaiah; the Spirit did his work through Isaiah.
 - a. Isaiah 61:1: "The spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound."
 - b. Luke 4:16-22: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"
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4. The work of prophesying and teaching God's word is depicted as opening prisons and freeing those under the bondage of sin (Rom. 4:15; 5:13; 1 John 3:4).
 - a. Isaiah 42:7: "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."
 - b. Luke 4:16-22: "...The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."
 - c. The initial application of Isaiah's words was to the release of Israel from Babylon. In fulfillment of the main emphasis of the prophecy, the Lord said: "...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).
5. The Spirit was in all the other Old Testament prophets.
 - a. Nehemiah 9:20,30: "Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst...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."
 - b. 2 Samuel 23:2: "The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue." Acts 1:16: "Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus."
 - c. 2 Peter 1:20-21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost."
 - d. 1 Peter 1:10-13: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
6. The Holy Spirit guided Noah in his preaching to his generation.
 - a. 2 Peter 2:5: "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."
 - b. The Spirit strove with Noah's generation through the preaching Noah did: "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" (Gen. 6:3). Just as long as the voice of Noah was heard, only that long did the Spirit strive with them; when his voice ceased, the Spirit was silent.
 - c. Christ did not preach to the spirits of the lost from Noah's generation while He and they were in the Hadean Realm. Rather, the preaching was done through Noah, during the 120 years the ark was being constructed. They rejected his message; they lost their lives in the flood; and they lost their souls for all eternity!
7. Some maintain that Peter is saying that Christ, while his spirit was in the hadean realm, preached to the spirits of those rebellious humans who died in the flood. But if Christ preached to these spirits in hades, why did he preach to them? Why did he preach only to these spirits? Why will he not do the same thing now?
 - a. The gospel is in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7). The gospel is the only message of salvation made available to any man today.
 - 1) Acts 4:12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

- 2) Romans 1:16: "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."
- 3) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
- 4) Jude 3: "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."
- b. Life on earth is our probationary period; there will be no second chance to be saved after we die.
 - 1) Romans 14:12: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 3) Revelation 22:11-13: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."
 - 4) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
8. There is ample and clear evidence from the Scriptures that only in this life will anyone have opportunity to be saved from past sins.
 - a. The Parable of the Virgins illustrates this point (Matt. 15:1-10). There would be no need to be prepared or to watch if there were a second chance.
 - b. The warnings and invitations of the New Testament emphasize the fact there will be no second chance. Those who rejected the offer, had no other opportunity.
 - 1) Luke 14:16-24: "Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."
 - 2) John 5:40: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." If they did not come, they would have no life.
 - 3) Revelation 22:11-12: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." They condition they were in when death came, would be the condition they have in eternity—there would be no possibility to change then.
 - 4) Revelation 22:17: "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." But when if one does not take the water of life?
 - c. If God gave the antediluvians a second chance, he would be obligated (on the basis of his total impartiality), to give everyone there a second chance. If so, everyone would accept and *Gehenna* would have no human inhabitants! If that were so, why did Christ have to die? Why are we

required to preach the gospel to the world's population?

H. 1 Peter 4:6 is difficult [Guy N. Woods thought it was the hardest in the New Testament].

1. 1 Peter 4:1-6: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. **For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.**"
2. Although it appears very difficult, there is one very clear interpretation of verse six that fits the context and does no violence to any other passage.
 - a. That which was preached was the gospel: "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" (Rom. 1:16).
 - b. *Unto this end....*This phrase indicates the purpose or object for which the gospel was preached to those who are here called "dead." That purpose was that they might be judged [condemned, rejected, and persecuted] according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.
 - c. The preaching of the gospel was to the dead. Notice that the apostle used the past tense—**was preached**. They were dead when Peter wrote this letter, but they were alive in the spirit-world at that time; but they had been alive in this world when the gospel was preached to them.
 - d. As a result of having heard the gospel preached, they obeyed the gospel and became Christians. But they had since died, and were thus dead when the epistle was written. Notice: The gospel **was** preached to them that **are** dead.
 - e. While they lived they were judged (condemned, spoken against) by evil people; Peter's readers were undergoing the same kind of treatment. Although they were judged and condemned by men in the flesh, because of their faithfulness to Christ, they lived according to God in the spirit (in the higher and nobler life of the spirit}.
 - f. That these to whom the gospel was preached were not the same as those contemplated in I Peter 3:19-20, follows from the fact that those who were the objects of Noah's preaching rejected that patriarch's warnings and perished in disobedience in the flood; whereas, these who were the objects of the preaching to which Peter refers had accepted the gospel, and, though dead, had the approbation of God in the spirit realm" (Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on I Peter*).

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The Bible reveals the mind and will of God.

1. Nothing trite is included; what is given is not included to satisfy idle curiosity: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph 5:17).
2. We can understand the Bible, but we do not have to understand everything in the Bible.
 - a. Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are revealed belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we may do* all the words of this law."
 - b. Romans 8:32: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"
 - c. John 7:17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching..." (ASV).
3. We must know the will of God! Human responsibility is clear.

B. The Bible reveals clearly our requirements:

1. To become a Christian:
 - a. Acts 16:30-31: "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."

- b. Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - c. Acts 8:37: "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."
 - d. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
2. To be restored if one is an erring Christian:
- a. Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - b. James 5:16: "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."
 - c. 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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A STUDY OF NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. The New Testament offered to first century saints many warnings about an impending apostasy.
1. The roots of the apostasy were sown during the middle years of that century, and began to come to fruition during its latter decades.
 - a. Acts 20:28-31: "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. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way."
 - c. 1 Timothy 4:1-2: "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."
 - d. 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 2. Despite the warnings, the brethren fell into apostasy, a rebellion that deepened and broadened with the passing of the next couple of hundred years.
- B. The apostasy involved many grave departures from the Word of God.
1. The first departure was in the realm of church leadership—one elder was exalted over the other elders, and given the title of "bishop."
 2. With the passing of time, changes were also made to worship.
 3. It was inevitable that changes to the gospel plan of salvation were made, for when one departure occurred, departures would naturally follow on other subjects and practices.
- C. With the development of the false doctrine of Original Sin came unauthorized changes.
1. The Old and New Testaments both teach that we enter the world completely free from any taint of sin:
 - a. Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - b. Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."
 - c. Matthew 18:3: "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."
 - d. Matthew 19:14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
 - e. Ecclesiastes 7:29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."
 - f. Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) was the first to formulate the doctrine of original sin. He taught that the
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- soul shares in Adam's guilt, and that every person is under the condemnation of sin, even though infants have never committed sin.
- g. The world has been cursed with this devil's doctrine ever since! Virtually every religious group today teaches this error. Obviously, an infant does not obtain the guilt of sin from God, and God said sin is not obtained from parents; the fact is, no infant or little child has any guilt of sin!
2. Infant baptism resulted from this false doctrine.
 - a. The New Testament teaches that baptism is for those who are mature enough to be taught, to have faith, to repent, and to confess their faith.
 - 1) Matthew 28:19-20: "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."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - 3) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 4) Acts 8:37: "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."
 - 5) Romans 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - b. Once the doctrine of original sin was generally believed, the next natural step was infant baptism. If babies are guilty of sin, it was reasoned, they then need to be baptized. At first, infants were immersed. The brethren still understood correctly that baptism is essential for salvation.
 - c. The water of baptism took on magical powers to these people, in cases of infants or adults. Elaborate ceremonies accompanied "baptismal" services. People would gather around the ones to be baptized, waving their arms and shouting to drive evil out of the candidate (cf. F.W. Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom*, Gospel Light Publishing Company, Delight, Arkansas, 1961, p.119).
 - d. Infant baptism was developed in the third century. There is not a single example of it in the New Testament.
 3. Sprinkling or pouring for baptism soon came.
 - a. In the New Testament, baptism was by one action: immersion. The Greek word means "to dip, plunge, or immerse." The descriptions given of baptism by the inspired writers always indicate immersion.
 - 1) John 3:23: "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."
 - 2) Acts 8:36-39: "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. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."
 - 3) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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."
 - 4) Colossians 1:12: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:"
 - b. The first recorded case of anyone being *baptized* by having water poured on him was in 251 A.D.
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A man named Novatian was seriously ill, so sick that it was decided he could not be immersed. Since he had not been baptized, the officials poured water on him, hoping that in this exceptional case it would be acceptable to God. This became known as *clinic baptism*, and was practiced only in very special cases.

- c. The common *mode* of baptism for many centuries was immersion, except in the instances of "clinical baptisms." In 1311, a council was held in Ravenna, Italy in which the decision was made to accept sprinkling or pouring water on the candidate as equally valid with immersion.

D. In this study of New Testament baptism, we shall notice several necessary items.

1. There are six different baptisms spoken of in the Bible.
2. The action of baptism.
3. The proper subjects of baptism.
4. The purpose of baptism.
5. What baptism will not do.
6. What baptism will do.
7. Objections to baptism for the remission of sins.

II. **THERE ARE SIX DIFFERENT BAPTISMS SPOKEN OF IN THE BIBLE.**

A. It surprises many to be told there are six baptism listed in New Testament.

1. Two of these are baptisms only in a figure of speech.
2. Two others have ceased to be practiced in God's arrangement.
3. One is still in effect.
4. One is still future.

B. The two figurative baptisms are:

1. The Baptism of Suffering:
 - a. Matthew 20:20-23: "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father."
 - b. Jesus and his apostles would be subjected to severe treatment—which he called "baptism." James and John had asked for special honors in the kingdom. These two and the rest of the apostles suffered greatly for Lord's Cause—thus endured the "baptism" of suffering. The first of the apostles to die was James, who was martyred (Acts 12); the last was John, who died a natural death (according to secular sources).
 - c. The Administrators of the baptism of suffering were evil men—with the Lord's permission; the Subjects were James and John; the Element was persecution; the Purpose was to strengthen the individual and the church.
2. The Baptism unto Moses
 - a. 1 Corinthians 10:1-2: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."
 - b. To baptize is to dip, plunge, immerse, submerge, or overwhelm. The Israelites were covered on both sides and the top as they passed through the Red Sea—they were figuratively baptized.
 - c. The Administrator was God; the Subjects were the Israelites; the Element was the water and the cloud; the Purpose was to mark the point of deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

C. John's baptism:

1. Acts 19:3-5: "And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's

baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

2. The Administrator was John, the son of Zacharius and Elizabeth.
 3. The Subjects were believing Jews.
 - a. Matthew 3:6: "And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."
 - b. Mark 1:5: "And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."
 - c. Luke 7:29-30: "And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."
 - d. John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. *12* But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:"
 4. The Element was water.
 - a. Matthew 3:6: "And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."
 - b. 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."
 - c. John 3:23: "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."
 5. The Purpose:
 - a. The remission of sins: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins" (Mark 1:4-5).
 - b. To prepare a people for Christ:
 - 1) Luke 1:76-77: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins."
 - 2) Acts 19:4: "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."
 - c. To reveal Christ: "And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water" (John 1:31).
 6. John's baptism ended when Christ's law took effect: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:1-6).
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A Comparison of the Baptism of John and the Baptism of the Great Commission

The Baptism of John	The Baptism of the Great Commission
Not Into Any Name	Into Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Matt. 28:18-20
Believe On Him Who Was To Come: Acts 19:4	Believe On Him Who Has Come: Rom. 10:9; Mark 16:16
Repentance Required: Mark 1:4; Matt. 3:7-12	Repentance Required: Acts 2:38; 17:30
Prior to Baptism, Subject Confessed Their Sins: Matt. 3:6	Penitent Believers Confess Their Faith in Christ: Rom. 10:9-10
Baptism Was "Unto the Remission of Sins" (Mark 1:4)	Penitent Believers Baptized in Order to be Saved Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21
To Refuse Was Rebellion Against God Luke 7:29-30	To Refuse is Rebellion Against God Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 6:1-18
Ended at the Cross: Acts 19:3-5	To Last to End of Time: Matt. 28:18-20

D. Holy Spirit baptism.

1. The Administrator was Christ.

a. Passages:

- 1) 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."
- 2) John 16:7: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."
- 3) John 16:12-15: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 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 show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show *it* unto you."

b. This baptism was never commanded of anyone; it was promised only to select ones (the apostles).

c. It was never administered by any man.

2. The Subjects—only intended for the apostles of Christ [the Twelve plus Paul].

a. Passages:

- 1) 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." [Later passages identify the ones to whom this promise was intended].
- 2) Luke 24:33,44: "And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them....And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
- 3) Acts 1:1-8: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come

together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 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."

- 4) Acts 1:26: "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."
- 5) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
- b. What Cornelius received was not identical to that of the apostles, although it came in the same way, i.e., directly and suddenly from Heaven.
3. The Element: Holy Spirit [The Holy Spirit overwhelmed them, clothing them with power].
4. The word "baptism" is used here in the sense of "to overwhelm."
 - a. Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
 - b. Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - c. Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - d. The Holy Spirit is a person; one cannot literally be immersed into a person.
 - e. The Holy Spirit overwhelmed them, inspiring and empowering them, equipping these apostles for the great work Christ intended them to accomplish..
5. The Purpose.
 - a. To qualify them as apostles.
 - 1) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 2) Acts 1:5-8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 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."
 - b. To clothe them with authority.
 - 1) Matthew 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."
 - 2) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - c. To make them ambassadors.
 - 1) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in

heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

- 2) 2 Corinthians 5:18-20: "And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."
- d. To make them witnesses.
- 1) John 15:27: "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."
 - 2) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - 3) Acts 10:39-43: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."
- e. To guide them into all truth.
- 1) John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
- f. To show them things to come.
- 1) John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."
- g. To cause them to remember what Jesus taught them: "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).
- h. To teach them all things.
- 1) John 14:26: "But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:11-13: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
- i. To confirm the message they presented.
- 1) Mark 16:17,20: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out
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devils; they shall speak with new tongues....And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

- 2) 1 Corinthians 14:22: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:3: "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."
 - j. To give the apostles full and complete inspiration, thus: "But as it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And *which* entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed *them* through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual *words*. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged" (1 Cor. 2:9-14, ASV).
6. Note: Did Cornelius or anyone else besides the apostles have all these powers? No!
- E. Baptism of the Great Commission:
1. Passages:
 - a. Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - c. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 2. The Administrator—the disciples:
 - a. Acts 8:4-5: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them."
 - b. Acts 8:12: "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."
 3. The Subjects— penitent believers.
 - a. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Acts 3:19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."
 - c. Acts 8:12: "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."
 - d. Acts 8:36-38: "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."
 4. The Element—water.
 - a. Acts 8:36-38: "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
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- 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."
- b. Acts 10:47-48: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."
 - c. Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."
 - d. Hebrews 10:22: "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."
5. The Purpose:
- a. Remission of sins.
 - 1) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - b. Salvation.
 - 1) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 2) 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."
 - c. To put the individual into Christ: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27, ASV).
 - d. To give new life.
 - 1) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

F. The Baptism of fire:

1. 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."
 2. The Administrator—Christ.
 - a. Acts 17:31: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 3. The Subjects—the wicked.
 - a. Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
 - b. Matthew 13:41-42: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
 - c. Matthew 25:41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
 - d. Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and
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- whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
4. The Element—fire.
 - a. 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."
 - b. Mark 9:43-48: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
 - c. Hebrews 6:8: "But that which beareth thorns and briars *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned."
 - d. Jude 7: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."
 5. The Purpose—divine punishment.
 - a. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - b. Revelation 20:12-15: "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."

SIX BAPTISMS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

NAME	ADMINISTRATOR	SUBJECTS	ELEMENT	PURPOSE
Moses	God	Israelites	Water, Cloud	Deliverance
Suffering	Evil Men	James & John	Persecution	Faithfulness
John's	John & His Disciples	Jews, Proselytes	Water	Remission
Holy Spirit	Christ	Apostles	Holy Spirit	Apostolic Authority
Great Commission	Christians	Obedient	Water	Salvation
Fire	Godhead	Disobedient	Eternal Fire	Divine Punishment

G. What is the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5?

1. Not the baptism of suffering, for that is figurative.
 2. Not the baptism unto Moses, for that was figurative and occurred only in the ancient past.
 3. Not John's baptism, for that is past.
 4. Not the baptism of fire, for that is still future.
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5. Not Holy Spirit baptism, for that does not pertain to anyone today.
6. The only baptism it could be is that of Great Commission:
 - a. 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."
 - b. Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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 alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - c. Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - d. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

III. THE ACTION OF NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM.

- A. The **action** of New Testament baptism is determined from the definition and use of the word.
 1. The Greek word used for "baptism" (*baptidzo*) means "to immerse." Water is the element into which baptism (the immersion) takes place. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...." (Acts 10:47-48).
 2. The descriptions given in the New Testament of baptism present a picture of immersing the subject in water, not of sprinkling or pouring water on him.
 - a. Romans 6:1-7: Baptism follows the pattern of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. We die to the practice of sin when we repent; we are buried in the grave of water in being immersed; we are raised up from the water to live a new and holy life.
 - b. Acts 8:35-39: When Philip and the man from Ethiopia came to a certain body of water, the latter requested baptism. They came *to* the water; they *both went down into the water*; the man was baptized; they *both came up out of the water*. There would have been no need for them to go into the water to sprinkle him.
 - c. 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." Baptism is described as a burial, not as a sprinkling or pouring.
 - d. John baptized people at a certain location, "because there was *much* water there" (John 3:23). This shows that "much water" was essential for baptism. How much is *much*? Enough to immerse the subject!

IMMERSION REQUIRES	SPRINKLING REQUIRES
Water	Water
Going to the Water	Bringing Water to Subject
Much Water	Little Water
Going Down into the Water	Bringing The Water Up
A Burial	No Form of Burial
A Planting	No Form of Planting
The Body Washed	The Body is Not Washed
A Birth of Water	No Birth of Water
A Resurrection	No Resurrection
Coming Up Out of the Water	No Coming Up Out of the Water

BAPTISM REQUIRES	PASSAGES
Water	Acts 10:47; 8:36; John 3:23
Going to the Water	Matt. 3:5; Mark 1:5-9; Acts 8:36-37
Much Water	John 3:23
Going Down Into the Water	Acts 8:38
A Burial	Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12
A Form of Planting	Rom. 6:5
The Body Washed	Heb. 10:22; cf. 1 Pet. 3:21
A Birth of Water	John 3:5
A Resurrection	Rom. 6:5; Col. 3:1
Coming Up Out of the Water	Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Acts 8:39

B. There is no record, direct or indirect, in the New Testament of any little one being baptized.

1. If the household of Lydia, the Jailer, or Cornelius had any infants that were baptized, what were their names? How old were they? How many were there? If one "baptizes" an infant, he does so without the authority of the Bible.
 - a. Ephesians 4:4,5: "*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism.*"
 - b. 2 John 9: "*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*"
 - c. Revelation 22:18-19: "*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."

2. The practice of applying water to an individual and calling it baptism did not occur until long after the New Testament had been revealed; it was introduced by uninspired men, without the approval of God.
 - a. The first historical case of sprinkling or pouring water on the subject and calling that action baptism, took place in 251 A.D. on a man who was thought to be too ill to be immersed. When he later recovered, he was immersed. The affusion of water (misnamed "baptism") was called "clinical baptism," and was used only in special cases for many years; it gained acceptance by the apostate church, and enjoys wide sanction by the majority today. It is entirely without scriptural authority: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 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" (2 John 1:9-11).
 - b. Is there anyone who would want to immerse a little infant in water? Even if an infant were a proper subject for baptism, it would have to be by immersion, and that would be hazardous to the baby's life and of no benefit to its soul.
- C. What some religious leaders and scholars have said about the action of baptism.
1. John Calvin (Presbyterian): The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church.
 2. Martin Luther (Lutheran): "Baptism is a Greek word and may be translated immerse. I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped."
 3. John Wesley (Methodist): "Buried with him in baptism—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."
 4. Mr. Wall (Episcopalian): "Immersion was in all probability the way in which our blessed Savior, and for certain the way by which the ancient Christians received their baptism."
 5. Mr. MacKnight (Presbyterian): "In baptism the baptized person is buried under the water. Christ submitted to be baptized, that is, to be buried under water."
 6. Mr. Whitfield (Methodist): "It is certain that the word of our text, Romans 6:4, alludes to the manner of baptizing by immersion."
 7. These men are cited, not for authority, but to show that these leaders in religious groups which practice sprinkling, when true to their scholarship, admitted the truth regarding the action of baptism.

IV. THE PROPER SUBJECTS FOR NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM.

- A. The proper subjects of New Testament baptism are identified in the Bible.
1. These are people who are mature enough for certain things far beyond the capability of infants or little children.
 2. Faith must precede baptism (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 8:35-37; Hebrews 11:6).
 - a. Faith is obtained by learning God's word (Romans 10:17; John 8:30; Acts 15:7).
 - b. Babies and little children do not have the ability to learn and believe such profound subjects as those which pertain to salvation.
 3. Repentance must precede baptism (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30,31).
 - a. Godly sorrow is the only thing that can produce repentance: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:10).
 - b. This godly sorrow can be produced only if the individual firmly believes what the Bible says about sin (1 John 3:4; Romans 6:23; Isaiah 59:1-2).
 - c. Repentance is the profound decision one makes when he commits himself to serving the Lord; this decision is produced by deep sorrow for his sins; repentance is genuine only if the life one lives in the future shows a real change for the better.
 - d. Infants have no need to repent for they have done nothing for which they must have godly sorrow;
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- the have no capacity to believe and no ability to commit themselves to God; they cannot change their lives: they will be babies and act like babies until they reach an age of responsibility.
4. Confession of faith in Christ must precede baptism, an action which babies and little children cannot do and which they do not need to do.
 - a. Matthew 10:32-33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."
 - b. Acts 8:37: "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."
 - c. Romans 10:9-10: "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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
- B. The practice of infant baptism is based on the false doctrine of "Original Sin."
1. This tenet asserts that Adam and Eve committed the first sin and that each of their offspring came into the world guilty of the parents' sins; and that every descendant of Adam and Eve enters this life guilty of their original sins, plus any they commit personally.
 2. There are only two possible sources of the inheritance of this guilt: from the parents or from Almighty God.
 - a. It is obvious that God is not the source of guilt. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15-16).
 - b. And the Bible teaches that we do not inherit the guilt of our parents! "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).
 3. Since we did not inherit guilt from God, and since we cannot inherit it from our parents, it follows that no guilt is inherited at all! The verse cited shows that the individual who sins is the only one who bears that guilt, just as the one who does righteousness is the only one who has that righteousness. The guilt of sin is acquired by individuals only when they personally violate God's word (1 John 3:4; James 1:13-15; James 4:17). Sin occurs when one acts contrary to some precept of God's word or when he fails to do his God-given duty. Eventually, every responsible person commits sin:
 - a. 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - b. James 1:13-15: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."
 - c. James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin."
 - d. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - e. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 4. In the Judgment (Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:30,31), each responsible individual will give account only for his own activities:
 - a. Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
- C. The Bible teaches that babies enter the world pure from any contamination of sin.

1. "...The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth..." (Gen. 8:21). Notice, evil (sin) is with man from his youth onward, not from his infancy.
2. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29). God made us upright (honest, just, righteous). It was only later that we went astray.
3. "Thou was perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:15). Thus, sinless at the first; guilty later.
4. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:2,3).
 - a. This rebuke was given to the 12 disciples who were discussing who would be the greatest in the kingdom. Christ stated that unless they became as little children, they would not even be part of the coming kingdom. The particular trait of children they needed to cultivate was humility (verse 4). The "one such little child" of verse five is identical to the "whosoever shall humble himself as this little child" of verse four. Verse six describes the same individual as "one of these little ones which believe in me." The child of verses 2, 3, and 4 is a literal child; the *little child* and *little ones* of verses 5 and 6 are those who are mature enough to be followers of Christ.
 - b. The Lord held up little children in their innocency and humility as proper examples of what all in the kingdom must be and have. To enter the kingdom, one must acquire the pure condition which is characteristic of little children. This means that a little child is pure, therefore does not enter the world guilty of sin.
 - 1) Matthew 19:14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
 - 2) John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - 3) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
5. "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). Little children were brought to the Lord that he might pray for them; the disciples rebuked the parents. The Lord's response is given in verse 14.
 - a. The "coming to Jesus" under consideration is not the "coming to him" for salvation, but for the purpose plainly stated in verse 13. The pure nature of their spiritual condition erases any need for them to come to the Lord for salvation. The Lord plainly declares that the kingdom of heaven is comprised of such as these little children (those who are pure and innocent).
 - b. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom would be comprised, not of actual little children, but of those responsible individuals who would become as pure and innocent as little children are.
6. From these verses, it is obvious that babies come into the world utterly free from any contamination of sin. Therefore, the doctrine of "original sin" is a false doctrine, invented by men. Compare Matthew 15:9: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men."
7. The nature of New Testament baptism shows that it is not intended for babies.

V. THE PURPOSE OF NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM.

A. The purpose of New Testament baptism is clearly set forth in the New Testament.

1. Baptism is for the remission of sins: "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). As we have shown, infants do not have the guilt of sin.
 2. Baptism is for salvation: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). But babies have no need for being saved since they have never been
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lost. Those who die in the innocence of youth are safe, and are assured of heaven: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23).

3. Baptism results in the washing away of the guilt of sins (by Christ's blood).
 - a. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - b. Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."
 - c. Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 - d. Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

B. The baptism of the Great Commission is bound on all alien sinners.

1. Baptism will do an alien sinner no good unless he believes on the Savior, has repented of his sins, and makes the good confession of his faith in Christ.
 - a. John 8:24: "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."
 - b. Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - c. Acts 8:36-37: "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."
 - d. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 2. Baptism is not intended for a wayward child of God; that sinner needs to repent of his sin, confess it to God (and to his brethren if the sin has been known to them), and ask God's forgiveness.
 - a. Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - b. James 5:16: "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."
 - c. 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
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WHERE BAPTISM STANDS IN THE CONVERSION PROCESS

PASSAGE	CONDITION	BENEFIT
Mark 16:16	Baptism	Salvation
John 3:5	Birth of Water [Baptism]	Entrance into Kingdom
Acts 2:38	Baptism	Remission of Sins
Acts 22:16	Baptism	Washing Away of Sins
Romans 6:3-4	Baptism	Benefits of Christ's Death
Romans 6:3	Baptism	Entering Into Christ
Romans 6:4	Baptism	Newness of Life
1 Corinthians 6:9-11	Baptism	Washed [Cleansed of Sins]
Galatians 3:27	Baptism	Being Clothed With Christ
1 Corinthians 12:13	Baptism	Entering Into Body of Christ
Ephesians 5:26	Washing of Water [Baptism]	Sanctification and Cleansing
Colossians 2:12	Baptism	Spiritual Resurrection
Titus 3:5	Washing of Regeneration [Baptism]	Salvation
1 Peter 3:21	Baptism	Salvation

C. From what we have learned, the following deductions are undeniable.

1. Babies enter this world utterly free from any guilt of sin.
2. The very nature of their spiritual purity erases any need for them to come to the Lord for salvation.
3. The innocence of babies separates them from the need for baptism.
4. Babies have no ability to believe, repent and confess Christ, therefore, they are not proper subjects for baptism.

D. The practice of infant baptism is sinful.

1. It is without any scriptural authority:
 - a. Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - b. 2 John 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
2. Those who teach, promote, and practice it commit sin by violating God's word.
3. Parents who subject their babies to it commit sin by promoting an unscriptural act.
4. The infants themselves are made to think that they are in the proper relationship with God because of their "baptism," thus live out their lives believing they are bound for heaven.
 - a. Romans 1:16-17: "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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed

from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

- c. Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

VI. THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT BAPTISM DOES NOT OR CANNOT DO.

A. According to the Bible, there are some things baptism is designed to do:

1. It will put penitent believers into Christ.
 - a. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Romans 6:3: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"
 - c. Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
2. It will put penitent believers into the Lord's church.
 - a. Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
 - b. Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - c. 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."
 - d. Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
3. It provides remission of sins for penitent believers.
 - a. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - b. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
4. It constitutes the new birth.
 - a. 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."
 - b. John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - c. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - d. Acts 10:47-48: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."
 - e. 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
5. It saves penitent believers since it is the final step in the gospel plan of salvation.
 - a. Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b. 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."

B. But According to the Bible, there are some things baptism is not designed to do.

1. God never intended for baptism to work miracles—it cannot do the impossible.
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2. He set it in force to do certain things, but not all things.
- C. Baptism does not remove the fact that we are saved by the grace of God.
1. Grace and baptism cannot be separated.
 - a. Romans 6:1-6: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
 - b. Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 2. Baptism is the dividing line between those who have and those who do not have his grace.
- D. Baptism does not remove the power to save from Christ's blood.
1. The power to cleanse Naaman of his leprosy was not in the waters of Jordan—cf. baptistry.
 2. The blood of Christ cleanses, but it must be contacted.
 - a. A bar of soap left in the wrapper cannot cleanse the hands.
 - b. Medicine left in the bottle will not heal.
 - c. The blood of Christ *un-contacted* cannot save our souls.
 - d. There must be the right application of the blood. If the Roman soldier who pierced the Lord's side with a spear had been covered by the Lord's blood, would that literal application of the blood have benefitted his soul? Certainly not!
 3. Salvation is attributed to several things in the New Testament.
 - a. We are saved by Christ's blood: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).
 - b. We are saved by the truth: (Jn 8:32).
 - c. We are saved by obedience:
 - 1) Matthew 7:21: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - 3) Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:22: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently."
 - d. We are saved by his blood when we obey his truth—the final step is baptism!
- E. Baptism will not make a baby or little child a Christian.
1. Baptism must be preceded by faith, which is impossible for little ones. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).
 2. Baptism removes the guilt of sin, but little ones have no guilt.
 - a. Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."
 - b. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
- F. Baptism will not allow one to keep what was illegally taken before baptism.
1. To be saved, we must repent before baptism: "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
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the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

2. One cannot keep another's cow, car, or spouse: "For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matt. 14:4).

G. Baptism will not sanctify an unscriptural marriage.

1. Matthew 5:31-32: "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."
2. Matthew 19:9: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."
3. Homosexual marriages remain sinful even after baptism.
4. **Whosoever** [Matt. 5:31-32; 19:9] applies to aliens and Christians alike.

H. Baptism will not free one from legal penalties.

1. Baptism will bring God's forgiveness if it is sincerely sought.
2. But even penitent believers who are baptized must still answer to civil law, if they are guilty of some crime—even for a capital crime.

I. Baptizing many people will not make a false teacher right before God.

1. Numeric "success" does not mean God is pleased. Islam has more than a billion adherents; if numbers make right, then the Moslems are right! But numbers do not make right.
 - a. Exodus 23:2: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to *do* evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest *judgment*."
 - b. Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
2. Although a person or congregation may boast of many baptisms, that will not cause God to overlook their false teachings.

J. Many baptisms will not legitimize a false movement within the body of Christ.

1. Causing strife will condemn the soul.
 - a. John 17:20-21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 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."
 - b. Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
2. The Boston-Crossroads movement is sinful even though they report 100s of baptisms.
3. Liberal congregations with many "baptisms" are not made legitimate thereby.
4. The progress of false teachers and religious errorists is made at the expense of lost souls!

K. Baptism will not guarantee eternal salvation.

1. Passages:
 - a. Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - b. Galatians 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
 - c. Philippians 2:12: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."
 - d. Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast
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- some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
2. Baptism relates to past sins; it puts one on the road toward heaven—it does not guarantee heaven of itself, apart from a faithful Christian life.
 3. If one begins to live in sin again—he is once again lost! "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet 2:20-22).
 4. If one turns to religious error after his baptism—he is once again lost!
 - a. 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
 - b. 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 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."
 5. A faithful Christian life is required to go to heaven.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 4:2: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
 - c. 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 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."
 - d. 1 John 3:1-3: "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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

VII. THE BAPTISM OF JOHN AND THE BAPTISM OF THE GREAT COMMISSION.

A. What he preached concerning the kingdom was preparatory.

1. He preached that the kingdom was at hand, not that it was already present (Matt. 3:2). During his personal ministry, Christ preached the same fact (Matt. 4:17), and directed the Twelve and the Seventy to preach the same fact (Matt. 10:7; Luke 10:9) prior to the Pentecost Day of Acts 2.
 2. John was never a citizen of the kingdom of Christ.
 - a. Matthew 11:11: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."
 - b. If John had been a citizen of the kingdom, it could not be said that he is beneath the least citizen. That would be a practical impossibility. Paul's statement that he was the least of all saints (Eph. 3:11) is clearly hyperbolic, but there is no evidence that the Lord's statement about John (in Matt. 11:11) is figurative.
 - c. John died before the kingdom (the church) was established, thus was never a member of the Lord's church or a citizen of his kingdom. The report of John's death is given in Matthew 14, and the
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- Lord's promise to establish his church (kingdom) is found two chapters later.
- d. Notice the following syllogism:
 - 1) The kingdom, the power, and the Holy Spirit were to come at the same time.
 - a) Mark 9:1: "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."
 - b) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - 2) The Holy Spirit came on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - 3) The kingdom of God and the power came on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2.
 - 4) Therefore, the kingdom (the church) came on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2.
- B. John preached other great truths that relate to salvation.
1. He preached that Jesus is the Christ, the real bridegroom.
 - a. Christ is the bridegroom and the church is his bride.
 - 1) Romans 7:4: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:2: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ."
 - 3) Ephesians 5:22-23: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body."
 - b. The church wears the name of the bridegroom (Christ); it does not wear the name of John.
 - 1) Acts 11:26: "And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."
 - 2) Acts 26:28: "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."
 - 3) Romans 16:16: "Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you."
 - 4) 1 Peter 4:16: "Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."
 2. He preached faith in Christ.
 - a. Acts 19:4: "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."
 - b. During the ministry of John, Christ had not completed his mission, had not established his church, and not died on the cross. John taught people to believe on the coming Christ.
 3. He preached repentance.
 - a. Matthew 3:2: "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - b. Matthew 3:8: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."
 - c. Luke 3:8-14: "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two
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coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages."

4. He preached baptism for the remission of sins.
 - a. His baptism was an immersion in water (Mark 1:9-10; John 3:23). Immersion (to dip or plunge) is the meaning of the Greek word from which comes the word "baptize."
 - b. It provided remission of sins: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4). The pardon offered was based on the forthcoming sacrifice Jesus was to accomplish on the cross. The basis of the pardon granted to all Old Testament people who are acceptable to God was based on the future death of Christ. His death has now been accomplished; our pardon is based on this historical fact.
 - c. The baptism John did was required of the Jews of his time; to refuse his baptism was to reject God's will: "And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (Luke 7:29-30).
 - d. John's baptism ended at the cross.
 - 1) Those who received John's baptism before the cross were not required to be re-immersed after the cross. Where is the example to the contrary?
 - 2) Those who received his baptism after the cross were required to be re-immersed (Acts 18:24-28; 19:1-7). Apollos knew only the baptism of John; those he baptized at Ephesus were baptized with John's baptism; this took place after the cross, thus after John's baptism ended; hence, these people needed to be baptized with the baptism of the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-16).

C. John's baptism and the baptism of the Great Commission.

1. Consider the case of Apollos and the twelve men at Ephesus.
 - a. Acts 18:24-28: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ."
 - b. Acts 19:1-5: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
 2. Absolutely nothing is said about Apollos being immersed again; there was no need. This implies that he had been baptized while John's baptism was still in effect. However, these twelve men at Ephesus had received John's baptism after that baptism had ceased to be in effect; they had not been baptized at all. There is nothing in the Bible about *re-baptism*—one has been baptized or he has not been baptized; one or the other. If he has been baptized (for the right purposes, in the right way, and is qualified to be baptized), he will never need to receive baptism again.
 3. There is only one baptism in effect today (Eph. 4:4-5).
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4. A question and answer regarding baptism:
 - a. Question: "Were those who had received John's baptism prior to the death of Christ, required to be baptized by the baptism of the Great Commission?"
 - b. Answer: No. These individuals had been baptized "for the remission of sins." They received forgiveness in promise (cf. Heb. 9:15), based on the fact that the Lord would die on the cross in keeping with God's eternal plan. Had they been baptized or had they not been baptized? Were they provided with pardon, or were they yet unpardoned from their past sins? Since they had been forgiven when they were baptized, there was no need for another baptism. There is no biblical evidence that indicates that any of the twelve apostles, who had been baptized by John's baptism, were immersed again after the cross.
5. Those who received John's baptism while it was in effect, were not baptized into the church, since the church was not then in existence. The faithful converts of John and of Jesus, including the twelve apostles and the one hundred and twenty disciples (Acts 1:12-15), along with the three thousand (Acts 2:41), formed the material from which the church was "constructed" [established].

A Comparison of the Baptism of John and the Baptism of the Great Commission

The Baptism of John	The Baptism of the Great Commission
Not Into Any Name	Into Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Matt. 28:18-20
Believe On Him Who Was To Come: Acts 19:4	Believe On Him Who Has Come: Rom. 10:9; Mark 16:16
Repentance Required: Mark 1:4; Matt. 3:7-12	Repentance Required: Acts 2:38; 17:30
Prior to Baptism, Individuals Confessed Their Sins Matt. 3:6	Penitent Believers Confess Their Faith in Christ Rom. 10:9-10
Baptism Was "Unto the Remission of Sins" Mark 1:4	Penitent Believers Baptized in Order to be Saved Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21
To Refuse Was Rebellion Against God Luke 7:29-30	To Refuse is Rebellion Against God Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 6:1-18
Ended at the Cross: Acts 19:3-5	To Last to End of Time: Matt. 28:18-20

VIII. OBJECTIONS TO BAPTISM FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS CAN BE ANSWERED.

A. *The requirement for salvation is the new birth, not baptism*

1. But what is the new birth? John 3:5 specifies water as a significant part. The new birth requires the word of God and baptism.
 - a. John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - b. Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 - c. James 1:18,21: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures....Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - d. 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth

- for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- e. Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."
 - f. When we receive the Spirit's word, and obey that word in baptism, we are born again.
2. Just as the physical birth puts us into our earthly family, the New Birth puts us into the family of God; this is its purpose.
 - a. But baptism puts us into God's family: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27, ASV).
 - b. The Lord's kinsmen are the obedient: "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. 12:50).
 - c. Baptism is the act of obedience that puts us into Christ, into Christ's body—into God's family.
 3. A further argument is made on 1 John 5:1: "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." The argument is made that faith-only gives us salvation, but that we are not saved by faith alone is demonstrated in the following:
 - a. Luke 4:41: "And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ." James 2:19: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."
 - b. James 2:24: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Here are demons who believed, but no ones thinks they are saved.
 - c. John 12:42-43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Here are unsaved believers.
- B. Baptism is a token of our appreciation for being saved.
1. But there is no biblical text that says so! Indeed, many passages say the opposite:
 - a. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 2. Why did Naaman dip in Jordan? To be cleansed of his leprosy, not to express appreciation for the cleansing; the cleansing did not take place until he met the condition (2 Kings 5:1-14).
- C. If baptism is essential to salvation, then the water and the immerser become the savior.
1. But did the water of Jordan heal Naaman's leprosy? Did the water of Siloam give sight to the blind man (John 9)?
 - a. Water was the element involved in both of the above cases; the command for Naaman to dip in Jordan and for the blind man to wash in Siloam were the conditions required in order for the benefit to be given.
 - b. Since Naaman dipped himself in Jordan and the blind man washed himself in Siloam, did they perform the miracle that healed them?
 - c. If Naaman had not obeyed, he would not have been cleansed; if the blind man had not complied with the required washing, he would have remained blind; if there had been no obedience, there would have been no blessing; if aliens today do obey the Lord's requirement of baptism, there will be no salvation for them.
 2. If the argument is true, then to make faith essential to salvation would make the preacher or teacher the savior, for faith comes through hearing: "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?...So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God....But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (Rom.
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10:14,17,16).

D. The thief on the cross was not baptized.

1. Where is the proof that the thief had not been baptized earlier? It is like evolution—it is not subject to proof! There were thousands of Jews who went out to John to be baptized in Jordan; no one could establish that the thief was not in the crowd.
2. Enoch, Abraham, and Elijah were never baptized. Why not?
 - a. For the same reason that Abraham Lincoln never obtained a driver's license—no requirement had been given at the time they lived.
 - b. The law of baptism never applied to anyone living during the Old Testament days. Baptism is part of the New Testament, not of the Mosaic Law: "For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:16-17). The Last Will and Testament of Christ took place at his death; it was not in effect when the thief received pardon.
3. It does not matter whether the thief had been baptized or had not been baptized. The baptism of the Great Commission was not given during that man's lifetime; it was given after the Lord's death and resurrection (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:9-16).

E. Simon was baptized but remained guilty of sin (Acts 8:21-22).

1. The argument is alleging that Simon was not forgiven although he had been baptized; therefore, they say, baptism did not save Simon.
2. If the argument is true, to be consistent, we must conclude that none of the Samaritans were saved: "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done" (Acts 8:12-13).
 - a. The conversion of the Samaritans (including Simon) is given in the same statement; if one was saved, they all were saved.
 - b. The Samaritans and Simon believed and obeyed the gospel—they were all saved.
3. The sin of Acts 8:21-22 was a new sin, a transgression committed by Simon after his baptism: "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:21-22). He was told to repent of **this** sin; all of his former sins had been remitted.

F. We are saved by the blood of Christ, not by the waters of baptism.

1. It is true that we are saved by Christ's blood, but we are saved when we contact the blood. When and where is the blood contacted? Obviously, we cannot apply the literal blood of Christ to our physical body. If the Roman soldier who pierced the side of Christ's body had been covered by the Lord's blood, it is manifest that the literal application of his blood would have done the soldier's soul no good.
 2. When and where do we contact his blood?
 - a. He shed his blood after he died: "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:33-34).
 - b. Baptism puts us into his death: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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" (Rom. 6:3-4).
 - c. We contact his blood in baptism: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became
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the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:16-18). The *form of doctrine* (the *pattern of teaching*) of the text is baptism; when we are baptized (immersed in water), we emulate the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4).

3. Medicine cannot do its good work unless it is properly applied.
 - a. Micitin cannot cure athlete's foot unless it is applied to the affected area.
 - b. Powdered aspirin dusted on the head will not cure a headache.
 - c. "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). The blood of Christ can save our souls only when we contact it. We contact his blood in baptism.

G. *We are saved by grace, not by works such as baptism.*

1. The Bible teaches that we cannot be saved by works of our own design or by the works of the Law of Moses.
 - a. 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."
 - b. Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
2. But a work which God requires is not such a work.
 - a. If it is, then Ephesians 2:8-9 contradicts James 2:24: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."
 - b. God set up baptism as a requirement for salvation: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" (Acts 10:47-48). The Bible does not call baptism a "work."
 - c. God also set up faith as a requirement for salvation; he called faith a "work."
 - 1) John 6:29: "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."
 - 2) 1 John 3:23: "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."
 - d. If they set aside baptism because they consider it a work [even though it is not called a "work" in the Bible], then they must also set aside faith, for it is specifically called a work!
3. Baptism is not a work of human merit; it is an act of obedience essential unto salvation:
 - a. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - c. Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

H. *He that believeth not is condemned, not he that is not baptized.*

1. The passage alluded to (Mark 16:16) discusses two subjects: salvation and condemnation.
 - a. To be saved, one must believe and be baptized (this is the plain declaration of the statement).
 - b. To be condemned, only must only disbelieve.
 2. God is wiser than men.
 - a. If the passage had said, "he that believes not and is not baptized shall be condemned," then both conditions would be required before one could be condemned.
 - b. Therefore, one could be immersed without faith and still not be lost. But that conclusion is at odds with John 8:24: "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."
 - c. The fact is, one cannot be baptized without faith. Without faith one cannot be pleasing to God (Heb. 11:6); without faith in Christ one cannot be saved.
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3. Mark 16:16 is parallel to this statement: "He that eateth and digesteth shall live; he that eateth not shall die."
 - a. We must eat and digest in order to life; both eating and digesting are required in order to live.
 - b. If we do not eat, we cannot digest—therefore we will die. If we eat but are not able to digest the food, we will still die; both are required in order to live.

IX. CONCLUSION.

A. Baptism is a vital part of God's system.

1. It beautifully typifies Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.
2. It is the appointed time, place, and means wherein his blood cleanses.
3. But baptism will do only what the Lord appointed it to do.
4. If we should find a verse that allows 21st century men to be saved without baptism, we will have found a contradiction in the New Testament.
 - a. If a witness in court is found in one lie, his entire testimony is impeached and is to be rejected.
 - b. But the New Testament is completely harmonious, reliable, and true.
 - 1) John 8:32 "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

B. Have you been scripturally baptized?

1. An action that is called "baptism" that is not by immersion is not New Testament baptism.
2. An action that is called "baptism" that is done to one who does not believe is not New Testament baptism.
3. An action that is called "baptism" that is done to one who has not repented is not New Testament baptism.
4. An action that is called "baptism" that is done for some other purpose than for salvation is not New Testament baptism.
5. An action that is called "baptism" that is done to give membership in a sectarian church is not New Testament baptism. When one is scripturally baptized, the Lord adds that person to his church (Acts 2:7; cf. Col. 1:13-14).
6. You can answer the above question in the affirmative only if you believed that Jesus is the Son of God, repented of your past sins, confessed your faith in Christ, and been immersed in water for the purpose of obtaining the remission of your sins.
7. What is an alien sinner's condition without baptism?
 - a. When we are baptized:
 - 1) We put on Christ (Gal. 3:27).
 - 2) Our sins are washed away by the blood of Christ (Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5).
 - 3) We obtain remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 - 4) We are made free from sin (Rom. 6:1-18).
 - 5) We obtain the benefits of Christ's death (Rom. 6:3-4).
 - 6) We enter into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).
 - b. What is the condition of the alien sinner? "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

C. Did your obedience stop with baptism?

1. Baptism marks the beginning of the Christian life.
 - a. It is not enough for one to begin to run a race; he must complete the race, abiding by the rules that have been established for that contest. We must finish our course (cf. 2 Tim. 4:7).
 - b. It is not enough to have begun a job of work; for any benefit to be derived, one must complete the job at hand.
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2. Faithfulness to the end of life is essential—one cannot give up and still expect the crown of life.
 - a. Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 9:27: "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."
 - c. Galatians 5:7: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"
 - d. Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 3. If your obedience stopped some time after your baptism, you need to take the actions required of you by the gospel: Repent of your sins; Confess your sins; Pray for forgiveness.
 - a. Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - b. James 5:16: "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."
 - c. 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
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First and Last Adam

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Although a study of Biblical types is a basic subject, many today have never heard it.

1. The Bible's message is comprised of literal and figurative language. Figurative language includes parables, fables, similes, similitudes, metaphors, metonymys, synecdoches, allegories, proverbs, hyperboles, personifications, parallelisms, symbols, and types.
2. A type is event, person, or some item which was divinely appointed to be a prophetic picture of the good things which God purposed to bring to fruition in the New Testament.
3. There are several words used in the Greek New Testament to denote type.
 - a. First, there is the term *tupos* (the basis of our English word 'type'). It is used in Romans 5:14: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." Adam is here said to be a type [a figure] of Christ.
 - b. Second, there is the word *skia*, rendered "shadow." Certain elements of the Mosaic system are said to be "a shadow of the things to come" (Col. 2:17; cf. Heb. 8:5; 10:1).
 - c. Third, there is the term *hupodeigma*, translated "copy," and used in conjunction with "shadow" in Hebrews 8:5 (cf. Heb. 9:23).
 - d. Fourth, the Greek word *parabole* (cf. parable) is found in Hebrews 9:9, where certain elements of the tabernacle are "a figure for the present time" (cf. Heb. 11:19).
 - e. Fifth, the Greek term *antitupon*, rendered "figure" (KJV) or "pattern" (ASV) in Hebrews 9:24, and "like figure" (KJV) or "true likeness" (ASV) in I Peter 3:21. This word is used in the New Testament to mean "that which corresponds to" the type; it is the reality which fulfills the prophetic picture.

B. The Holy Spirit placed a special significance on certain people and items in the Old Testament.

1. These people, places, things, offices, institutions, and events have special meanings in the New Testament. Several specific likenesses are observable between those people and items and their counterparts in the New Testament.
2. The English word "type" is from the Greek word *tupos* [*tupoi*, plural], and is defined by Webster as "a person, thing, or event, that represents or symbolizes another that is to come; symbol; emblem; token; sign."
 - a. "We say that we have seen a horse's foot in the clay, when we have only seen the impression of his foot, which would be the type. But when we take the track of the foot for the foot, we really have just the opposite of the foot. So if a man should strike his fist into a ball of putty, he would leave there, not his fist, but the type of it" (D.R. Dungan, **Hermeneutics**, Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Company, p.360).
 - b. A child may press his hand into uncured concrete, leaving behind a handprint. We might say, "This is my boy's hand." What we mean is, "This is my son's handprint." The hand is the reality; the print is the type.
3. Symbols are unreal, but types are real.
 - a. "Adam was a type of Christ; so were the sacrifices from the foundation of the world; the kings, priests, and prophets, in that they were *anointed*; the serpent in the wilderness, Solomon, and Joshua, etc. These were as real as the Saviour" (Dungan, p.361).
 - b. "It must not simply happen to represent something in the future, and therefore do as an illustration—it *must have been intended to represent that thought or fact when it was given*" (Dungan, p.360).

C. The *antitype* is always superior to the *type*.

1. Moses was typical of Christ in that he served as lawgiver, prophet, and leader. Christ is Lawgiver,
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- Prophet, and Leader in the fullest sense.
- a. "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. 18:15).
 - b. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22-23).
 - c. As great as Moses was, Christ is vastly superior.
2. Israel's bondage in Egypt was typical of an individual's bondage to sin.
 - a. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea....But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples [*tupoi*], to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted....Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [*tupoi*]; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Cor. 10:1-11).
 - b. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form [*tupon*] of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:16-18).
 - c. As harsh as the physical hardships of the Israelites were in the wilderness, the hardships of sin are far worse.
 - d. As important as their "baptism" was, baptism into Christ is of far greater importance (Rom. 6:3-4; Eph. 1:3).
 3. The manna Israel received during their sojourn in the wilderness [Ex. 16:16] was typical of Christ, who is the "Bread of Life." "...Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven" (John 6:32). As nourishing as the manna was to the body, the "Bread of Life" is much more nutritious to the soul.
 4. The brazen serpent Moses lifted up in the wilderness [Num. 21:8] was typical of our Lord being lifted up on the cross.
 - a. "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).
 - b. The lifting up of Christ on the cross is vastly more important than the lifting up of the brazen serpent.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. Adam is typical of Christ.

1. I Corinthians 15:44-49: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."
 2. The apostle's point in the passage is to illustrate the truth that there are natural and spiritual bodies. We inherited our physical body from Adam, down through the long ancestral line that connects us to Adam and Eve. We obtained mortality from Adam and our immortality derives from Christ, who is said here to be the second Adam. Specifically, we are told that Adam was typical of Christ:
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"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure [*tupos*] of him that was to come" (Rom. 5:14).

B. Comparisons between the First and the Second Adam.

1. The first Adam is spoken of in the Bible as "the son of God" and the second Adam is spoken of as "the Son of God."

- a. "Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God" (Luke 3:38).
- b. "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).
- c. God created the first Adam, who thus became the son of God. But the second Adam was never created (cf. Micah 5:2; John 1:1-3; Col. 2:9); He is the *Son* of God in that the Father brought about His entrance into this world (Heb. 1:5-6) and later raised Him from the dead (Acts 13:28-33). God is the Father of the Christ also in the sense that the Son was perfectly obedient to the Father's will (cf. John 13:16; 6:38; Heb. 10:7), recognizing the greater authority possessed by the Father.

2. Each of the two Adams sustains a special relationship to the human family.

- a. The first Adam was the head of the physical race of mankind. In keeping with the all-pervading law of nature (Gen. 1:11), Adam and Eve produced after their kind (Gen. 5).
- b. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45).
- c. The second Adam is head of the spiritual race of mankind.
 - 1) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 2) "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 5:15).
 - 3) "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3).
 - 4) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).
- d. The relationship we have with Christ is superior to the connection we have with Adam. Christ is our Savior and Sustainer. Adam was the first man in our ancestral line.

3. Each of the two Adams came into the world by a miraculous act of God's power.

- a. Neither of the two was produced by natural law.
 - 1) "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" (Gen. 2:7).
 - 2) "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:20-23).
 - 3) If God had stopped the creation process just before creating Adam and Eve, no *homo sapien* would be here; there would be no sin; there would be no marriage and home; there would be no civil government; there would be no Bible; there would be no church. There would only be the material universe, with its plant and animal life. The only way Adam could come was by God's miraculous power.
- b. Matthew refers to Isaiah 7:14, where the prophet had predicted the very event discussed by the

apostle: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Our Lord's natural body was conceived by supernatural power.

- c. It is not possible for finite man to comprehend Adam's miraculous creation, and it is certain that no man can comprehend the Virgin Birth of Christ. The means by which these two Adams entered into the world is a matter of faith, and is not to be denied. How else could their coming be explained? In what other way could they have come? The God who made the worlds was able to circumvent the laws of nature, which He also designed and put into place. In the case of the first Adam, God constructed his physical body from the elements of the earth, and placed into that body the spirit. In the case of the second Adam, using miraculous power, God placed into the womb of Mary the fertilized seed which produced the physical body of Jesus.
4. **Each entered the world free from the slightest taint of sin.**
- a. There could have been no defect, physical or spiritual, in the first Adam, for it is inconceivable that God should do anything substandard or make anything that is flawed. Indeed, He pronounced that all of the components of the creation (including Adam and Eve) were "very good" (Gen. 1:31).
 - b. Sin is acquired by an accountable human when he transgresses a command or precept of God's Word.
 - 1) "...Sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4).
 - 2) "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17).
 - 3) "All unrighteousness is sin..." (I John 5:17; cf. Psm. 119:172).
 - c. Obviously Adam could not have violated any command of God until some time subsequent to his entrance into the world (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-24).
 - d. Christ is altogether and forever free from sin. He could not be Deity and be imperfect. Plain declarations of Scripture affirm His absolute purity.
 - 1) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).
 - 2) "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26).
 - e. Every human being is also free from the contamination of sin until such a time that the individual reaches an age when God can properly hold him (or her) responsible for his (or her) actions. Most of the religious world has been deceived into thinking that every baby enters the world with the guilt of sin already stamped upon its soul. If so, from what source did that guilt obtain? From God? Utterly unthinkable!
 - 1) "...The LORD...formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1).
 - 2) God is the Father of our spirits (Heb. 12:9), and He is infinitely holy (Lev. 20:7; I Pet. 1:15-16). Our guilt of sin did not originate with the Father!
 - f. Does an infant inherit guilt from the first Adam through its own parents? This is denied by plain statements of the Bible!
 - 1) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).
 - 2) The guilt of sin is obtained by each individual when he personally violates God's will. "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:15).
 - 3) "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).
 - 4) Citizens of God's kingdom are free from the guilt of sin (Col. 1:13-14), and are declared to be like little children in this regards (Matt. 18:3; 19:14).
5. **Each of the two Adams was capable of being tempted to commit sin.**
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- a. This is a common feature of all accountable men, a characteristic of free agency. If there was no power to do wrong, there would be no virtue in doing right. If there were no possibility of incurring God's wrath by disobeying His will, there could be no possibility of obtaining God's favor by obeying His will.
 - b. The first Adam was tempted successfully by Satan:
 - 1) "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:16-17).
 - 2) "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" (Gen. 3:6).
 - c. The second Adam was tempted by the same adversary, but did not succumb to those enticements (Matt. 4:1-11).
 - 1) The devil would have known whether Christ was subject to temptation, and would not have wasted his efforts if there was no possibility of temptation having any effect on Him.
 - 2) He was tempted in every way any other human being can be tempted (Heb. 4:15; I John 2:16). Unlike ourselves, he did not permit himself to fall victim to Satan's efforts to lead Him away from the Father.
 - d. The first Adam was tempted and conquered by Satan, but the second Adam conquered Satan. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:14-18).
6. **Each of the two Adams received their names from God.**
- a. "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:2).
 - b. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).
 - c. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:16-17).
 - d. It is from the father in a human family that the child's name is derived.
7. **Both of the two Adams were given brides.**
- a. God made a bride for the first Adam. "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him....And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:18-24).
 - b. The second Adam (Christ) also obtained a bride, which is His church.
 - 1) "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2).
 - 2) "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's
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wife" (Rev. 21:9).

8. **A deep sleep came upon the two Adams in order for the bride to be given.**
 - a. The first Adam underwent a deep, unnatural sleep before he could obtain his bride: "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:21-24).
 - b. Christ had to experience the "sleep of death" before His bride came into existence.
 - 1) "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost" (Mark 15:37).
 - 2) "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4).
 - 3) Christ gave Himself for the church (Eph. 5:25; cf. Acts 20:28).
9. **The side of each of the two Adams was opened before the bride could be obtained.**
 - a. In the case of the first Adam, God performed a surgical procedure on him to obtain a rib from which He made Eve.
 - b. In the case of the second Adam, Christ's side was parted by the Roman spear, from the wound of which His blood was shed (John 19:33-34). The blood of our Lord was the purchase price for His church, which is His bride (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:23-27).
10. **Each of the two Adams was given only one bride.**
 - a. The first Adam had only one bride, Eve. If God had wanted him to have more than one wife, He would have constructed more than one. If He had intended him to have another man for a wife, He would have constructed a man instead of Eve.
 - b. The second Adam, Christ, has only one bride, the church; if it had been the will of God for Christ to have more than one church, more than one would have been provided. The oneness of the church is emphasized in many passages:
 - 1) "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build **my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).
 - 2) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to **the church**, Which is **his body**, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 3) "There is **one body**, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:4-6).
 - 4) "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved **the church**, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25: Notice, the text does not say He gave Himself for **them**, but **it**).
 - 5) "And he is the head of **the body**, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). Christ has only one body, which is His one church.
11. **Both Adams held authority over their brides.**
 - a. The first Adam exercised authority over Eve. "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (I Tim. 2:12-13; cf. I Cor. 11:3).
 - b. Likewise, the second Adam exercises authority over his bride, the church.
 - 1) "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).
 - 2) "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their

own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:23-27).

12. The brides each took the name of the respective husband.

- a. This was true of the first Adam:
 - 1) "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen. 2:23).
 - 2) "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:2).
- b. The church wears the name of Christ, her bridegroom:
 - 1) "Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16).
 - 2) "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?" (Jas. 2:7).

C. Contrasts between the First and the Second Adam.

1. The first Adam was a mere man, but the second Adam is the Son of God. The first Adam was entirely human. Christ was as human as his mother, Mary, but as divine as His Father is.
 - a. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:1-3).
 - b. "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 1:14).
 - c. "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).
 - d. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:15-17).
 - e. The Father made these statements to Christ: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands" (Heb. 1:8-10).
2. The first Adam, having the power of choice, disobeyed the will of his Creator (Gen. 3:6), while the second Adam, also having the power of free moral agency, obeyed the will of His Father perfectly.
 - a. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38).
 - b. He "...did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Pet. 2:22; cf. Heb. 4:15).
 - c. The first Adam violated God's law and committed sin (cf. I John 3:4), but the second Adam obeyed the Father's will with absolute perfection.
3. The disobedience of the first Adam resulted in loss for the whole human family. He was evicted from the Garden of Eden.
 - a. "Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3:23-24).
 - b. Neither Adam nor any of his offspring was ever permitted to return to that Paradise. He was alienated from his Creator, and the penalty of physical death passed on to him and his descendants. "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely

- eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:16-17; cf. 3:6ff).
- c. "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" (Rom. 5:12).
 - d. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 5:21-22).
 - e. But the obedience of the second Adam made the resurrection of all mankind possible (I Cor. 15:21-22), made available great spiritual blessings to every accountable member of the human family, and the prospect of entering heavenly Eden became possible.
 - 1) "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3).
 - 2) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:3-5).
 - 3) "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).
4. Everything that was lost through the disobedience of Adam has been recovered or replaced with much greater advantages and blessings in Christ!
- a. "Let us stress the fact that Paul calls the Lord the 'second Adam' (I Cor. 15:45-49). There is a definite sense in which we regain in Christ (and the church) what was lost in Adam (and the garden of Eden). In Christ, we regain the close relationship which was destroyed by Adam's transgression. 'Friendship' is restored. Reconciliation occurs. Separation from God's favor and from the tree of life brought death. In Christ and his church we have life, and that more abundantly (John 10:10b). Truly we regain in Christ what was forfeited in Adam; we regain in the church what was lost in Eden. Truly, paradise lost becomes paradise regained; but only through the grace of God!" (Bert Thompson, **Studies in I Corinthians**, Denton, TX: Annual Denton Lectures, Dub McClish, Ed., "The First Man—Adam, p.230).
 - b. Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - c. Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
5. The law of propagation was given to the first Adam, which insured the continuation of the race.
- a. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:26-27).
 - b. The immutable law of Genesis 1:11 applies to the human family, just as it does to all plants and animals: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." There has never been a single case of an acorn producing a squirrel, or of a pair of turtles producing an orange tree, or of a human couple producing a kangaroo!
 - c. The law of spiritual propagation makes it possible for future generations of Christians to be produced, thus insuring the continuation of the kingdom of Christ.
 - 1) "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11).
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- 2) "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Pet. 1:22-25).

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The fall and restoration of man.

1. The same pattern evident in the fall of Adam and Eve into sin is the same pattern that individuals follow when they reach the age of accountability and fall into sin. That same pattern is followed in reverse in order for a fallen soul to be restored into fellowship with its Creator.
 - a. God fashioned an exalted being when He made man in His image (Gen. 1:26-27). He gave man a physical body, and a spirit (which exalts man above all the animals). Man was made in the image of God, but since God has no physical body (John 4:24; cf. Luke 24:39), the likeness man has to his Creator is of a different kind. God has intellect, emotions, the power to purpose, and is a spiritual Being. Man has been given intellect, emotions, the power to will, and an eternal spirit. Man is capable of making intelligent choices, but he does not always use wisdom in making his choices!
 - b. God gave man a prohibition against eating a certain kind of fruit in Eden (Gen. 2:16-17). Adam and Eve violated that law and became guilty of sin (Gen. 3:6ff). Their fall into sin was not instantly done, but followed an easily discerned pattern.
2. A messenger [Satan] came with a message which was addressed to their minds (Gen. 3:1-4).
 - a. The message was a falsehood. God had said that they would surely die if they ate the fruit; the devil asserted that they "would **not** surely die" (Gen. 3:4).
 - b. Eve heard the lie, believed the lie, and obeyed the lie.
 - c. When she obeyed the devil's lie, she disobeyed the commandment of God. So also did Adam.
 - d. Having disobeyed by eating the forbidden fruit, they lost their state of spiritual purity, and were now separated from God.
 - 1) Sin, which is the transgressing of God's Word (I John 3:4), separates the sinner from God. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:1-2).
 - 2) They were now out of fellowship with God and were evicted from the Garden of Eden.
3. Each of the descendants of Adam and Eve enters this world as pure and free from the guilt of sin as were the original couple, when they first came from God's creating hand. In time, we all will violate some part of God's Word (Rom. 3:23). We do in reality the same kind of thing Adam and Eve did in the original rebellion: we obey the devil's will and disobey God's will, and thus incur the guilt of our own sin (Ezek. 18:20; 28:15; I John 3:4). Each individual can be restored to his original purity and fellowship with God by taking certain definite steps.
 - a. A Messenger has come [Christ]. He has brought a message of truth (John 1:14; 8:32; 17:17). That truth is presented in the Gospel (I Pet. 1:22-25).
 - b. Man is to hear that truth, and come to an understanding of it (Rom. 10:13-14; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).
 - c. The individual is to believe that message (Acts 16:30-31; Mark 16:16; 2 Thess. 2:11-12).
 - d. The believer is to obey that message (I Pet. 1:22; Acts 17:30; 8:37; 10:48; 2:38).
 - e. The state of justification is then given.
 - 1) "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11).
 - 2) The person is added to the church (Acts 2:47), or, which is the same thing, is translated into

the kingdom (Col. 1:13), and receives salvation (Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7; 2:1-13).

- 3) Every spiritual blessing is provided in Christ (Eph. 1:3).
- 4) The individual has become a new person (II Cor. 5:17). As he walks in the light of the Gospel (I John 1:6-10), he lives daily with the hope of passing through the gates of Heaven, which stand ajar for him (Rev. 22:14). "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

ADAM & EVE’S FALL and OUR RESTORATION

STATE OF PURITY ☆ SAVED CONDITION ☆ IN CHRIST	
Lie Preached: Gen. 3:1-5	Truth Obeyed: Acts 2:36-47
Lie Heard: Gen. 3:6	Truth Believed: Acts 2:36-37
Lie Believed: Gen. 3:6	Truth Heard: Acts 2:36-37
Lie Obeyed: Gen. 3:6	Truth Preached: Acts 2:1-36; Mark 16:15-16
LOST ☆ SEPARATED FROM GOD ☆ TAINTED WITH SIN	

The Nature of the Resurrected Body

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. If a man die, shall he live again? (Job 14:14).

1. This is a question that has interested and perplexed man from the beginning. The doctrines drawn up by man have usually included some precept concerning this subject, however, the only parts of their concepts that are right are those derived from the Bible.
2. The Old Testament gives some information on the subject, but the New Testament answers more fully.
 - a. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - b. Acts 24:15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22: "For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
 - d. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

B. "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" (1 Cor. 15:35).

1. The passage that follows provides some insight into the "how" of the resurrection.
2. Paul also gives some information in the passage regarding the nature of the resurrected body.
3. We will be involved in it personally! What will it be like to experience the resurrection?
4. What will be the nature of the resurrected body? What will it look like?
5. We can speak on this subject only what the Bible says, and it does not give us very much information.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. How are the dead raised up? By the power of God.

1. Matthew 22:28-29: "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."
2. Paul describes the method by an illustration from the planting of grain: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body" (1 Cor. 15:36-38).
 - a. The seed is placed in the earth where it dies (it ceases to be a kernel of grain). Something else grows from the kernel; God gives it a different body; it is now a stalk of corn.
 - b. The same life that was inherent in the grain is now in the plant; from the shell of the kernel of corn, a tall plant grows. The form of the body has changed, but it is still the same life.
 - c. How is this done? By the power of God! (verse 38). No man can duplicate this process. God created the first specimen of the plant, but after that, natural law took over and has continued the lineage through thousands of years.
3. There are different kinds of fleshly bodies in God's creation: "All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind* of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds" (1 Cor.

15:39). Critics of the Bible once accused Paul of being wrong and unscientific in stating that there was a difference between these various kinds of flesh; they argued that each of these animals has flesh and blood, needs food and rest, and grows old and dies.

- a. There are plain differences between men, beasts, fish, and birds. Some live in the sea, others on land; some live in the mountains, others in the deserts, and others in swamps; some walk, others crawl, and others fly or swim. God had the power to make different varieties of earthly beings.
 - b. Paul was perfectly scientific; each creature is made up of a cell structure that is different from all others. Each cell is a universe all its own, consisting of nucleus, cytoplasm, chromosomes, and genes. Each contains sufficient information and power to reproduce itself exactly—a veritable library of information.
 - c. By counting the number of chromosomes in a sample, the identity of the animal from which the specimen was taken can be determined with precision. By laboratory examination, the identity of an individual person can be determined by a sample of blood or tissue. This is a new development which promises to be a great assistance to criminal investigators.
 - d. Since God could create all these varieties of life with their wondrous intricacies, including all these distinctions, he can raise the dead and give us new bodies!
4. Further (1 Cor. 15:40-41), Paul states that there are celestial (heavenly) bodies and there are terrestrial (earthly) bodies. Is he speaking of spiritual (angelic or glorified) bodies in his reference to celestial bodies? Or does he refer to such heavenly bodies as the stars, sun, and moon? Verse 41 shows that it is the material bodies of space that he means: the moon and stars.
- a. There are differences between a star and the moon; one appears brighter than the other; the nature of the light given off by each is different (a star produces light; the moon merely reflects the light produced by the sun).
 - b. There are differences between the various kinds of terrestrial bodies. A dog is different from a deer; a fish is different from a feline; a man is different from a whale; and there are differences between two men.
 - c. Since God could make these different varieties of things and beings, he has the power to bring us forth from the dust of the ground, causing us to retain our same identities, and give us spiritual bodies.

B. Bible critics deny the reality of the resurrection.

1. They demand to know how the resurrection is possible when the following items are considered:
 - a. Our bodies disintegrate naturally after death; many bodies are utterly destroyed by fire; in atomic explosions bodies have evaporated in a flash; some bodies have been devoured by beasts.
 - b. The elements that were part of our bodies are made part of new plants, are often combined with other substances, and in other ways, are scattered over the earth far removed from the place of burial.
 2. It is foolish to limit or question the infinite power of God.
 - a. We cannot see or completely explain electricity, but we believe in it; we have the testimony of firsthand experience. We have not seen a case of resurrection, but we have the inerrant testimony of God's word to verify its reality. It is logically impossible to explain the existence of the universe apart from an Infinite Power (God). The Bible gives the most logical explanation of the origin of the universe and earthly life. Internal evidence shows it must be from God, thus true and accurate in all its pronouncements.
 - b. During our earthly life, we grow, develop, change, and age; the cells of our body are constantly being replaced. Yet through all this change, we still retain the same identity and remain the same person. We know who we are, and our family and friends continue to know who we are.
 - c. If we in our finite ways are able to retain this knowledge, surely the infinite God can remember what we were like, where our bodies were buried, and is fully able to bring our bodies back from the dust of the earth.
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C. With what body do the dead come forth?

1. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44: "So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."
 - a. Before the corn stalk can spring from the ground, the kernel of corn must be planted in the earth. When placed in fertile soil, with proper moisture and warmth, the kernel germinates and grows; it appears, not as another grain, but first as a blade, then a plant which puts out great fronds, a tassel, shoots, silk, and finally full ears with hundreds of other kernels identical to the one originally planted. The seed planted was tiny, but the full-grown stalk is perhaps 12-14 feet tall.
 - b. Paul draws a comparison between this example from nature and the resurrection. The human body is planted in the earth; it is dead when planted, and soon disintegrates, and its elements returns to the earth again. But in the resurrection, it comes forth as an immortal body, not subject to death and decay; it is utterly different in its nature from the body that was planted. "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36).
 2. The human body is interred in dishonor. Sin has brought about its death (cf. Gen. 2:16-17). There is a certain repulsiveness that pertains to a dead human body. Abraham alluded to this when he sought a place in the land of the Canaanites to "bury my dead out of my sight" (Gen. 23:1-8). But it will be raised from the grave in glory (cf. Phil. 3:20-21; 1 John 3:1-2).
 - a. Our bodies are buried because of weakness; they were not designed to live forever; their demise results from sin. It is buried in weakness, but it is raised in power (Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - b. Our body is buried because it is a natural body, belonging to this natural world; it was not designed to live in heaven (1 Cor. 15:50; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 John 3:1-2; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:52-53). The resurrected body is a spiritual body, designed to inhabit eternity.
 3. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body; these bodies have the same identity, although they are different in nature. The natural body is adapted to live in the natural world; the spiritual body is adapted to reside in the spirit world of eternity.
 - a. A caterpillar gorges itself on green leaves, growing fatter and uglier; it covers itself with a cocoon; after a period of time has passed, it emerges from the cocoon as a beautiful butterfly. The same life that animated the caterpillar, now animates the butterfly. As a caterpillar, it was adapted to live in one environment; as a butterfly, its environment has changed.
 - b. In eternity, we will retain our same personality and being, but our body will have changed; it will then be no longer physical, but spiritual.
 4. Even in life our bodies undergo great changes.
 - a. Once our hands were very tiny; they would not cover our present palm. Our shoes were so small they could scarcely contain our thumb now. But through that growth and development, our identity remained the same.
 - b. Suppose your mother died when you were 6 months old, and you grew through your teenage years into adulthood, middle age, and old age, and died at the age of 95. Your mother who did not see you pass through those stages of life would not recognize you (if she should see you when you were 75). Which of these stages will you be, in the resurrection? You were once all of these. We cannot now know the particulars, but we can know that we each will be recognizable and known by others, and our being will not have changed, only our bodies.
 5. Our identity does not depend on our physical body. This body grows old, dies, and is buried; the elements return to the earth (Gen. 3:19; Eccl. 12:7). Your body disappears from human view, but your spirit (the real YOU) lives on.
 - a. Your father may have been dead 50 years, but you can still carry an accurate, detailed mental image of him; in a flash, you can produce him in your mind.
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- b. God has perfect knowledge of you, and can raise you up and give you a new body. If we carry a mental picture of some loved one with us for many years, God can retain a perfect remembrance of each of his offspring, and can raise us up.

D. But what is raised up from the grave?

1. 1 Corinthians 15:45-49: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."
2. Will it be the same body, identical in every detail as the one buried?
 - a. If so, what if it were missing a leg, was bald, or toothless? Would these deficiencies still pertain in the resurrected body?
 - b. Would it be a reproduction of your body when you were 20 years of age? Of 50 years? If one died at the age of 3 years, will he be raised to appear and to be three years of age?
3. If the physical body is raised up from the grave exactly as it was at some stage of its earthly life, it will be changed (Phil. 3:21) so as to be a spiritual body before it meets the Lord in the air (1 The. 4:16-17).
 - a. Christ's earthly body was raised up from the tomb, it still retained the wounds he suffered in being crucified, and was recognizable. It was this same body that was present when he began to ascend toward heaven; but before he reached heaven, it changed to his glorious, eternal body which he inhabits in heaven. This we know because no fleshly body can enter heaven (1 Cor. 15:50-53).
 - b. Therefore, if our physical bodies are raised from the grave, they must be changed into spiritual bodies prior to entering heaven. Those who are still alive on the earth will be changed instantly into those spiritual bodies at the Lord's return.
 - c. Some think that the bodies that are raised from the grave are the spiritual bodies we will inhabit through eternity (1 Cor. 15:43,44).
 - 1) Certainly what we shall have in eternity will be spiritual bodies. Fleshly bodies cannot enter heaven.
 - 2) Even if we are in the robust health of 20 years of age when the Lord returns, we must be changed in order to enter heaven. This changed body will be new and different; it will be ageless and incorruptible.
4. This new body will be like Christ's own glorious body: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).
 - a. Our present body is called "vile" (*body of our humiliation*—ASV). Our body can get into such a state that others are repulsed and we are shamed; a dead body soon becomes repulsive to all (cf. Gen. 23:8).
 - b. Christ will change our present body; he will fashion it anew; he will change its nature; we shall be fashioned to have the same form as his own glorious body.
 - 1) Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed."
 - 2) Matthew 17:2: "And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."
 - c. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that

hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:2-3).

5. 2 Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Our present body is described as an earthly house; our new body will be an eternal house (for the spirit); this eternal body will not be fashioned by human hands.

E. How can God accomplish this?

1. Since he could create all things of the universe (the stars, sun, planets, moons, all plant and animal life in great abundance and beauty); and since he could make all these to differ in magnitude and glory, he can surely raise us up from the grave and give us each a new body!
2. God is our Maker.
 - a. He is the father of our spirits.
 - 1) Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
 - 2) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
 - b. He created the first human pair miraculously; he created our physical bodies using the natural laws of procreation.
 - c. We got our spirits from God; our bodies came from Adam (whom God created by miracle) through our earthly parents.
 - d. At death, two things occur: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).
 - 1) The body returns to the earth from which its elements were originally taken.
 - 2) The spirit passes into the keeping of God.
 - e. At the resurrection, God raises our bodies up and makes them to be spiritual, and places our spirits in them—forever!

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Story of German tomb.

1. A man died in Hannover, Germany more than 150 years ago. His body was buried in a tomb made of large stone slabs which were bound together by straps of iron, and topped with a huge stone weighing one and one half tons. He had this message engraved on his tomb: "This grave is purchased for eternity: it shall never be opened."
2. "Somehow, though, a little poplar seed was enclosed in the tomb's mold, and by the power of Jehovah's natural laws, it sprang into a slender shoot and found its way up through a crevice between two of the huge stones. It became a stately tree, breaking the iron bands and moving every stone from its original place....The little poplar seed literally opened that tomb! Victoriously, the tree waves its leaves over the resting place of some infidel who dared to declare that it would 'never be opened.' If one of nature's laws can accomplish such a feat—just think what will be wrought by God's mighty power on the resurrection day!" (Wayne Jackson, *Reason and Revelation*, August, 1985).
3. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

B. Saints shall then be beyond sin and suffering, and will live with God forever!

1. 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a

new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

2. 1 John 3:3: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
 3. Matthew 5:8L: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
 4. 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
 5. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
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A Christian's Duty To His Nation

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. God has ordained three institution, each having responsibility and authority in its own sphere.

1. The home is his oldest institution, and is designed to furnish mankind the companionship, protection and training to be productive and happy citizens of this world (cf. Gen. 2:18-25). The husband and father in the average case is given primary authority in the family: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God" (1 Cor. 11:3).
2. The church is God's spiritual institution, and is designed to forward God's work of converting the lost and edifying the saved (Eph. 4:12). Authority in the church is vested in Christ, its head and founder, and is expressed in the New Testament. In local congregations, elders are appointed to oversee the affairs of the congregation (Phil. 1:1; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
3. Civil government was likewise appointed by God, with authority divided according to the type of rule decided upon by the controlling force. That a society of men needs some kind of directing force is clear. God ordained the original principle of civil government, but has given mankind latitude to select the type that they deem best. "I think every nation has a right to establish that form of govern-ment, under which it conceives it may live most happy; provided it infracts no right, or is not dangerous to others...." (George Washington, *Federalist*). However, a repressive rule does not meet with God's approval, nor one which hinders morality and godliness or which promotes immorality and unrighteousness. He may permit such a rule for a while, to accomplish some objective, but will bring it down when that purpose has been served. Hitler's Germany, Hirohito's Japan, and Stalin's Russia were allowed to function for a time, but have since been dismantled and have disappeared into the dust of history.

B. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul gives directions regarding the Christian's attitude toward civil authority.

1. Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
 2. In the first century, persecution frequently was directed against the church by civil rulers. How should a Christian react? If he could not flee, he was to submit humbly. In many cases, flight was the proper thing to do. Paul fled from his tormentors at Damascus (2 Cor. 11:32-33).
 3. In ordinary cases, when a civil authority issues a decree, Christians are to be submissive to that order, as are all other citizens. It is in the best interest of mankind to have some power in control, to make decisions in behalf of all, to provide protection for the whole. Democracy was established so that the individuals could express their wishes in regards to how they were to be governed. The democratic form of government provides for the well-being of the whole nation, while insuring the rights and privileges of the individual.
 4. The passage under consideration places on all the citizens of a nation (or state) the obligation to obey the decrees of its rulers. We are to render unto Caesar the things that pertain to Caesar, and unto God the things that pertain to God (Matt. 22:21). We are to pay taxes, and in all other ways to show that we are loyal subjects of those earthly rulers who are over us. Only when obedience to a civil law
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would put us in disobedience to God's law, are we to disobey civil authority.

- a. Acts 4:19-20: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."
 - b. Acts 5:29: "Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."
5. All power (authority) resides in God; he is the source of all authority. There are two kinds of authority: primary and delegated. His is primary, but he has delegated certain authority to others.
- a. He has given his Son all authority to operate in the Christian Age; his Son delegated a certain amount and degree of authority to the apostles, who received and transmitted the fullness of the gospel to humanity by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). In eternity, Christ will return to the Father all things, and with the redeemed of all ages, will be subject to the Father: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28).
 - b. The authority exercised by civil rulers derives from God. Jesus shocked Governor Pilate by his statement in John 19:11: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above...."
 - c. God operates in the kingdoms of men. When Nebuchadnezzar boasted of his own greatness in building Babylon and conquering the world, God severely rebuked and punished him. "While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that **the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will**" (Dan. 4:30-32).
6. God promotes and demotes earthly rulers. He can do this because, as Paul affirms, "the powers that be are ordained of God."

II. GOD REQUIRES CERTAIN THINGS OF BOTH CHRISTIANS AND NATIONS.

A. Christians are required to be obedient to civil authority.

1. Unbelievers in the first century falsely accused Christians of being lawbreakers. These saints were told to be obedient to civil rulers and give no occasion for the enemy to speak evil of them.
 - a. 1 Peter 2:12: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."
 - b. 1 Timothy 5:14: "...Give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."
2. We are to be characterized by "Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:8).
3. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
4. Philippians 2:12-15: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is

God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

5. 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

B. God requires that both individuals and nation strive for righteousness.

1. Individuals:

- a. Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man."
- b. Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
- c. Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

2. Nations:

- a. Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
- b. Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people."
- c. A nation is righteous only if its citizens are righteous and it enacts righteous laws and follows a righteous course of action in its administrative and judicial operations.
- d. The Bible teaches the following truths regarding nations.
 - 1) The destiny of nations is ultimately in the hands of the Almighty.
 - 2) God expects all nations to conform to certain moral standards.
 - 3) When the moral status of a nation declines to a certain point, God can and will bring punishment on that nation.

3. If God stands opposed to a nation, it cannot long stand! If God opposes an individual, that person is in serious straits!

III. A CHRISTIAN OWES CERTAIN SPECIFIC THINGS TO HIS COUNTRY.

A. Each Christian is obligated to be loyal to his nation.

1. Rebelling against civil authority is contrary to God's will for Christians. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1).
 - a. ***Let*** prefaces an imperative sentence which is equivalent to a command. The "higher powers" are the civil authorities, at any level. It is certain that church authorities do not bear a sword, which these rulers have: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
 - b. Peter gave similar directions regarding civil obedience in 1 Peter 2:13-17: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
2. One who resists civil rulers also resists God's law. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (Rom. 13:2).
 - a. Because the statement of verse one is true, the fact of this verse is also true. One who resists the authority of a civil ruler, who is operating within his God-given sphere, also resists the ordinance of God. He requires that we obey our civil rulers; when we disobey the civil ruler, we disobey God.

- b. There are questions which are difficult, if not impossible, for us to answer satisfactorily.
 - 1) A generation ago, it was common to hear of some people who conducted *sit-ins*, or blocked traffic, or interfered with the normal activities of other people. Were they in violation of God's decree? Is it right for Christians to try to force their will on the general population by "civil disobedience?" Does the end justify the means? In the light of Romans 13:1-2, we think not!
 - 2) Were our founding fathers wrong when they fomented rebellion against their British overlords? The opposition against England was conducted, not by Christians, but by citizens. We enjoy the benefits of the outcome of the War of Independence; the world has been greatly blessed by our nation winning its independence.
 - 3) Were Christians in the North wrong, during the War Between the States, when they sought to overthrow the Confederacy? That struggle was not fomented by Christians, but by citizens. If that war had not been fought, it may have been possible, if the gospel had had free course in American society, for the issues which divided the nation to have been settled without a war.
 - 4) Were the Christians who lived in the south wrong when they rebelled against the federal government by seceding from the union? Again, it was not Christians who made the decision to pull away from the union, but citizens.
3. Our mission as followers of Christ is to change the world. The means by which we are to effect this change is the gospel. Positively, we can bring about the change by preaching the gospel; indirectly, we can encourage the change by influence, as the gospel lives in us and as we teach it.
 - a. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - b. Ephesians 5:6-11: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
 - c. Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
 - d. 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
4. David Lipscomb was strongly opposed to a Christian taking part in war. When the War Between the States came, "He publicly spoke out against the war, and took no part either in Southern or Northern politics. He was, however, denounced by men of both sides, but this did not deter him from preaching his convictions" (West, Vol. 2, p.13). "A military officer was sent one Sunday to hear him preach. He took a seat near the front and listened attentively. At the conclusion he said: 'I am not sure that the sermon is loyal to the Southern Confederacy, but I am profoundly convinced that it is loyal to the Christian religion'" (Boles, p.245).
5. Christ did not fulfill his earthly mission by making disturbances in the streets. That would have been more like a *rabble-rouser* than the Savior of the world! Our Lord's work was too holy and majestic to be accomplished by ignoble methods. Our work as Christians is not to be done through circus-like tactics. The Lord never employed base procedures; he had too high a regard for his great work. We should not demean our great mission by resorting to disgraceful methods. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my

beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. **He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.** A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust" (Matt. 12:17-21).

- a. What the Lord did was in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law" (Isa. 42:1-4).
- b. The prophecy quoted is descriptive of the Messiah's person and character and work. The reference shows that Christ was doing exactly what had been predicted of him. The Father was well-pleased with him and loved him; he put his spirit upon him. The three persons of the Godhead are referred to in the verse.
- c. "Jesus was no street corner egotist, bawling for attention. Techniques of the rabble rouser, the sensationalist, and the soap-box orator were beneath his dignity....In keeping with these words concerning Christ, some of the antics of certain religionists appear to be totally improper. On Times Square in New York City, one often sees screaming advocates of this or that doctrine jostling the throngs pouring forth out of the theaters; and, although their zeal may be commendable, one cannot help remembering that the Christ drew the throngs to himself. He did not invade them, beating on a bucket, and yelling for the attention of the passers-by" (Coffman, p.170).
- d. The Lord never intended to foment riots by his preaching. He went about teaching whenever a situation presented itself; he taught publicly, when he had opportunity; he taught privately on many occasions. But never did he seek to arouse the multitudes against the civil authorities (cf. Rom. 13:1-7). Our Lord's tactics are to be ours. He did not use street-corner antics; he did not call attention to himself by religious garb or by outlandish tactics.

B. He owes his country obedience to its laws.

1. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake" (Rom. 13:3-5).
 - a. This passage gives a general rule about civil rulers. In normal circumstances, they do not represent a danger to their subjects; they enact laws to encourage peace and safety, and to provide a situation in which the citizens may earn a decent living and provide for their families and live in peace.
 - b. Only those who violate the law should have any reason to fear the law. Since Christians should be the most law-abiding citizens in a nation, there ought not be any reason for them to fear civil authority. But law breakers, in God's plan, should have much to fear.
2. Laws are needed to maintain order and peace in a country. To insure the maintenance of law and order, a police force and a judicial system are essential.
 - a. But if the law enforcement officials apply the law in an arbitrary manner, the citizens will lose respect for the law. If the judicial system favors the criminal, the citizenry will gradually lose its respect for the system. The law must be enforced with fairness, with a measure of mercy.
 - b. A law abiding citizen has nothing to fear from the civil ruler who is operating within his God-given realm. Instead of having terror of the law, such a person might even receive commendation from civil rulers.
3. The subject of the first clause of verse four is the civil ruler. When a civil authority operates within his God-given realm, he is a minister (servant) of God. The verse does not address the spiritual

condition of the ruler; it merely states that the official is filling a role assigned to him by the God of heaven.

- a. If he is operating within the authority God has delivered to him, his work will be productive of good for all his subjects, Christian and non-Christian.
 - b. However, if a citizen (believer or unbeliever) violates the law, there is reason for that lawbreaker to be afraid. Why? The ruler does not have a sword at his disposal merely for show! He has the God-given right to execute lawbreakers found guilty of a capital offense. The government has been charged with the requirement to enforce the law. *Sword* is symbolic of all the authority which civil rulers are given. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6).
 - c. Civil rulers are servants of God in the civil arena; they are charged with the responsibility to maintain law and order. This requires them to punish criminals and others who break the law. Punishment is often thought of as an expression of wrath, but in the case of judges who mete out penalties for criminal activities, their disposition is one of judicial sobriety, not anger. When a criminal is thus punished, the process may properly be viewed as the wrath of God being brought to bear upon the outlaw.
4. In verse five, two reasons for a Christian being obedient to the civil authority where he lives are given.
- a. The first reason is because of **the penalty** that he may receive if he violates the law. The second reason pertains to **his conscience**. Obeying the law only to avoid punishment may be good enough for the non-believing citizen, but it is insufficient for the child of God. A Christian operates in the spiritual realm, as well as the physical. He must please civil authorities if possible, but of greater importance is the requirement that he please God! Obeying the law of the land because of fear is one thing; obeying the law because it is God's will is an entirely different motive.
 - b. God requires that his people maintain a pure conscience. To do so necessitates that we live up to what we know or believe to be right. To violate one's conscience is to do wrong (Rom. 14:23). Thus, to have God's continuing approval, a Christian must follow God's will—from the heart. In doing this, he will keep himself well within the requirements of civil law, and will retain his good conscience.
 - c. We want to avoid falling under the penalty the law imposes on law breakers, but we especially want to retain God's approval, which includes being obedient to civil law.
- C. Each Christian is obligated to pay taxes.
1. "For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing" (Rom. 13:6).
 2. Because of the truths just presented, Christians are to pay their taxes. We are not responsible for the way government spends the tax money; they will be held accountable for any misuse. This passage places the obligation on saints to pay their taxes (tribute) as prescribed by law. The reasons Paul assigns for this are those stated in verse five: to avoid penalty and for conscience sake.
 3. There is no *free ride*. Money is necessary for government to accomplish its mission. We might not agree with the way government spends tax revenues, but that does not give us the right to refuse to pay taxes. Therefore, render tribute to whom tribute is due. Every government must levy taxes; in our case, we pay county, state, and federal assessments. All of these are our God-given duty to pay.
 4. Matthew 22:15-22: "And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree
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withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

- a. The Lord's statement has since become proverbial: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." What wonderful wisdom! Who but the Lord could have given such a reply!
- b. "Nearly two thousand years have not diminished the wisdom and truth of that sensational answer. It fell like a blow on the questioners. It gave the truth about the tribute question, namely, that it should be paid, and that it could not be wrong to do so since it was paid with Caesar's own money, a plain fact attested by his picture and title on the coins! Christ then went far beyond their question and commanded the tax be paid, but in such a manner that no breach in the popular esteem of Jesus would result. Then, vaulting over all earthly and secular considerations, Christ, as always, directed their attention to the higher ground of God's authority rather than to Caesar's..." (Coffman, pp.351f).
- c. "The answer is general, and in teaching that tribute must be rendered to those to whom tribute is due, it teaches that other obligations to civil rulers are to be discharged as well. While thus pronouncing unmistakably in favor of paying the tribute, he saves himself from popular prejudice by adding, 'and unto God the things that are God's,' asserting in a manner which carried conviction with it, that the payment of enforced tribute was not inconsistent with maintaining complete allegiance to God. The answer was not inconsistent with the statute in Deuteronomy, for this had reference, not to enforced subjection by a foreign power, but to the voluntary choice of a king" (McGarvey, pp. 189f).

D. Christians owe civil authority figures respect for their office.

1. We are told to render custom to whom custom is due: "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. 13:7). "The customs were duties imposed by law upon merchandise, whether imported or exported" (Lard, p.402). This precept prohibits a Christian from smuggling activities. But what about those cases where a country (such as Russia and China) forbids the importation of Bibles? Could Christians scripturally smuggle Bibles into the nation? In such a situation, God's word is being hindered; and precious souls are dying lost. In cases where Christians are forbidden to teach the gospel, we are to teach it anyway. No ruler or government has the right to prohibit the preaching of God's word. On the same basis, a nation that prohibits the importation of the Bible is acting out of harmony with God's will, and Christians may surely bring in Bibles so the people may be taught. If not, why not?
2. We are told to render fear (reverence, respect) to those to whom it is due. In order to encourage respect for the law, our nation calls on us to show respect to the president, judges, and law-makers. In the military forces, respect for superiors is demanded, not because the person being saluted deserves that respect, but deference is being shown to the position the officer occupies. While Christians are not allowed to worship anyone occupying a position of authority in government, we are taught to pay them the respect due their office.
3. Paul further tells us to show honor to whom honor is due. Rulers and judges are to be tendered the tribute of respect due their office.

E. He owes his country his support during troublous times.

1. During World War II, virtually every citizen supported the war effort, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Every productive member of American society contributed to the country's welfare and strength—which made the war effort possible. To some degree, directly or indirectly, the work, influence, or the produce of every citizen promotes the war effort. It is virtually impossible for a productive member of a nation which is at war, to isolate himself from all the aspects of the war effort. During a time of war, no Christian has the right to undermine the struggles of the

- nation to defend itself; to be a traitor to the civil authorities of his country is to be in rebellion to God's word (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17).
2. During a time of economic emergency, a Christian will not contribute to the problem. Some unscrupulous characters will take advantage of such a situation to get rich—a clear violation of several biblical principles.
 - a. Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
 - b. Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - c. Galatians 6:10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
 - d. Ephesians 4:28-29: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."
 3. The real strength of any nation is a high moral quality on the part of the citizens and government. Any citizen, or any part of the legislative, judicial or executive arm of government who hinders, opposes, or undercuts Biblical morality in the nation, violates God's moral directives. Moreover, such a person or party disregards or repudiates their God-given responsibility to support sound civil authority. No man, no group of men, and no civil authority can ignore God's word with impunity.
 - a. Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
 - b. Proverbs 14:33-35: "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known. Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people. The king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame."
 - 1) The wisdom of a prudent man resides in his heart; it rests there. What is in the hearts of foolish men is demonstrated by them—foolishness.
 - 2) This is one of the outstanding, practical truths in Proverbs. During the time when Greece and Rome were in their heyday (from man's point of view), they were in the throes of degradation in God's sight. The state of a nation is determined by the nature of its individual citizens. To make a nation right, the individuals must be made right.
 - 3) What is said here about a king's attitude toward those who show wisdom in his service and those who bring him shame, is God's attitude to these responses.
 - c. Daniel 4:32: "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."
 4. The point in this section of the study calls for a notice of the *war question*—is it in accordance with the Bible for a Christian to fight in a war? If it is not, then to what degree if any may a Christian citizen support his country's war efforts?
 - a. As noted earlier, in a time of war, every productive citizen contributes to some degree, either directly or indirectly, to the war. Farmers grow crops that are partially used by the war machine; every factory worker, regardless of what he manufactures, likewise supports the war, at least in some indirect way; whatever contributes to the strength and welfare of the country as a whole, supports the military activities of the nation.
 - b. Some sincere, knowledgeable Christians have concluded that serving in a combat situation is entirely compatible with the principles of Christianity. In their view, a war-effort is parallel to
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- police-work: each is necessary for the good of society—a society in which Christianity serves. Thus, since it is right for a Christian to serve as a policeman, it is also right serve in the military.
- c. Other equally sincere and knowledgeable Christians have concluded that they can serve the military effort in war in every way, excluding the actual taking of another human life.
 - d. Others, no less sincere, maintain that everything that contributes to warfare must be shunned by every faithful Christian. If this view is followed consistently, no Christian can serve on a police force or in the military (even in peacetime); further, there is no logical and consistent way to determine what a Christian can do during a time of war—since virtually everything being done in the nation contributes to the war-making powers, either directly or indirectly. Some have decided that it is wrong for a Christian to hold public office, or even to vote—it appears clear that such a conclusion is extreme and unwarranted.
 - e. The question is very difficult; it has been argued for centuries. Brethren have generally concluded that, in the final analysis, the individual saint must decide what he can conscientiously do.

IV. WHEN A NATION'S MORALITY DECLINES BELOW A CERTAIN LEVEL, GOD ACTS.

A. The case of the Amorites.

1. Genesis 15:16: "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: **for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.**"
2. God would not dispossess the people of Canaan until their iniquity was full. His longsufferance would delay the entry of Israel into the promised land.
3. We wonder why God allows evil nations and men to prevail: His patience is being shown; also his dealings are unbelievably complex; he plans for centuries, not for a momentary situation.
4. When their iniquity peaked, the Amorites lost their deed to Canaan; so did Israel later on: "Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you" (Josh. 23:15-16).

B. The case of Sodom and Gomorrah.

1. Genesis 18:20: "And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous."
2. They had crossed the line and must be destroyed! God's mercy and patience have a limit: "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" (Gen. 6:3). But for Abraham's sake, he would spare Sodom and Gomorrah if ten righteous people were found therein.
3. Only four were discovered (Lot, his wife, and their two daughters). For lack of six people thousands were destroyed! You are important: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

C. The case of Nineveh.

1. Jonah 1:2: "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me."
2. They were given forty days to repent; the message terrified them; they repented—Jonah 3 (773 B.C.).
3. One hundred and fifty years later they returned to sin and were destroyed: "But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies" (Nahum 1:8, 625 B.C.).
4. They were defeated by Babylon in 612 B.C.

D. The case of Israel.

1. Throughout their history as God's chosen people, they ran hot and cold. They reached a point in rebellion that God disowned them after they rejected Christ; he had no further use for them.

2. They were overthrown by the Roman army in 70 A.D. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. 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! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:35-39; cf. Matt. 24:1-35).
3. A remnant obeyed the gospel in the first century—the majority rejected the gospel; a remnant is now in Palestine—the majority is scattered as a reminder of God's sovereignty and as proof of inspiration: "For I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11).

E. God does not change in his righteous character.

1. Statements from the Scriptures:
 - a. Malachi 3:6: "For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."
 - b. Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."
2. Since he punished wicked nations in ancient times, we may expect he does so now.
3. If not, then Old Testament Scriptures are not as important as Romans 15:4 suggests: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

F. What about the future of our own great nation?

1. Has America become more righteous or less righteous over the past 200 years? By comparing current attitudes with those of the past, we can answer this question.
 - a. Washington: "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible....He is worse than an infidel who does not read his Bible and acknowledge his obligation to God."
 - b. Lincoln: "I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this Book...and you will live and die a better man."
 - c. Webster: "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on prospering, but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury us and our glory in profound obscurity."
2. Public laws and practices show that a great decline in respect for the Bible has occurred in America. This cannot be done without grievous consequences.
 - a. Prayers to God and studying his word are now forbidden in public schools.
 - b. Each year we murder more than 1 million unborn babies.
 - c. A recent survey of 100,000 women revealed that 90% of those not married admitted they were fornicators; two-thirds of those married confessed adultery or said they desired to do so.
 - d. Add to this the crime figures, drug problems, sexual perversion, hatred, religious error, suicide rates, child abuse, and sins of other kinds.
3. There are many who believe the Bible and follow it; but America has lost much of the former respect it once had for the moral principles of the Bible.

V. **CONCLUSION.**

A. What can we do to help and preserve our nation?

1. We can commit ourselves to godly, scriptural lives; the influence of a few godly people is tremendous. The presence of only six more righteous souls could have spared Sodom.
 - a. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the

- house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
- b. Philippians 2:14-16: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
2. We can bind our homes together with the Word of God.
 - a. The home is the backbone of a nation: as goes the home, so the nation.
 - b. Strong Christian homes can benefit the nation and the world.
 3. We can teach against the evils that plague us and enlist others in the war.
- B. The best service a Christian can give his country is a faithful Christian life.

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Abortion And The Bible

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Bible is final authority on all spiritual and moral subjects.

1. Passages:

- a. John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
- b. Galatians 1:6-9: "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."
- c. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
- d. 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
- e. 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 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."

2. It is the fully inspired, inerrant, all-powerful, authoritative Word of God.

3. The Bible is shown to be God's inspired word by various evidences:

- a. Internally, its message is complete, concise, comprehensive, and harmonious.
- b. It has proved to be indestructible although having many powerful enemies.
- c. It has many scientific, medical, historical, and geographical references which have been shown to be absolutely correct.
- d. The countless prophecies which have been minutely fulfilled.

4. Therefore, what it says on spiritual and moral questions is to be understood as being perfectly true and reliable: it is God's word on the matter!

B. The question of abortion has plagued our country for many years.

1. Many sincere souls are perplexed over the issue. There are some disturbing questions regarding it that seem difficult to answer.
2. The Supreme Court reversed the long-established view that abortion was wrong in 1973. Why? Did they have a new revelation from heaven? Was a practice that was considered illegal and sinful for so long, suddenly become right? Judges are human, and as such, are subject to prejudices and mis-judgments, and are prone to favor popular ideas.
3. There are many powerful people on both sides of the issue; the numbers on each side of the question are many; there seems to be some strong arguments in favor of abortion.
4. With this background, how are young people to decide which is the right view? Christian young people will have been taught the truth by their Bible teachers and parents. But what about those who do not have this advantage? Or those who have honest doubts? What about all those who never question the practice? Or those who go through the dreadful experience and then have horrible memories of what they have done?

II. DISCUSSION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ON THE SUBJECT?

A. First, notice some facts regarding the serious nature of the practice.

1. In our country, about one and one half million babies are aborted each year. This is an average of about four thousand each day, seven days a week.
 2. Around the world, it is estimated that about fifty million babies are thus slain each year.
 3. Records show that our country has lost about one million, one hundred and sixty thousand soldiers in the major wars we have fought. Each year, more than that number are killed in abortion clinics and hospitals in our country—legally.
 4. In 1982, Gainesville, FL had 2,067 babies born, but there were 2,510 abortions. In many other cities the same pattern was found: births were outnumbered by abortions. Atlanta had 24,255 births but 31,030 abortions.
 5. Every major newspaper carries advertisements for abortion clinics. Many doctors have forsaken their noble work of healing for the despicable work of slaughtering the unborn.
 6. The procedures by which this evil work is done are extremely gruesome: dismembering their unborn bodies with sharp instruments; using powerful suction devices to tear their little bodies asunder, leaving only the head and part of the spine which have to be removed by other means; using a powerful saline solution which shrivels and shrinks the baby; others are taken by c-section and dropped into a bucket.
 7. Unspeakable things are done to some aborted babies who are brought forth alive. Reports in "The Defender", Vol. 5, No. 3 (3-76) gave these horrible descriptions:
 - a. A doctor at Stanford University sliced open the rib cage of a still-living fetus in order to observe its heart action.
 - b. Aborted, live fetuses were packed in ice while still moving and trying to breath, then rushed off to a laboratory.
 - c. Babies ranging from 12-20 weeks old were delivered alive; their heads were removed and attached to a machine which pumped various chemicals through the brain circulation of their severed heads.
 - d. One doctor was disturbed by the aborted baby's attempts to cry, so he dropped some the mother's tissue on the face and smothered it.
 8. These horror stories could be multiplied, and no doubt many accounts could be given of even worse instances of torture and cruelty.
- B. What does the Bible teach about killing and murder?
1. Man is a two-fold being, comprised of a physical body and an eternal spirit (soul).
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 2) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - 3) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - b. His physical body is described in Psalm 139:14: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well."
 - c. His spirit is also formed by God:
 - 1) Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."
 - 2) Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
 2. God's word teaches that it is sinful to take an innocent life.
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- a. He not only condones, but requires, the execution of certain criminals (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:1-5; 1 Pet. 2:13-14). God slew and caused many to be slain in Bible times (Gen. 38; 1 Sam. 15; Acts 5).
 - b. Executions do not violate God's law against murder.
 - c. The sixth of the Ten Commandments forbids killing (Ex. 20:13); but Jesus showed that murder is the thing forbidden (Matt. 19:18). The Hebrew word in Ex. 20:13 (*ratsach*) means to murder; the word used in Deuteronomy 13:9 (*harag*) describes a legal execution.
3. If it can be shown that an unborn baby is alive, then the taking of that life is shown to violate God's word forbidding murder.
- a. Keep in mind the distinction between killing and murder. To accidentally kill a man is not punished; executing a criminal by the duly appointed civil authorities is not wrong (in capital cases).
 - b. But taking a life out of anger, envy, hatred, etc., is a violation of God's will. God hates "hands that shed innocent blood" (Prov. 6:17). Murderers, and others who are identified, commit things that are "worthy of death." "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Rom. 1:29-32).
 - c. Those who perform abortions are taking innocent blood; therefore, are guilty of a heinous crime in the eyes of God. Murder is the deliberate taking of a human life; abortion is the planned, intentional killing of a human life.
4. Although the word "abortion" is not found in the Bible, the act is forbidden and condemned by various Biblical principles and commandments.
- a. It is forbidden and condemned by those passages which prohibit the taking of innocent blood.
 - 1) Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."
 - 2) Proverbs 6:16-19: "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."
 - 3) Matthew 19:18: "He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness."
 - 4) Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
 - 5) 1 John 3:15: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."
 - 6) Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - b. The sanctity and value of human life as taught in the Bible forbids and condemns abortion. Only human life is in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; Ps. 8). Only God has the right to take a human life (Gen. 50:15-19). [Civil authorities have the right to execute criminals only because of God's decree; cf. John 19:11].
 - 1) "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:55-56). This was a revolutionary thought in the first century.
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Sixty million lived under slavery in the Roman Empire; men fought to the death with each other and with wild beasts—for entertainment; infants were the property of the father and were often killed or cast out at birth; suicide was common; and abortion was widespread.

- 2) In the midst of this callous society, Jesus came teaching the sanctity of life.
- c. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). The golden rule forbids the killing of innocent unborn babies. If this grand precept of the gospel were uniformly applied, all the abortion clinics would close. "What mother would want to be killed by dismemberment such as the dilation and curettage abortion procedure? What abortionist doctor would want to be trapped in a tiny cell and have a corrosive poured over his body and forced into his lungs and stomach and then be left to convulse for hours till he died? This occurs to the baby in the salt poisoning abortion. Is there a nurse who assists in abortions who would want to be torn from her home, ripped apart by a powerful machine? Remember, by the time that early abortions are performed (eight to twelve weeks) the baby has his entire organ system in place and his full sense of pain" (Waddey, *Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly*, pp.30f).
- d. The many Bible passages which forbid selfishness and demand sincere concern and help be given to others also prohibit abortion.
 - 1) Passages:
 - a) Genesis 4:9: "And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?"
 - b) Matthew 26:39: "And 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."
 - c) Romans 12:15-18: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
 - d) Romans 14:19: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."
 - e) 1 Corinthians 10:24: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*."
 - f) Galatians 6:2: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."
 - g) Philippians 2:3-4: "*Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."
 - 2) To some degree, we are our brother's keeper! How much more so the unborn child we have conceived.
 - 3) "Selfishness and personal interest lies at the root of most abortions. Unmarried couples selfishly indulge in sexual pleasure and then when pregnancy occurs they destroy the life that would cause them embarrassment or limitations. The same sin is at work when the married professional woman chooses to abort rather than accept the responsibilities of parenthood, which would interfere with her personal ambitions" (ibid., p.31).
- e. The Bible condemns those who are without natural affection (Rom. 1:31). "The Greek term "*astorgos*) denotes the want of affectionate regard towards their children. Without doubt, a mother that can deliberately kill the innocent child in her womb is lacking that normal, motherly affection which God expects of mankind" (ibid.).

C. According to the Bible, when does life begin?

1. If it can be shown that an unborn fetus has life, it is a human being; if it is a human being, it has a spirit (soul).

- a. Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."
 - b. Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
2. The Bible speaks of unborn babies as real persons.
- a. Genesis 25:22-23: "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Jacob and Esau are spoken of as real persons, having distinct personalities and traits which would also characterize their descendants.
 - b. Judges 13:5: "For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." Samson was called a son although yet unborn.
 - c. Ruth 1:11: "And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?"
 - d. Job 3:11-19: "Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck? For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest, With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves; Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver: Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light. There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master." Job says that if he had died from his mother's womb, he would have gone into the realm of departed souls where the dead, small and great, had gone. This could not be said about a non-entity.
 - e. Job 31:15: "Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?" God made us all; he made us all after the original pattern, i.e., with body and spirit, in the image of God. Thus, the unborn child is a real person.
 - f. Ecclesiastes 11:5: "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." The unborn one is called a "child."
 - g. Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." Jeremiah was set apart for his special work for God, not merely a body, but as a body and soul. When God sanctified Jeremiah in the womb, he sanctified the total man. (Gaston Cogdell, "Contending For The Faith," April, 1978).
 - h. Jeremiah 20:17: "Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb to be always great with me." Jeremiah is described as a real person even before his birth into the world.
 - i. Luke 1:15: "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy host, even from his mother's womb." John would have the Holy Spirit before his birth, indicating he was a real person at the time.
 - j. Luke 1:41: "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost." The word translated "babe" (used here to describe an unborn baby) is used elsewhere to denote infants and children in the world:
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- 1) Luke 2:21: "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb."
 - 2) Luke 18:15: "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them."
 - 3) Acts 7:19: "The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live."
 - 4) Luke 2:12: "And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."
 - 5) Luke 2:16: "And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."
 - 6) 1 Peter 2:2; I Tim. 3:15. The word is used to describe humans, unborn or born.
 - k. Galatians 1:15: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace." Paul was a real person before birth.
 - l. Psalm 139:13-16: "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." David was a real person while his body was being formed.
 - m. 2 Kings 19:3: "And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." The unborn are spoken of as children, not as non-living appendages to the mothers.
 - n. Matthew 1:18: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." She was with child, not with some non-entity.
 - o. 2 Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
3. These verses show that the unborn babies referred to had the properties of a human being even before birth. Since a fetus has the properties essential to being a human being, it is a human being; a fetus has those properties; therefore, it is a human being.
 4. To kill an innocent human being is murder; a fetus is a human being; therefore, abortion (killing a fetus) is murder.
- D. The development of a baby.
1. Human life begins at conception; this is when the development and growth of the entity begins, getting his nourishment from his mother.
 2. When this unborn child is three weeks old, he has eyes, a spinal cord, nervous system, lungs, and intestines; and he is only one-tenth of an inch long.
 3. The heart begins beating about the 18th day which supplies blood separate from the mother.
 4. At six weeks, the baby begins to move; his brain waves are present and can be recorded on an electroencephalogram.
 5. By the end of seven weeks the baby has fingers, knees, ankles and toes; if his lip is tickled, he will pull away.
 6. At eight weeks, he will grab an instrument placed in his palm; swims freely; an electrocardiogram can be used to record heart impulses.
 7. At ten weeks, the baby is so perfectly formed that he even has fingerprints.
 8. At twelve weeks, all organs are present and functioning; he breathes (fluids); sucks his thumb; swallows; tastes, cries, sleeps and wakes. Beyond this time, nothing new is formed; he grows rapidly.
 9. By eighteen weeks the baby (still not much larger than your hand) is active and energetic, flexing muscles, punching and kicking. He only needs time to grow and develop. At birth he exits the womb;
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breathes air; takes his food by mouth. At what point during this process is this developing being not human life? At what point could its life be taken and no guilt be incurred?

- E. To have an honest investigation, we must properly consider the objections offered.
1. Pro-abortionists argue that since Adam did not live until God breathed into him the breath of life, and since a baby does not breath until birth, therefore the unborn baby is not a human being (having a soul) and may be killed without guilt.
 - a. "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" (Gen. 2:7). God had formed Adam's body from earthly ingredients; he had no life at all until God placed in him the breath of life. But the baby is alive and growing from the moment of conception.
 - b. James 2:26: "...The body without the spirit is dead..." The converse of this truth is also accurate: For the body to be alive, the spirit (soul) must be in the body.
 - c. What was true of Adam is not the way it is for all other humans. He received the breath of life after his body was fully formed; we receive it long before we begin to breathe separate and apart from our mothers. The unborn breathe (receive oxygen) through their mothers from the moment of conception.
 2. Pro-abortionists allege scriptural proof supporting their position is given in Exodus 21:22: "If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine." They assert that "if the unborn baby is killed in the struggle, only a fine is imposed; if the mother is killed, capital punishment is given (vv 23-25). Therefore, unborn babies are not real persons."
 - a. But what proves too much, proves nothing. In the same chapter (vv. 28-36), if an ox "goes a free man, the animal and the owner shall be put to death, but if it only goes a servant (slave) the owner of the ox shall pay a fine. Since the slave's death is punished more lightly than the free-man's, shall we conclude that slaves are not full persons and can be killed with impunity? If the case of the woman and her unborn babe teaches that the babe is a less valuable life, then so does this" (ibid., p.32).
 - b. C.F. Keil, one of the premier commentators on the Old Testament, said about this passage: "If men strove and thrust against a woman with child, who had come near or between them for the purpose of making peace, so that her children come out (come into the world), and no injury was done either to the woman or the child that was born, a pecuniary compensation was to be paid, such as the husband of the woman laid upon him, and he was to give it by (by an appeal to) arbitrators. A fine was imposed, because even if no injury had been done to the woman and the fruit of her womb, such a blow might have endangered life....But if injury occur (to the mother or the child),'thou shalt give soul for soul, eye for eye...wound for wound:' thus perfect retribution was to be made" (pp.134f).
 - c. The idea advanced in the text is this: If the woman is struck in the struggle so that her child is delivered prematurely but unharmed, and she suffers no significant injury, the penalty was only a fine. However, if mischief follows (the baby or the mother is injured significantly or is killed, then a similar injury (even death) is to be inflicted on the offender.
 - d. Thus, instead of supporting the abortionists' view, this passage refutes it. But even if the passage says what the pro-abortionist claims, there would be no support for abortion in the text. The passage describes an unintentional injury done to a nonparticipant in a fight; the abortionist does his evil work with full awareness of what he is doing: his intent and purpose is to dispose of the unwanted life in the womb of the mother.
 3. "If the pro-life advocates have their way and make abortion illegal, it will bring back the back street butchers."
 - a. But those who break the law bring the penalty that is incurred upon themselves. It is not the law
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- that causes them to go to the "butcher," but their unwillingness to abide by that civil law and/or the spiritual law that forbids the immorality which led to the unwanted pregnancy.
- b. It is also against the law to sell, buy, or use illegal drugs, but many people do so anyway. To prevent the horrible things which result from the use of these drugs (addiction, death, disease, robbery to support the habit, etc.), should we make the selling, buying, and use of these drugs legal?
 - c. Murdering someone often results in the offender having a very guilty conscience which sometimes leads to his committing suicide. Should we make murder legal?
4. "To make abortion illegal again would mean that the developing baby might lead to a life-threatening danger to the mother. Surely you would not object to abortion if it would save the life of the woman."
- a. One doctor's view in this situation was to say: I would never attack and kill the unborn child. The mission of doctors is to save, not to kill. If faced with a truly either/or situation, I would remove a cancerous uterus or a tubal pregnancy. In doing so, the child would inadvertently die. But this would not be the purpose of the surgery. The purpose was to save a dying mother. (ibid., p.33).
 - b. Medical advances have progressed to the point that a case where the mother's life is genuinely threatened by the pregnancy is very rare. "Anyone who performs a therapeutic abortion (for physical disease) is either ignorant of modern methods of treating the complications of pregnancy, or is unwilling to take time to use them" (Dr. R.J. Hefferman, ibid.).
5. "A victim of rape who is thereby impregnated should have the right to abort the child which is certainly unwanted."
- a. Emotional issues (such as this and number 4 above) are frequently used to justify abortion. What is not mentioned is the rarity of these situations. The exceptional case is made to appear a normal occurrence.
 - b. We have all known couples who desperately wanted a baby, but were unable to conceive a child. After going through the adoption process and getting a baby that way, they then have a baby on their own. "There are psychological factors involved which affect conception. Our benevolent Creator so made the feminine reproductive system so that she rarely conceives under the trauma of a rape situation" (Waddey, p.34). Treatment is available to avoid pregnancy in such cases where it develops; there is a vast difference in preventing conception and terminating a life.
 - c. "Less than one percent of our annual million and a half abortions are for hardship cases such as rape, deformity, incest and threat to the mother's life...A scientific study was made of rape victims treated in the Minneapolis-St. Paul hospitals. A ten year study which dealt with some 3,500 cases showed not one case of pregnancy" (ibid., pp. 33f).
 - d. A question that directly relates to the point under consideration is the right of the unborn child conceived by rape (an extremely rare occurrence). Does that child have the right to live? He did not choose to be conceived, but has the right to live.
6. "If there is a danger of the baby being deformed, could we then abort it?"
- a. This is a very difficult question, but there are other equally difficult and timely questions. Is the defective unborn baby a human life? Is all human life sacred or just certain ones? What about the deformed baby after birth: should it be killed?
 - b. If we decide to terminate those who are imperfect, just how perfect must an unborn baby be before it is spared? Who has the right and the wisdom to made the fateful decisions? Can man play God?
 - c. Hitler's Germany practiced infanticide to the point that babies who had wrinkled ears or were bed-wetters were killed.
7. "The woman have the right to control the affairs of her own body. Therefore, she has the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy."
- a. But the unborn, developing child is not an appendage of the woman's body; it is a separate life which is dependent upon the woman for its sustenance and protection.
 - b. This unborn child is totally different from the body of either the mother or the father. It has its
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- own set of chromosomes; it is alive and capable of replacing its own dying cells; all it needs is food, care and time to mature. Its blood type may be very different from its mother or father's.
- c. Just because the baby is deriving its necessities from the mother does not mean that the mother may do with it what she wishes.

F. There are certain absurdities pertaining to the pro-abortionist view.

1. The IRS ruled, a number of years ago, following the 1973 ruling permitting abortion, that parents may claim as dependents those infants that briefly survive abortion. How can the federal government insist that the child, while inside the womb, is not human and has no legal protection under the law from being aborted, but if the child lives briefly after being taken from the mother, then be considered by the government as a human being and thus a legal dependent for that year?
2. Two men were arrested in West Virginia for killing two hibernating female bears. It was discovered that the bears were both pregnant, carrying seven unborn bear cubs. A spokesman from the Department of Natural Resources said that the crime committed involved the killing of nine bears. How can an unborn bear be considered a bear, having all the normal rights of bears, while an unborn human child is not even considered as human and has no rights at all?
3. The medical field is either unable or unwilling to agree on when life begins or ends. Controversies have raged over these matters for many years, but no clear-cut agreement has been reached. If they are this ignorant about these basic issues, how can they make such pronouncements about the rightness of putting innocent babies to death?
4. A doctor was tried and convicted for killing a baby he had aborted. The baby survived the abortion attempt, so the doctor strangled it to death. If he was acting under the law in killing babies in the womb, why was it wrong to kill this one who happened to survive the procedure? Why is it legal to kill a baby one minute and wrong to kill it a minute later?
5. In abortion, perfectly healthy babies are butchered; they would have no difficulty in living to maturity following birth. In other cases, wanted babies are born into the world with many deficiencies; these can be cared for and grow to have a healthy life.
6. Medical knowledge, equipment, procedures, and skill have advanced to the point that many babies who formerly would have had no chance for survival, are now able to be saved. How is it that the healthy one is killed, and no effort is spared to save the other?

III. CONCLUSION.

A. Where will the legality of abortion eventually lead?

1. No one can say for sure, since the Supreme Court has been sending signals of a move back to saner ground. But if the current situation continues, some grievous ends are in the offing.
 2. The extreme views voiced in university settings often have a way of becoming the law of the land.
 3. Once a society has accepted the idea that human life is not sacred, only time is needed for more drastic steps to be taken.
 - a. "...It used to be easy to know what we wanted for our children, and now the best for our children might mean deciding which ones to kill. We've always wanted the best for our grandparents, and now that might mean killing them" (Dr. William Gaylin, Columbia University; Waddey, p.35).
 - b. "How long shall life be preserved when there is no redeeming social value? If life has no apparent purpose, perhaps it is to the benefit of others that such lives not be salvaged" (George Paulson, quoted by Waddey, p.35).
 4. The history of Nazi Germany shows the rapid progress from relatively simple matters of evil (hatred of Jews, pride in supposed Germanic superiority) to the mass killings of the death camps.
 5. Our country could proceed to infanticide (the killing of babies and children), to the promoting of suicide, to euthanasia (the killing of aged and imperfect people), to genocide (the elimination of whole races or classes deemed undesirable).
 6. One step into sin or religious error always promotes a second and third step, with each step becoming progressively worse—and easier to take.
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- a. A hundred years ago, liberal brethren began their departure by advocating instrument music in worship and a missionary society to do the work of the church. Their descendants today are among the most liberal and modernistic people in religion! Hardly anything is sacred or sinful to them now.
 - b. "On this planet civilization is necessarily based on a reverence for human life. Reverence for human life is indivisible. You either have it or you don't. You can't have reverence for only some human life. Once death becomes more highly valued in a society than life, then the bonds of restraint are cut and that society inevitably will self-destruct. If one human life is worth nothing, then no human life is worth anything. By what crazy logic do you think a society that casually condones the killing of babies is going to be overly concerned with preserving your life? What happens when you become inconvenient? ... When dying becomes casual and unimportant, so does living. Put another way, when life becomes cheap, death becomes profitable" (Charley Reese, "Orlando Sentinel," Feb. 5, 1986).
 - c. "A society that can rationalize the murder of babies eventually will rationalize the murder of human beings at other stages of their lives. Find yourself a pro-abortion argument and simply substitute another word—AIDS victim or retarded person, for example—wherever fetus is used. See how the argument flows along uninterrupted" (ibid., May 1, 1987).
- B. Something to think about.
1. The Supreme Court says abortion is all right; experts tell us it is good and needed; society says it is better than unwanted and unloved babies; doctors assert the methods are humane; but God says: "Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isa. 5:20).
 2. "May we who are God's children rise up in holy indignation and drive this Satanic evil from our midst lest the land vomit us out as ancient Canaan vomited out her heathen inhabitants who filled the cup of moral iniquity (Lev. 18:24-25; 20:1)" (Waddey, p.38).
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The Great Apostasy And Restoration

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The history of mankind has been one of rebellion.

1. Adam and Eve rebelled against God's will in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3).
2. Cain rebelled in his assault against his brother Abel (Genesis 4).
3. By the time of Genesis 6, almost the entire race had departed from God (Genesis 6-9).
4. After the flood, Noah's descendants rebelled in the affair of Babel (Genesis 11).
5. Esau rebelled by his greedy and worldly demeanor (Gen. 25:29-34; Heb. 12:15-17).
6. There were faithful men and women who served God loyally during this Patriarchal era.

B. Israel rebelled and was restored during their long Old Testament history.

1. During the time of the Judges, in a vicious cycle, one generation of Israelites was blessed by the Lord, the next generation rebelled by going into idolatry; punishment was sent; they repented and were restored, and God blessed them again. The cycle would repeat.
2. Israel rebelled when they demanded a king (1 Sam. 8; Hos. 13:11).
3. They departed in drunkenness, idolatry, fornication, injustice, pride, ingratitude, and worldliness. This was especially true during the years of the divided kingdom.
4. When Christ came, they were in a state of rebellion. "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:15).
5. There were many occasions of repentance and restoration during this Mosaic era. One was led by Josiah (2 Kings 22-23); another was led by Ezra and Nehemiah.

C. The Gentile nations rebelled against God.

1. Romans 1:18-32. They did not have the light the Jews had, but they had no excuse. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).
2. If the Jews had lived up to God's expectations, they and the Gentiles would have been much better prepared for the coming of Christ.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. Many warnings were given in the New Testament to hinder future rebellions.

1. Matthew 7:15-20 "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
 2. Matthew 24:24-27: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
 3. Acts 20:25-32: "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your
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own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

4. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
 5. 1 Timothy 4:1-3: "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."
 6. 2 Timothy 3:1-8: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith."
 7. Hebrews 3:12-13: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
 8. 2 Peter 2:1-2: "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. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."
- B. Many of our brethren rebelled in the first century.
1. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5).
 2. The incestuous man in the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 5:1-13).
 3. Hymanaeus and Alexander. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymanaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:19-20).
 4. The Judaizing teachers corrupted their own faith, and sought to pollute the faith of the Gentile saints, by following the Law of Moses (Gal. 1:6-9; Acts 15).
 5. Some taught that the resurrection is past already. "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:17-18).
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6. Some were teaching that there would be no resurrection at all: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:12-20).
 7. There were the Gnostics who taught some despicable doctrines.
 - a. Docetic Gnostics denied the actual humanity of Christ; they regarded all flesh as inherently sinful, thus decreed it would have been impossible for Christ, who was sinless, to abide in a sinful body of flesh. They argued that the body of Jesus was not real, but an illusion and that he only appeared to suffer on the cross.
 - b. Cerinthian Gnostics attempted to distinguish between Christ and Jesus; claimed that Jesus was the offspring of Joseph and Mary, and that Christ descended upon Jesus at his baptism and left him on the cross.
 - c. Paul exposed the early stages of Gnosticism in Colossians. The book of 1 John refuted these false doctrines, which had by that time come to full strength.
- C. Soon after the first century, many great departures in doctrine arose.
1. Marcion.
 - a. He was born 85 A.D., the son of an elder in the church in Pontus. Marcion also became an elder, and was a wealthy ship owner. He went to Rome in 138 A.D., and reportedly, gave \$10,000 to the church.
 - b. He was what we would call a *liberal* or *modernist* today. He believed that law and grace were mutually exclusive; that the God of the Old Testament was a God of Justice; that the God of the New Testament was a different God: one of love and mercy. He accepted only the epistles of Paul and the Gospel of Luke.
 - c. Marcion taught: "Yahveh exists, and is the creator of the world; but he made the flesh and bones of man from matter, and therefore left man's soul imprisoned in an evil frame. To release the soul of man a greater god sent his son to earth; Christ appeared, already thirty years of age, in a phantasmal, unreal body, and by his death won for good men the privilege of a purely spiritual resurrection. The good, said Marcion, are those who, following Paul, renounce Yahveh and the Jewish Law, reject the Hebrew Scriptures, shun marriage and all sensual enjoyment, and overcome the flesh by a stern asceticism. To propagate these ideas Marcion issued a New Testament composed of Luke's Gospel and the letters of Paul" (Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, pp.604f).
 - d. When the church at Rome withdrew from him, he formed the Marcionite Church. It lasted until the fifth century (an existence of about 300 years).
 2. Montanus.
 - a. He was converted to Christianity after serving as a priest in the pagan temple of Cybele. His former religion was one given to great emotional outbursts.
 - b. On becoming a Christian (156 A.D.), "he denounced the increasing worldliness of Christians and the growing autocracy of bishops in the Church; he demanded a return to primitive Christian simplicity and austerity, and a restored right of prophecy, or inspired speech, to the members of the congregations. Two women, Priscilla and Maximilla, took him at his word and fell into religious trances; and their utterances became the living oracles of the sect. Montanus himself prophesied with such eloquent ecstasy that his Phrygian followers...hailed him as the Paraclete promised by Christ"(Durant, *ibid*, p.605).
 - c. His zeal outdistanced his knowledge. He rejected the authority of the inspired writings, claiming
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- that Christians were still being led directly by the Holy Spirit. He claimed that he was the first one to receive the Holy Spirit in its completeness (this would exalt him above the apostles). Montanus would go into a trance in which he would rave and utter strange sounds.
- d. Montanus taught that Christ was going to return shortly and set up his earthly kingdom at the place where he was preaching (Pepuza, in Phrygia), and that Christ would reign there for 1000 years. His perversion of Christianity resembles in many details the modern Pentecostal errors.
 - e. "When, about 190, the Roman proconsul Antonius persecuted Christians in Asia Minor, hundreds of Montanists, eager for paradise, crowded before his tribunal and asked for martyrdom. He could not accommodate them all; some he executed; but most of them he dismissed with the words: 'Miserable creatures! If you wish to die are there not ropes and precipices?' The Church banned Montanism as a heresy, and in the sixth century Justinian ordered the extinction of the sect. Some Montanists gathered in their churches, set fire to them, and let themselves be burned alive" (*ibid*, p.605).
3. Departure in organization of the church.
 - a. The terms *elders*, *bishops* and *pastors* are used interchangeably in the New Testament (Acts 20:17-28). They are called elders because of their experience and age; they are called bishops because of their oversight of the congregation; they are called pastors because of their loving care for those in their charge. But by 150 A.D., the term *bishop* was reserved for the presiding elder in a given congregation.
 - b. For about a hundred years, this arrangement was held, but one departure naturally leads to another. By the end of the third century, these bishops were considered to be successors to the apostles. The bishops of large congregations took the lead in establishing other congregations; these new churches fell under his control. Over a period of time, the bishop was over many congregations in an area. "By the close of the third century these bishops were regarded as successors to the Apostles....By the time of Irenaeus (185) there was some interest in trying to establish a succession of bishops back to the Apostles" (Mattox, p.109).
 - c. Eventually, archbishops were appointed to be in charge of the bishops. This hierarchal system developed over the years to resemble the chain of command used by the pagan Roman Empire.
 4. Development of a separate priesthood—the clergy-laity system.
 - a. In the New Testament, Christ intended for all his people to be equals.
 - 1) Matthew 23:8: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren."
 - 2) Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."
 - b. The artificial distinction of clergy (the priesthood) and the laity (the rest) was developed and patterned after the Old Testament system. The bishop took the position of High Priest, the other elders were priests, and the deacons were the Levites (Mattox, p.111).
 - c. Worship could only be conducted by these "priests." Authority to interpret the Scriptures was limited to this "clergy." The result was that worship degenerated into mere ceremonialism.
 - d. The New Testament teaches that every Christian is a priest (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), and has the right to approach God through Christ, without the interposition of some human. "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
 5. Original sin.
 - a. The Old and New Testaments both teach that we enter the world completely free from any taint of sin:
 - 1) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - 2) Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity
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- was found in thee."
- 3) Matthew 18:3: "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."
 - 4) Matthew 19:14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
 - 5) Ecclesiastes 7:29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."
 - 6) Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) was the first to formulate the doctrine of original sin. He taught that the soul shares in Adam's guilt, and that every person is under the condemnation of sin, even though infants have never committed sin.
- b. The world has been cursed with this devil's doctrine ever since! Virtually every religious group today teaches this error. Obviously, an infant does not obtain the guilt of sin from God, and God said sin is not obtained from parents; the fact is, no infant or little child has any guilt of sin!
6. Infant baptism.
- a. The New Testament teaches that baptism is for those who are mature enough to be taught, to have faith, to repent, and to confess their faith.
 - 1) Matthew 28:19-20: "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 alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - 3) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 4) Acts 8:37: "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."
 - 5) Romans 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - b. Once the doctrine of original sin was generally believed, the next natural step was infant baptism. If babies are guilty of sin, it was reasoned, they then need to be baptized. At first, infants were immersed.
 - c. The water of baptism took on magical powers to these people, in cases of infants or adults. Elaborate ceremonies accompanied "baptismal" services. People would gather around the ones to be baptized, waving their arms and shouting to drive evil out of the candidate (see Mattox, p.119).
 - d. Infant baptism was developed in the third century. There is not a single example of it in the New Testament.
7. Sprinkling or pouring for baptism.
- a. In the New Testament, baptism was by one action: immersion. The Greek word means "to dip, plunge, or immerse." The descriptions given of baptism by the inspired writers always indicates immersion.
 - 1) John 3:23: "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."
 - 2) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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."
 - 3) 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."
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- 4) Acts 8:36-39: "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. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."
 - b. The first recorded case of anyone being *baptized* by having water poured on him was in 251 A.D. A man named Novatian was seriously ill, so sick that it was decided he could not be immersed. Since he had not been baptized, the officials poured water on him, hoping that in this exceptional case it would be acceptable to God. This became known as *clinic baptism*, and was practiced only in very special cases.
 - c. The common *mode* of baptism for many centuries was immersion, except in the instances of "clinical baptisms." In 1311, a council was held in Ravenna, Italy in which the decision was made to accept sprinkling or pouring (affusion) water on the candidate as equally valid with immersion.
8. Development of creeds.
- a. Christ intended that the gospel be the only "rule book" for his church.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not (to go) beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 2) Galatians 1:6-12: "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. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."
 - 3) Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - 4) Philippians 3:16: "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."
 - 5) 2 John 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - 6) Revelation 22:18: "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."
 - b. Persecution had often descended upon the church until 313 A.D., when Constantine, the new Roman Emperor, issued the "Edict of Toleration." He was friendly toward *Christianity*. His influence hastened the church's decline into absolute apostasy.
 - c. In 325 A.D., Constantine convened and presided over a council of bishops. The Nicene Creed came out of this unscriptural council. It contained certain dogmas and doctrines that had only the authority of uninspired men behind them.
 - d. Other councils were held in which other doctrines were formulated.
 - 1) The Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.).
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- 2) The Council of Ephesus (432 A.D.) originated the title for Mary, "The Mother of God." This was not intended to exalt Mary, but to stress the divinity of Jesus. Later, this idea developed into the worship of Mary.
9. Instrumental music in worship.
 - a. The New Testament authorizes only singing as the proper kind of musical praise to be offered to God:
 - 1) Ephesians 5:18-19: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
 - 2) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
 - b. In the fifth century, efforts were made to introduce instruments of music into the worship services; the attempts were unsuccessful. Choirs were introduced with success at about this same time.
 - c. It was not until the eighth century that instrumental music became acceptable, but even then, only the churches in western Europe used them. The Greek churches rejected instrumental music in their worship (and still do). In 1054, a split developed between the eastern (Greek) and western (Roman) churches.
10. The Lord's Supper.
 - a. The New Testament teaches that the bread and fruit of the vine symbolize the body and blood of the crucified Savior.
 - 1) Matthew 26:26-30: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
 - b. Between the fourth and eighth centuries, the doctrine of mass was developed, which says that the emblems are changed into the actual flesh and blood of Christ when the priest blesses these items.
11. Papal authority.
 - a. The New Testament recognizes no authority in the church on earth above the elders (1 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Heb. 13:7, 17). Christ is the supreme head of the church.
 - 1) Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Colossians

- 1:18: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence."
- 2) Philippians 1:1: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."
- b. Through the years, a sharp rivalry developed between the churches in the eastern and the churches in the western sections of the Roman Empire. This contention focused on the cities of Constantinople and Rome, with their respective bishops. Constantine founded the city bearing his name in 325, and made it the capital.
 - c. In theory, the bishop of Constantinople and the bishop of Rome were equal to each other and to all the other bishops. But those serving over more prominent cities eventually achieved greater authority and prestige. A bitter power struggle raged between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople for many years.
 - d. In 588 A.D., John the Faster, bishop (or patriarch) of Constantinople, took upon himself the title, "Universal Bishop of the Church." But in 606 A.D., the emperor took that title away from him, and conferred it upon Boniface III, the bishop of Rome, who became "pope." The best date for the official beginning of the Roman Catholic Church is the year 606 A.D.
 - e. The departures from God's word had led eventually to the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church. The great apostasy was now complete. The "man of sin" was fully manifest; the "son of perdition" was about his evil work: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).
12. With the rise of papal authority, many other great outrages were unleashed.
- a. Monks and monasteries. "As a result of the Gnostic emphasis that all matter is evil, some Christians were led to asceticism. The human body was considered evil. Normal human processes such as eating nourishing meals, marrying and child birth, to them, became evil. It was believed by some that any contact with normal society was contaminating. This gave rise to bodily abuse, self-starvation and residence in the wilderness. The celibate life began to be exalted above marriage, and ministers especially were considered unfit to serve if they were married....As a result of the ascetic emphasis hermits emerged on the scene. Jerome tells of one Paul who fled under the persecution of Decius and lived for ninety years in the desert of Thebias. Others followed his example and soon began to form themselves into monastic communities" (Mattox, pp.120f).
 - b. The Roman hierarchal system, with its parish priests, rural deans, vicar generals, bishops, archbishops, papal legates, and pope, had now been developed. The pope has a group of advisors known as cardinals. In theory there are to be 70 cardinals (*cardo*, hinge): 50 are Cardinal Priests; 14 are Cardinal Deacons; and 6 are Cardinal Bishops. All are either Bishops or Archbishops.
 - c. Simony, the selling of church offices to the highest bidder, was commonplace. Pope Leo X made
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- more than a million dollars annually from the sale of offices.
- 1) “Alexander VI created eighty new offices, and received 760 ducats (\$19,000?) from each of the appointees. Julius II formed a ‘college’ or bureau of 101 secretaries, who together paid him 74,000 ducats for the privilege. Leo X nominated sixty chamberlains and 141 squires to the papal household, and received from them 202,000 ducats....So the active Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia (Alexander VI to be) received from a variety of benefices an income of 70,000 ducats (\$1,750,000?) a year...” (Durant, *The Reformation*, p.19).
 - 2) Durant (a Catholic) quotes Wycliffe, who states that the priests of his time “pray only for show, and collect fees for every religious service that they perform; they live in luxury, riding fat horses with harness of silver and gold; ‘they are robbers...malicious foxes...ravishing wolves ... gluttons...devils...apes’...” (*The Reformation*, p.34).
- d. Purgatory, indulgences, and the Bank of Good Works. “When one sinned satisfaction had to be made both in heaven and on earth. Penance was sufficient for the former, but temporal guilt had to be alleviated by temporal satisfaction. So the purchasing of an indulgence for a specified sum of money by one who had sinned enabled the pope to draw on the ‘treasury of merits’ in heaven and apply the goodness of departed saints stored in this treasury to the sins of the penitent individual” (Mattox, p.220).
- 1) The selling of indulgences was a highly successful method of raising money for the Roman Church, and a means by which the members could pay a sum of money for the right to commit sin.
 - 2) Money could be paid to Roman Catholic authorities in order to gain an early release of a loved one from purgatory. This gave rise to this advertisement by indulgence salesmen: "As soon as a coin in the coffer rings, another soul from purgatory springs." (See Mattox, p.220).
 - 3) Wycliffe denounced the entire conception. “He challenged the theory that the merits of the saints could be applied to the rescue of souls from purgatory; Christ and the Apostles had taught no doctrine of indulgences. ‘Prelates deceive men by feigned indulgences or pardons, and rob them cursedly of their money....Men be great fools that buy these bulls of pardon so dear.’ If the pope had the power to snatch souls from purgatory, why did he not in Christian charity take them out at once?” (Durant, *The Reformation*, p.34).
- e. Celibacy. A common misconception arose that assumed that one who chose to remain unmarried was more holy than those who married; it was assumed that an unmarried man would make a more dedicated worker than one who was married.
- 1) “Hildebrand as Pope Gregory VII caused the Lateran Council of 1074 to decree that celibacy of the clergy must be enforced” (Mattox, p.193).
 - 2) The Bible anticipated this false doctrine. "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
- f. Worship of departed saints became an official practice in 788 A.D.
- 1) “Erasmus, a noted scholar of the age, said fugitive nuns prayed to saints for help in hiding their sins—rather than praying to God for forgiveness. Merchants, he said, prayed for a rich haul, gamblers for luck and prostitutes for generous patrons” (Mattox, p.221).
 - 2) Durant describes Luther’s opposition to the adoration of saints: “And prayers should be the direct communion of the soul with God, not appeals to half-legendary saints. The adoration of the saints, in Luther’s judgment, was not a friendly and consoling intercourse of the lonely living with the holy dead; it was a relapse into primitive polytheistic idolatry” (*The Reformation*, p.376).
 - 3) The only advocate we have in heaven to mediate between us and God is Christ. "For *there is*
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one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

- g. Relics.
 - 1) Items were accepted by the great and small as having pertained to certain worthies of the ancient days; many of these related to Christ and the apostles. These relics were deemed to have special powers and significance.
 - 2) At various times, 5 shin bones of the ass Jesus rode into Jerusalem were on display. Erasmus said there was enough wood from the cross to build a ship.
 - 3) "Edward III of England paid a great sum for a phial which, he was assured, had belonged to St. Peter. Charles V of France was shown, in Sainte Chapelle, a phial allegedly containing some of Christ's blood; he asked his savants and theologians whether this could be true; they answered cautiously in the affirmative" (Durant, *The Reformation*, p.234).
- h. Persecution of those who opposed the papal system.
 - 1) The Inquisition was conducted under the Franciscan and Dominican monks who were subject to no religious or civil authority, except the pope. Anyone could accuse another of heresy; the accused was given the opportunity to recant or face torture. In either case, a terrible penalty was imposed.
 - 2) Durant describes in grisly detail some of the work of the Spanish Inquisition. "Those who were judged guilty of major heresy, but denied it to the end, were (till 1725) refused the last sacraments of the Church, and were, by the intention of the Inquisition, abandoned to everlasting hell. The 'reconciled' were now taken back to prison; the impenitent were 'relaxed' to the secular arm, with a pious caution that no blood should be shed. These were led out from the city between throngs that had gathered from leagues around for this holiday spectacle. Arrived at the place prepared for execution, the confessed were strangled, then burned; the recalcitrant were burned alive. The fires were fed till nothing remained of the dead but ashes, which were scattered over fields and streams. The priests and spectators returned to their altars and their homes, convinced that a propitiatory offering had been made to a God insulted by heresy. Human sacrifice had been restored" (*The Reformation*, p.213).
 - 3) Other persecutions resulted in untold thousands (perhaps millions) of deaths. During the 13th century, two-thirds of the people in southern France were slain in an effort to wipe out one opposition group known as the "Albigenes."
- i. Secular authority. Popes ruled countries; appointed kings; conducted wars. History records much of the evil done during the days of the "Holy Roman Empire."
- j. Other false doctrines developed included the Immaculate Conception, the Perpetual Virginity of Mary, and Papal Infallibility. It is no wonder that the thousand years, from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries, are called "The Dark Ages."

D. In view of all these evils, the need for a reformation was seen.

- 1. Through earlier centuries, many attempts had been made to correct the errors of the time. Hippolytus opposed the growing arrogance of the bishop of Rome; he started another congregation in Rome to further his opposition. Tertullian (155-223) likewise rendered strong opposition to the developing concentration of power in the church. There were doubtless a great many other efforts put forth which did not make the pages of history, but these are some which did:
 - a. The Catharists (*The Pure*) opposed Romanism in the ninth century.
 - 1) They accepted the Scriptures as their only authority, claimed to be the only true Christians at that time, and lived puritanical lives. They ate the Lord's Supper at every service, rejected infant baptism, and had no creed.
 - 2) To their discredit, they accepted some of the Gnostic ideas and thought that marriage was from the devil.
 - b. Arnold of Brescia (1100-1155) taught views on baptism and the Lord's Supper which were closer to the truth than what was being taught by the priests.

- 1) “After studying at Paris, he became an Augustinian monk. Attacking the worldliness of the church, he advocated radical church reforms, including a life of poverty for the clergy and the abandonment of wealth and temporal power by the church. He also rejected the idea of confession of sins to a priest. In 1139 the Second Lateran Council condemned these views, and Pope Innocent II ordered Arnold exiled and his books burned. Arnold was able to evade imprisonment, and for a short period he taught in Paris until expelled from France by the royal authorities. He traveled in Switzerland and Bohemia until he achieved a reconciliation with Pope Eugene III and returned to Italy. Soon after, he became the head of a political group in Rome that set up a republic and forced Eugene into exile (1146). Even after he was excommunicated, Arnold continued to head the city-state. He remained in Rome until 1155, when Pope Adrian IV banished him; within the year he was captured by Frederick I and hanged as a political rebel” (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).
 - 2) From his early success, it appeared that his reformation would change the entire papal order (see Mattox, p.209).
 - c. Peter of Bruys in France (about 1110) took the New Testament as his guide. He was permitted to preach for 20 years before he was executed.
 - 1) “He gained great crowds of followers who under his leadership tore down altars and images in various church buildings. Out of contempt for the Catholic ceremonialism his followers gathered up wooden crucifixes, on a Good Friday built a fire of the crucifixes and cooked meat to show their contempt for the regulations that Christians should not eat meat on that day” (Mattox, p.210).
 - 2) “Peter insisted that the priests should marry and that the Catholic worship should be returned to a simple service. As opposition developed against him he was seized in 1130 and executed” (*ibid*).
 - d. Peter Waldo and the Waldenses in France about 1160.
 - 1) They rejected priestly ordination and purgatory; they called for a return to the pure teachings of the New Testament.
 - 2) “The Waldenses (Vaudois), an Italian Protestant communion of 22,000 members, traces its origins to the ‘poor men of Lyon,’ founded in the late 12th century by Peter Waldo, or Valdes (d. c.1218). Waldo, a wealthy Lyon merchant, disbursed his goods to the poor and became a traveling preacher about 1173, advocating voluntary poverty for the sake of Christ. He attracted a large following in southern France and sought papal recognition for his fellowship. Instead he was excommunicated for heresy in 1184. Waldo's followers subsequently developed as a religious society with its own ministers. They promoted religious discipline and moral rigor, were critical of unworthy clergy and the abuses of the church, and rejected the taking of human life under any circumstances. In 1208 a crusade was authorized against the Waldenses and other groups (notably the Albigenses) in southern France. After the burning of 80 of their number at Strasbourg in 1211, the majority of Waldenses withdrew into Alpine valleys in northern Italy. They led a marginal existence until they joined (1532) with the Protestant reformers, at last becoming a separate church. The following three centuries were marked by intermittent persecution of them, growing out of the religious wars that raged between Protestants and Catholics. In 1848 they obtained full civil rights and, since then, have come to play a significant role in 20th-century Italian theological dialogue. The Waldensian church is a member of the World Presbyterian Alliance and has small congregations in North and South America as well as Italy. (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).
 - e. The work of the Albigenses [Al-be-gen-ses] in France, about 1170.
 - 1) “Like the ancient Manichaeans, the Albigenses adhered to a strict dualism. They considered the material world as evil; redemption meant the liberation of the soul from flesh. This led them to condemn marriage and sex. Meat, milk, eggs, and other animal products were
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forbidden. They also rejected the traditional teachings on hell, purgatory, and the sacraments because of the material elements involved. Their own sacrament, the consolamentum, or baptism of the soul, was administered by laying on of hands. Only the 'perfect' (perfecti) received it, and they were expected to live by a rigorous ethical code. The majority remained in the state of 'believers' (credentes) and lived less rigorously. The sect's efficient organization, with bishops and clergy supported by the local nobility, helped it to survive even when most of its congregations had been destroyed. Official countermeasures, such as the preaching efforts of the Cistercians and Dominicans, or conciliar decrees of the church (Combers, 1165; Verona, 1184; Fourth Lateran Council, 1215) were only partly effective. When a papal legate was assassinated in the territory of Count Raymond of Toulouse, Pope Innocent III called for a crusade that developed into the infamous Albigensian wars (1209-29). Simon de Montfort's massacre (1209) of the inhabitants of Beziers stands out as an example of the crusaders' cruel conduct. Asked how to separate Christians from heretics, one leader is said to have replied: 'Slay them all. God knows his own.' The greatest benefit from the enterprise accrued to the French crown. With the taking of Montsegur in 1244, the Languedoc province could now be incorporated into the kingdom. Throughout the 13th century the remnants of the Albighenses, together with other Catharist groups and the Waldenses, were the main target of the organized Inquisition throughout Europe" (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).

- 2) "Innocent III, the strongest of the popes, in the year 1206 began a serious effort to exterminate all of the Albighenses. His attitude may be seen in one of his letters: 'We exhort you wholly to destroy this wicked heresy of the Albighenses and do it with more vigor than you would use toward the Saracens themselves. Persecute them with a strong hand; deprive them of their lands and possessions; utterly banish them, and put Roman Catholics in their room'" (Mattox, p.212).
 - 3) "In order to stir up hatred special rewards as well as indulgences were promised by the pope to everyone who would leave his occupation for forty days to join the war against the Albighenses. Multitudes accepted this opportunity to trade their services for remission of sins. Others joined the papal army out of the desire for the loot that they would be permitted to take. In this manner over fifty thousand soldiers were mounted and equipped for battle. The unhappy Albighenses were unarmed and unprepared to defend themselves, so the papal force with fire and sword easily ravaged the entire country around Toulouse....There were many devout Catholics who were loyal to the pope in the city [Beziers] and they pled for an opportunity to prove their loyalty to him, but the reply was, that unless all in the city submitted they would all be put to the sword. According to the reports, twenty-three thousands persons were massacred indiscriminately there. The city was reduced to ashes. When some of the soldiers hesitated to kill people who were declaring their loyalty to the pope, they turned to a papal legate for instruction, who commanded, 'Kill them all, the Lord knoweth them that are his.' After this, the only hope that the Catholics in Southern France had of saving their own lives was to join the pope's army and sew the symbol of the cross on their clothing. As the destruction continued the army grew until it numbered three-hundred thousand" (Mattox, pp.212f).
 - 4) "Conservative estimates state that two-thirds of the people of Southern France were killed in this effort to wipe out the heresy of Albigensianism....Large numbers, however, had escaped to the valleys of the mountains where their descendants continue until today as Protestant groups" (Mattox, p.213).
- f. The works of William of Occan in England, from 1280-1349. He advocated the idea that the Bible is the only infallible source of religious authority.
- 1) "William of Occam, or Ockham...ranks among the most important philosopher-theologians of the Middle Ages. After joining the Franciscans, Occam studied at Oxford, where he

encountered the thought of John Duns Scotus and where, from about 1319 to 1320, he wrote a commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard. In 1324 he was called to the papal court at Avignon to answer a charge of heresy in a trial that dragged on without a formal conclusion. In 1328, Occam and Michael Cesena, the Franciscan minister-general, fled Avignon. Although under a ban of excommunication, they were welcomed by the pope's enemy, Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV, to whom Occam is reputed to have said: 'Defend me with your sword and I will defend you with my pen.' At the Munich court of Louis, Occam wrote all his important political works, including those on papal power and the state. It is believed that he died in Munich, a victim of plague. Occam has been called the greatest logician of the Middle Ages; using his logical faculty, he elaborated a theology that remained influential for centuries....In law and ethics, Occam's nominalist views led him to voluntarism and emphasis on the divine command. He concluded that the ultimate source of value and obligation lay not in any 'natures' of things but in the free will of God. He regarded the rightness or wrongness of human acts as a function of their being commanded or forbidden by divine authority. (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).

- 2) "He taught that the pope is not infallible and that a general council was higher authority than the papacy. He also advocated that the Bible is the only infallible source of authority in the church and that in secular matters, the church and the pope should be subordinate to the state" (Mattox, p.224).
- g. The work of John Wycliffe (1324-1384) in England.
- 1) He translated the Bible into English. He taught that the only two scriptural offices in the church were elders and deacons. Thirty-one years after his death, the council of Constance condemned him as a heretic, and ordered his bones removed from the tomb, burned, and the ashes thrown on the Severn River. This was carried out in 1428.
 - 2) Wycliffe "entered royal service in 1374, when he was sent to Bruges to negotiate with papal representatives on the issue of tribute payments to Rome. Becoming a key figure in the anticlerical party of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, Wycliffe attacked the rights claimed by the church, calling for a reformation of its wealth, corruption, and abuses. He looked to the king as the legitimate authority for church purification. After the Great Papal Schism began in 1378, Wycliffe's views became much more radical. In *De potestate papae* (On Papal Power, 1377-78) he rejected the biblical basis of papal authority, insisted on the primacy of Scripture, and advocated extensive theological reform. His views on the Eucharist (he denied transubstantiation) and advocacy of a vernacular Bible brought him into further conflict with the church and cost him support. Ten conclusions drawn from his writings were condemned in 1382, and his Oxford disciples were forced to recant; but Wycliffe himself was neither tried nor personally condemned during his lifetime. After his death he was condemned by the Council of Constance (May 4, 1415), and his body was ordered exhumed and burned." (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).
- h. John Huss (1373-1415) opposed prominent errors of the Catholic Church. He was burned at the stake on July 6, 1415.
- 1) Huss was a powerful and popular preacher in Prague. High-ranking officials in the Bohemian court attended his sermons, and the queen appointed him as her chaplain. His sermons were in Czech, and the audience was encouraged to participate in the singing.
 - 2) He was greatly influenced by the writings of John Wycliffe of England. At his trial, Huss said of him: "Wyclif, I trust, will be saved; but could I think he would be damned, I would my soul were with him" (Durant, *The Reformation*, p.163). Huss held the unscriptural view of predestination.
 - 3) The archbishop excommunicated Huss and some of his key followers in 1409, but he kept up his work with the church in Prague. The archbishop ordered Wycliffe's writings to be
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- surrendered and burned; he burned 200 manuscripts in the courtyard of his palace. When Huss appealed to the pope, he was ordered to present himself before the papal court; he refused.
- 4) "In 1411 the Pope, desiring funds for a crusade against Ladislas, King of Naples, announced a new offering of indulgences. When this was proclaimed in Prague, and the papal agents seemed to the reformers to be selling forgiveness for coin, Huss and his chief supporter, Jerome of Prague, publicly preached against indulgences, questioned the existence of purgatory, and protested against the Church's collecting money to spill Christian blood....He rejected image worship, auricular confession, and the multiplication of ornate religious rites...condemned the taking of fees by priests for baptism, confirmation, Masses, marriages, or burials...Christ, not the pope, is the head of the Church; the Bible, not the pope, should be the Christian's guide. The pope is not infallible, even in faith or morals; the pope himself may be a hardened sinner or heretic....A pope, Huss concluded, is to be obeyed only when his commands conform to the law of Christ. 'To rebel against an erring pope is to obey Christ'" (Durant, *ibid.*, pp.164f).
 - 5) Emperor Sisimund promised Huss safe-conduct if he would attend the Council of Constance. Huss was treated courteously and remained free when he first arrived, but he was soon imprisoned, where he became gravely ill due to mistreatment. He agreed to recant any of his positions which could be shown to be in violation of the Scriptures. "The council argued that Scriptures must be interpreted not by the free judgment of individuals but by the heads of the Church..." (Durant, pp.165f).
 - 6) "On July 6, 1415, in the cathedral of Constance, the Council condemned both Wyclif and Huss, ordered Huss's writings to be burned, and delivered him to the secular arm. He was at once unfrocked, and was led out of the city to a place where a pyre of faggots had been prepared. A last appeal was made to him to save himself with a word of retraction; he again refused. The fire consumed him as he chanted hymns" (Durant, p.166).
- i. Savonarola (1452-1498) became a popular preacher, renowned for preaching from the Bible, and exposing many of the errors of the time. His activities were centered in Florence, Italy.
- 1) "He decided that because of the wealth and sin in the hierarchy the church would have to go through a period of suffering before it could be purified. Accordingly, in 1492 he began to tell of a series of visions in which he saw a hand held out of a cloud over the city of Rome. Swords fell like rain and there was great bloodshed and famine. In another vision he pictured a black cross over the city of Rome and a beautiful cross of light over the city of Jerusalem. He became more bold in his attacks upon the wickedness of the priests and preached a series of sermons on the Ark of Noah in which he stated that a flood was soon to come on the church because of its wickedness" (Mattox, p.227).
 - 2) "When Charles VIII of France led his army into Italy in 1494 Savonarola welcomed him to the city of Florence and became dictator of the city in 1495. This power gave him opportunity to reform the church within the city after his own thinking. The pope took a hand to stop his criticism of the clergy and offered him the position of cardinal, thinking that increasing his prestige would make him loyal to the hierarchy. Savonarola, however, replied that he preferred a hat of blood to the hat of a cardinal" (Mattox, p.227).
 - 3) The pope unsuccessfully tried to get him to stop preaching. When the pope put him under the papal ban in 1497 and threatened Florence with the interdict, the people turned against Savonarola and he was denounced as a heretic. He was able to recruit about four thousand young people, ages between twelve and twenty, sent them through the city with demands for the women to turn in their cosmetics and that all people should turn to a study of the Scriptures and live more devout lives.
 - 4) "Under torture he confessed his wrongs, but as soon as the torture was removed he retracted his confession. He then was hanged and his body burned in 1498" (Mattox, p.228).
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- j. Ximenes (1436-1517) in Spain.
- 1) He remained loyal to all the Catholic doctrines throughout his career; the reformation he sought was improvement in the lives of priests. He removed more than a thousand corrupt priests from Spain. He taught that the shepherd was to feed the flock, not to fleece it. His efforts were toward cleaning up a corrupt, sinful priesthood.
 - 2) “The Spanish cardinal, statesman, and grand inquisitor Francisco Jimenez (or Ximenes) de Cisneros...initiated important reforms of the Spanish clergy that helped to eradicate much of the kind of corruption later criticized in Germany by Martin Luther during the Reformation. After studying at the University of Salamanca, Jimenez was ordained a priest. In 1484 he abandoned the secular clergy to join the Franciscan order. He became confessor to Queen Isabella I of Castille in 1492 and archbishop of Toledo in 1495. In 1499, Jimenez began a ruthless campaign of converting the Moors, burning a million priceless Arabic manuscripts, and provoking the Muslim revolt of 1499-1500. Appointed cardinal and head of the Inquisition in Castile by Isabella's widower, Ferdinand II of Aragon, in 1507, Jimenez financed and led the conquest (1509) of Moorish Oran....He also supervised the compilation of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible (1514-17), which displayed parallel columns of text in various languages. After Ferdinand's death in 1516, Jimenez, as regent of Castile, managed the accession of Charles I (later Holy Roman Emperor Charles V) to the Spanish throne” (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).
- k. Erasmus (1466-1536).
- 1) Erasmus, a Dutch scholar, edited the first printed Greek New Testament thus making available a more accurate text. Other men, especially Luther, were able to do their work because of his efforts. “It has been said that Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched” (Mattox, p.229). Erasmus made this reply on hearing this description made of him: “Yes, but the egg I laid was a hen, whereas Luther has hatched a gamecock” (Durant, *The Reformation*, p.429).
 - 2) “The Dutch scholar Erasmus...was the greatest classicist of the Renaissance in northern Europe. Erasmus lived at a time when the breakup of medieval feudalism and the increasingly obvious abuses and corruptions within the church created widespread anxiety and uncertainty, which in turn engendered fanaticism and violence....Faced with the disintegration of medieval Europe into disputatious national and religious factions, he sought peace, reconciliation, and unity....He was sharply critical of the corruptions of the church and the absurdities of scholasticism, but he did not repudiate the past in a blaze of reforming passion, as Luther had done. Although his work appealed to leaders of the Reformation, Erasmus was drawn into conflict with them; he engaged in a polemical exchange with Luther. His attempt to reform the church through gentle reason and toleration was swept aside by the fanaticism of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation” (*Grollier PC Encyclopedia*).
2. Martin Luther (1483-1546).
- a. Luther did not do well in school at first. “At school in Mansfeld there were more rods and much catechism; Martin was flogged fifteen times in one day for misdeclining a noun” (Durant, *The Reformation*, pp.341f).
 - 1) “One day, as he was returning from his father’s house to Erfurt (July 1505), he encountered a frightful storm. Lightning flashed about him, and struck a near-by tree. It seemed to Luther a warning from God that unless he gave his thoughts to salvation, death would surprise him unshriven and damned....He made a vow to St. Anne that if he survived that storm he would become a monk...He was received as a novice in a monastery cell. He performed the lowliest duties with a proud humility. He recited prayers in self-hypnotizing repetition, he froze in an unheated cubicle, he fasted and scourged himself, in the hope of exorcizing devils from his body. ‘I was a pious monk, and so strictly observed the rules of my order that...if ever a monk got into heaven by monkery, so should I also have gotten there....If it had lasted longer I should
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- have tortured myself to death with watching, praying, reading, and other work” (Durant, *ibid*, pp.342f).
- 2) “Then a treatise by John Huss fell into his hands, and doctrinal doubts were added to his spiritual turmoil; he wondered why ‘a man who could write so Christianly and so powerfully had been burned....I shut the book and turned away with a wounded heart’....The monks expressed their solicitude by giving him a Latin Bible—then a rare possession for an individual. One day in 1508 or 1509 he was struck by a sentence in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans (1:17): ‘The just shall live by faith.’ Slowly these words led him to the doctrine that man can be ‘justified’—i.e., made just and therefore saved from hell—not by good works, which could never suffice to atone for sins against an infinite deity, but only by complete faith in Christ and in his atonement for mankind” (Durant, p.343).
 - b. Luther was a Catholic priest and scholar; his studies led him to reject all religious beliefs and practices which were based only on tradition. He saw the corruption that prevailed in Catholicism, and sought to change it. In October, 1517, he nailed to the church house door in Wittenberg, Germany, a list of 95 statements he had written to expose Catholic perversions.
 - 1) Luther opposed the sale of indulgences, rejected the supremacy of the pope, denied the infallible of Catholic councils, and opposed the authority of priests. He believed the Bible was the final authority in religion.
 - 2) Some years after visiting Rome, he described “the Rome of 1510 as ‘an abomination,’ the popes as worse than pagan emperors, and the papal court as being ‘served at supper by twelve naked girls” (Durant. p.344). “He blamed the preachers of indulgences for taking advantage of the simplicity of the poor. In private correspondence he began to identify the Antichrist of John’s First Epistle with the pope” (p.345).
 - c. Luther preached with boldness; many new congregations were established; his work became popular. The pope was unable to send an army to bring this reformation back under his control. When he was excommunicated by the pope, Luther burned the paper telling of this action. He was condemned as a heretic, and his arrest was ordered. His friends hid him in a castle for ten months.
 - d. In 1530, the Reformers were asked to prepare a statement of their beliefs to be presented to the king Charles V). The result was the composition of a statement known as the Augsburg Confession. This confession later was modified, and became a creed, which in a practical sense was given greater authority than the Bible.
 - e. The Lutherans raised an army when they were attacked in 1552 by Charles V. When they defeated Charles' army, a treaty was drawn up which gave Lutheranism legal status.
 - f. Luther had not sought to establish a separate church; he had not tried to restore the New Testament church; his aim was to reform the existing Catholic Church. By his work, the Protestant Reformation began.
3. Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531).
 - a. He also was a Catholic priest, in Switzerland. His preaching aroused interest because he did something different: he began to preach on the Bible. He read the Bible in its original languages which whetted his appetite for teaching it.
 - b. He learned too much to remain loyal to Romanism. He brought about changes in the worship and organization of the church in Zurich: pictures of idols were removed from the building; instrumental music ceased to be used; the Lord's Supper was restored.
 - c. Zwingli and Luther disagreed on a very important issue: Luther thought that anything was permissible in religion that was not expressly forbidden by the Bible; Zwingli believed that only those things that were authorized by the Scriptures should be accepted. Zwingli's view is the correct (the Scriptural) view.
 4. John Calvin (1509-1564).
 - a. He was *converted* in 1533, and was persuaded to promote the Protestant Reformation in Geneva,
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- Switzerland. In a short time, he became the dictator of the city, and ruled with an iron hand. He had Servetus arrested and burned at the stake (1553).
- b. He developed a system of religion which bears his name today: Calvinism. It included belief that the Bible is the infallible guide in religion; but Calvin thought it could only be interpreted by the elect.
 - c. Calvinism holds to five basic tenets: Total Heredity Depravity; Unconditional Election; Limited Atonement; Irresistible Grace; Perseverance of the Saints. (TULIP).
 - d. An outgrowth of Calvin's work was the establishment of the Presbyterian Churches.
5. The Anabaptist Movement.
- a. There were certain followers of Luther and Zwingli who did not fully agree with them. They rejected infant baptism; and because they called on adults to be baptized, they were given the name "Anabaptist" (which has the idea of one baptism on top of another; or re-baptism).
 - b. Church membership depended on personal faith and a conscious submission to Christ in baptism. At the first they did not practice immersion. They believed in the autonomy of the local congregation.
 - c. Some of the Anabaptist were very radical, and incurred the wrath of both Catholics and Protestants. A large segment of Anabaptists settled in Munster, Germany, which they decided would be the headquarters of Christ, at his return; they perceived that his second advent was imminent. John Leyden was accepted as king of Munster until Christ's arrival. Catholic armies besieged the city until only 800 of its citizens were able to bear arms. A traitor enabled the attacking forces to enter the city. The 800 fighters were promised safe-conduct if they surrendered; they believed the Catholic promise, gave up, and were massacred immediately. "John of Leyden and two of his aides were bound to stakes; every part of their bodies was clawed with red-hot pincers, until 'nearly all who were standing in the market place were sickened by the stench'; their tongues were pulled from their mouths; at last daggers were driven into their hearts....Catholicism was triumphantly restored" (Durant, p.401).
 - d. In the Netherlands, Meno Simons (a Catholic priest) studied the Anabaptism views. He left the priesthood, and affiliated with this group, later becoming their leader. They adopted the name "Brethren" due to the hostility to "Anabaptist." His followers later adopted the name "Mennonites," after Meno's name.
 - e. There were many Anabaptists in England, which later began to be known simply as "Baptists." The Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkards, and Baptists all had their origin in the Anabaptist movement.
- E. In the following centuries, religious groups began to multiply.
1. The Church of England.
 - a. King Henry VII had two sons: Arthur and Henry. Arthur was married to Catherine of Aragon while he was still a boy; he died before the marriage was consummated. The father wanted to keep the rich dowry, so he had his son Henry marry her, although he was much younger than Catherine.
 - b. At the death of his father, Henry VIII became king. Catherine had given him seven children, but only one lived beyond infancy; he had no male heir. He asked the pope for a divorce from Catherine so he could marry Any Boleyn; his request was refused.
 - c. Henry VIII broke with the pope, establishing the Church of England. He appointed Thomas Cranmer as archbishop of Canterbury in 1533, who promptly granted the divorce and permitted Henry to marry Ann Boleyn.
 - d. In 1534, Henry was made Supreme Head of the Church of England. The beginning of this church is therefore dated from 1534. It was not Henry's intention to reform Catholicism; the Church of England continues the basic tenets of Romanism.
 2. The Methodist Church (1729).
 - a. John and Charles Wesley were members of the Church of England, but were disgusted with the ritualism and coldness of the priests and members. They began a movement in England in 1729
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- which resulted in the formation of the Methodist Church.
- b. The name was originally given them in derision because they insisted on a method of strict observance to the requirements of the prayer book.
 - c. John traveled about 5,000 miles annually on horseback to preach three or four times daily; when he was 85 he cut back to only two sermons daily. Charles wrote more than 6,000 hymns.
 - d. To their death, they both claimed membership in the Church of England. In 1795, after their passing, their followers made changes which resulted in a separation from the national church.
 - e. Original Methodism emphasized emotionalism. There are some congregations in Tennessee which claim to be today what original methodism was; they wear the name "Congregational Methodists." They are almost identical to the Pentecostal groups.
3. The number of new churches began to multiply.
 - a. The Church of England was unpopular in America during the Revolutionary War days. The branch in America began to be called the Episcopal Church. Its roots go back to King Henry VIII.
 - b. The Mormon Church began in America in 1830 in New York through the work of Joseph Smith. Sydney Rigdon is thought by some to have been a prime mover in the formation of this church. Rigdon was a former supporter of the restoration movement. His contemporaries said he was given to "exuberant fancy." (*Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. II, p.344).
 - c. Church of God denominations began to appear in 1880. There are many of them which wear this name. The first was the group which has its headquarters in Anderson, Indiana. The one which has it headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee began in 1886.
 - d. The Jehovah's Witness denomination began in the 1870s as the result of the work done by Charles Taze Russell. They were known as Russelites for many years. It was not until 1931 that they adopted the name "Jehovah's Witnesses." They are well known for their unfulfilled prophecies.
 - e. The Church of the Nazarene denomination originated in Pilot Point, Texas in 1908 when three splinter groups from a division of the Methodist Church got together.
 - f. The Assemblies of God denomination began in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914. It was formed from dissidents from the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations.
 4. For many years, the number of different churches was estimated to be about 250, but in more recent times, estimates ranging up to 1,500 have been given.
- F. The Restoration Movement.
1. The Reformation movement begun by Luther gave men a thirst for God's word. From many countries there were efforts put forth by sincere people to restore the New Testament system. Down through the centuries from apostolic times, there have no doubt been many who sought to follow the truth.
 2. In England in 1669, the Lord's church was restored for a time.
 3. A Methodist preacher in the Carolinas lead a strong effort in 1780s to lead people back to the New Testament church. His name was James O'Kelley. He had much success.
 - a. O'Kelley took some untenable positions at times, one of which was his favoring sprinkling for baptism. "Five Cardinal Principles" were accepted by O'Kelley and his associates (Earl West, *The Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 1, p.10):
 - 1) The Lord Jesus Christ is the only head of the church.
 - 2) The name Christian to the exclusion of all party and sectarian names.
 - 3) The Holy Bible, or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament our only creed, and a sufficient rule of faith and practice.
 - 4) Christian character, or vital piety, the only test of church fellowship and membership.
 - 5) The right of private judgment, and the liberty of conscience, the privilege and duty of all.
 - b. Pioneers settling in Tennessee brought the gospel with them. About 1805, a group settled in Warren County, and established the "Old Philadelphia Church of Christ," the oldest congregation in the state. It is still meeting.
 4. In 1801, Abner Jones began preaching New Testament Christianity in Vermont. He was later assisted
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- by Elias Smith in establishing many congregations throughout New England. These men had formerly been Baptist preachers.
- a. Smith's mother arranged for him to be sprinkled, to which he rebelled. "His uncle chased him, threatened him, and brought him back, and compelled him to receive the 'seal of the covenant'" (West, p.11). He was later immersed in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Smith wrote: "When in my twenty-fourth year...I found the name which the followers of Christ ought to wear; which was *Christians*. (Acts 11:26)...I held a meeting and spoke upon the text, Acts 11:26, I ventured for the first time, softly to tell the people, that the name *Christian* was enough for the followers of Christ without addition of the words, *Baptist*, *Methodist*, etc" (West, p.13).
 - c. In June, 1803, Abner Jones and Elias Smith met for the first time. They soon realized that they occupied similar positions regarding certain Biblical truths.
5. In 1804, Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian preacher, began preaching New Testament Christianity in Kentucky. His work resulted in a great success in calling men back to the Bible. Many of the converts of O'Kelly and Jones merged with Stone.
- a. After preaching for a while in eastern North Carolina, Stone decided to move to Virginia. "On Reed's Creek, near Wytheville was located a Presbyterian meeting house called 'Grimes Meeting House.' Here on May 15, 1796 Stone spoke...the response was overwhelming....At that time [July, 1796] he moved to Fort Chiswell. Fort Chiswell was right on the frontier. Wagon trains moving into the west went through here..." (West, p.21). Before long, Stone moved to Kentucky, near Cane Ridge.
 - b. In the summer of 1801, the famous Cane Ridge revival began, during which great numbers of people "got religion." Stone was among the men who preached. The next year, he and other Presbyterian preachers got in trouble with their superiors for preaching the universality of the gospel. Stone and the five other preachers withdrew from the Presbyterians, and formed "The Springfield Presbytery." Their work resulted in the establishment of fifteen congregations in Ohio and Kentucky. They soon came to see that their organization was unscriptural, and so on June 28, 1804 they issued a publication entitled, "The Last Will and Testament of The Springfield Presbytery."
 - c. Stone's studies of the Bible convinced him that baptism was by immersion and for the remission of sins. He began to see the truth on an occasion when he was laboring with several people at the mourners bench for an extended period of time. He addressed these remarks to the audience: "Brethren, something must be wrong; we have been labouring with these mourners earnestly, and they are deeply penitent; why have they not found relief? We all know that God is willing to pardon them, and certainly they are anxious to receive it. The cause must be that we do not preach as the apostles did. On the day of Pentecost those who were 'pierced to the heart,' were promptly told what to do for the remission of sins. And 'they gladly received the word and were baptized; and the same day about three thousand were added unto them'" (West, pp.30f).
 - d. The work of Stone and his brethren had great success; meanwhile, the work of Alexander Campbell and his brethren also was making progress. In 1831, the two groups held a meeting, which led to them to commit themselves to each other as one body the next year. John Smith made the following remarks: "Let us, then my brethren, be no longer Campbellites or Stoneites, New Lights or Old Lights, or any other kind of lights, but let us come to the Bible and to the Bible alone, as the only book in the world that can give us all the light we need" (West, p.33).
6. Thomas Campbell, a Presbyterian preacher, emigrated to America in 1807, and settled in western Pennsylvania. He was accepted into the Chartiers Presbytery, and began preaching each Sunday for the Presbyterian Churches in the area. "Thomas Campbell, father of Alexander, must be given credit for some of the clearest thinking and most important contributions of this period" (Mattox, p.317).
- a. Thomas was an avid student of the Bible. One who studies God's word will soon discover
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- differences between the teachings of the Scriptures and the teachings of the creeds. “Campbell soon saw that he could not be true to God and his conscience under such human limitations and after earnest prayer renounced the authority of both Presbytery and Synod” (Mattox, p.318).
- b. His announcement that he was cutting denominational ties made a great impression on the many people who had come to respect him. A large group of people gathered in private homes to hear him speak, and together they sought out a scriptural basis for unity without becoming a denomination.
 - c. Campbell declared that “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.” One of the members, Andrew Munro, exclaimed, “Mr Campbell, if we adopt *that* as a basis, then there is an end of infant baptism.” Campbell’s response was to say, “If infant baptism be not found in Scripture, we can have nothing to do with it.” (West, Vol. 1, pp.48f; Mattox, pp.318f). This precept had earlier been used in 1659 by Edward Stillingfleet; in 1637 Chillingworth had used a similar precept (West, Vol. 1, p.47).
 - d. Another precept popularized by Campbell was: “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity.” This idea was earlier expressed in different words by Rupertus Meldinius. Both of these mottos are scriptural principles.
7. Alexander Campbell, the son of Thomas, joined his father in western Pennsylvania in 1809. While Alexander and the rest of his father's family waited in Ireland and Scotland to join Thomas, young Alexander was exposed to the novel idea of returning to the New Testament for all religious authority. He was greatly influenced by two brothers by the name of Haldane.
- a. When Alexander and Thomas were reunited, they found that they had both arrived at some of the same conclusions, although neither knew of the other's progress. Alexander spent six months in a close study of the Bible, after which he stated his intention to spend his life preaching the gospel; he declared also that he would never accept financial compensation for his labors.
 - b. He married in 1811, and when his first child was born a year later, he was faced with the prospect of whether to have the infant sprinkled. “Alexander read all he could find on the subject both in English and French and was amazed at the weakness of the arguments that had been offered in its defense. Consulting the original language of the New Testament (Greek) he became convinced that immersion alone constituted Scriptural baptism and that it was valid only for a believer” (Mattox, p.328). On June 12, 1912, Alexander, Thomas, and a large number of others decided to be immersed in Buffalo Creek.
 - c. Their work blossomed and progressed as they learned more and more of pure New Testament truth. Alexander delivered a sermon in 1816 later known as his “Sermon on the Law,” in which he set forth the distinctions between the Old and New Testaments. What he presented was considered radical at the time, but has now been recognized as basic Biblical truth. He held several great debates which resulted in the conversion of many. He was held in such high esteem by his countrymen, that he was in constant demand to deliver addresses. He even spoke before a joint session of the United States Congress.
 - d. Alexander had determined that he would debate only the most prominent men among the opposition. His debates drew great crowds, were printed in book form, and were productive of tremendous good. He decided that “a week’s debating is worth a year’s preaching.” He soundly defeated the position of each of his opponents.
 - 1) He debated John Walker, a Presbyterian preacher, on the subject of baptism. It was held near Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania on June 19-20, 1820.
 - 2) He debated W.L. McCalla, a Presbyterian preacher, on the mode of baptism. It was held in October, 1823 in a grove near Washington, Kentucky.
 - 3) He debated Robert Owen in Cincinnati on April 13-21, 1829 on the theme of skepticism. Owen had developed a strong disdain for Christianity, and attempted to discredit it.
 - 4) In January, 1837, he met Bishop Purcell, a Roman Catholic priest, in debate. It was reported
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later that, as a result of this debate, the Catholic hierarchy forbade debating .

- 5) In the fall of 1843, he debated N.L. Rice, a Presbyterian preacher. This discussion lasted for sixteen days, and was held in Lexington, Kentucky.
- e. In 1823, Alexander began publication of a magazine entitled *Christian Baptist*. It continued for seven years. “He was harsh and very often bitter in his denunciations of prevalent religious practices. Campbell sought to expose the pride, worldliness and paganism in the churches. He turned his attack against the ‘kingdom of the clergy,’ for he believed that the Protestant clergy was as guilty as the Romanish of deluding the people, and holding from them the words of life” (West, Vol. 1, p.69).
- f. Campbell began publishing *Millennial Harbinger* in 1830. The tremendous success of the Restoration to that point indicated to him that the entire Protestant and Catholic religions were on the verge of full collapse, and that the result of this perceived breakdown, pure New Testament Christianity would have a virtual universal acceptance. This is the significance of the name of the publication.
- g. In 1841, he brought Bethany College into existence, and served as its president. A large number of great gospel preachers received their education at Bethany.
8. The movements of Stone and the Campbells developed independent of each other for a number of years, until the brethren came to see that they were virtually identical in doctrine and practice. They united forces 1832. The spread of pure New Testament Christianity was dramatic. In 1850, the Lord’s church was fourth in size in the country. Between 1850 and 1860, it grew faster than any other religious group. During the early decades of the 19th century, many great gospel preachers worked ceaselessly, under great hardships and with much strong opposition, in planting the Lord's church throughout America. Thousands of converts were made, and entire denominational churches entered this restoration movement. When the plain truth of the Bible was laid down beside sectarian error, honest souls quickly saw and obeyed.
9. To tell the stories of the great gospel preachers of the 19th century would require the space of thousands of pages, and many years. However, we shall try to give a brief sketch of a few of these spiritual giants.
 - a. “Raccoon” John Smith (1784-1868) was doubtless the most colorful of the pioneer preachers. He was also a very effective gospel preacher, baptizing 700 in one year (1827).
 - 1) About 1815, he was selected to deliver a sermon at Crab Orchard, Kentucky before a very large gathering. Many in the audience started to leave when they noticed his rough appearance and dress. He called out to them: “‘Stay, friends, and hear what the great Augustine said!’ and they all stopped to listen. ‘Augustine wished to see three things before he died,’ continued Smith. ‘Rome in her glory and purity; Paul on Mars Hill; and Jesus in the flesh.’ A few now sat down, but many smiled, and started off again. ‘Will you not stay,’ he cried, in a still louder voice, ‘and hear what the great Cato said?’ Many returned and took their seats, and seemed willing to be amused. ‘Cato,’ he continued, ‘repented of three things before his death: first, that he had ever spent an idle day; secondly, that he had ever gone on a voyage by water, when he might have made the same journey on land; and thirdly, that he had ever told the secrets of his bosom to a woman.’ The people continued to come back, and began to crowd close to the stand. A few acquaintances, who had not seen him for a long time, now recognized him, and passed the word among the crowd—‘It is John Smith, from the Little South Fork!’ Seeing groups of persons still standing in the distance, he called again with all the strength of his heavy voice: ‘Come, friends, and hear what the great Thales thanked the gods for.’ ‘Let us go and hear the fellow,’ said one, ‘there may be more in him than we suppose.’ And they all, at last, sat down near by to listen. ‘Thales thanked the gods for three things: first, that he was endowed with reason, and was not a brute; secondly, that he was a Greek, and not a Barbarian; and thirdly, that he was a man, and not a woman. And now, friends, I know you are ready to ask; And

pray, sir, who are you? What have you to say for yourself? I am John Smith, from Stockton's Valley. In more recent years, I have lived in Wayne, among the rocks and hills of the Cumberland. Down there, saltpeter caves abound, and raccoons make their home..." (West, Vol. 1, pp.240f).

- 2) He would be gone for weeks at a time on preaching excursions, returning home only long enough to hand his wife his dirty clothes, before continuing on to his next appointment. Living near Huntsville, Alabama, his cabin caught fire while he was away on a preaching trip, burning his two children to death; his wife grieved so much that she died about six months later.
 - 3) Someone asked Smith to tell him the difference between "your baptism and our mourning-bench." His reply was typical of his incisive mind: "One is from heaven and the other is from the sawmill." A lady brought her infant to the Methodist preacher for "baptism." Despite the baby's screams, the preacher applied the water. Smith was baptizing some people at a nearby river. The Methodists came to watch. Smith waded to the bank, took a firm hold on the preacher's hand, telling him that he was going to baptize him. Finally, after several appeals, the preacher stated, "It wouldn't do me any good to baptize me against my will!" Smith released him, and spoke to the crowd: "Let me know if he ever again baptizes others without their full consent; for you yourselves have heard him declare that such a baptism can not possibly do any good!" (Williams, pp.189f).
- b. John T. Johnson (1788-1856) served well as an editor, but it was as a pulpit evangelist that he was best known. Samuel Rogers, a great preacher in his own right, stated that there was not a preacher on the scene who was Johnson's equal. "It has been said that of all the pioneers of the Restoration, John T. Johnson was the most devoted, zealous, self-sacrificing....There were few States in the Union at that time in which he did not preach the gospel and establish churches" (Boles, p.45). He was 42 when he began preaching; in a quarter century of evangelism, he baptized a very great number.
- c. Walter Scott (1796-1861) was born and educated in Scotland, and emigrated to America in 1819. He was quite an orator, at times surpassing Alexander Campbell. Once, with Campbell in the audience, Scott "reached such heights that the self-possessed Campbell jumped to his feet in the middle of the sermon and shouted 'Glory to God in the Highest!'" (Mattox, p.335).
- 1) Scott had some eccentricities. He took great care of his voice. When it was in good tune, he was a great orator. He would use various things which he thought would help his voice, such as change his diet, drink coffee, tea or water. At one point, he thought that drinking milk would be of help, but that practice didn't last long. A good sister, thinking he was still using milk, offered him a glass. He politely declined, saying, "I thank you sister. There is no music in a cow" (West, Vol. 1, p.76f).
 - 2) Scott and Campbell were so much unlike that they made an excellent team. "Campbell was inclined to be coldly logical, fearless, self-reliant and firm while Scott was emotional and timid, but gifted with an artistic nature" (Mattox, p.335). It would take Campbell's mind to see the great principles of the Bible; Scott was able to see the gospel was comprised of facts, commands, and promises.
 - 3) Scott was able to quickly perceive the connection of Acts 2:38 and salvation. A man came by the place where Scott was preaching, and heard him quote the passage. The man had learned through his own studies that baptism stood at the door of salvation. Immediately, he pushed his way into the crowded room, walked down to the front, and stated his desire to obey the gospel.
- d. Jacob Creath, Jr. (1799-1886) was born on Butcher's Creek in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. He was a fearless proclaimer and defender of the faith. He was also noted for his praying.
- 1) In 1854, L.B. Wilkes went to Missouri to hold a meeting; he was privileged to spend some
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- time with Creath. Creath led Wilkes out into the woods near his house. Wilkes described Creath's prayer: "We fell on our knees and O such a prayer!....Brother Creath talked so to God that I voluntarily felt for the moment that if I should open my eyes I should certainly see him upon whom no one can look and live. I have never heard such a prayer before, and now thirty years have passed since that remarkable experience, and yet I have heard no such prayer since" (West, Vol. 1, p.124).
- 2) During the War Between the States, a company of soldiers was camped near Palmyra, Missouri, planning an attack. "Creath went out to the grove to pray and the leader of the troops happened to be near. He edged closer to the grove and listened as Creath prayed for his neighbors, his town and for peace. The next day the troops withdrew without any attempt to capture the town" (West, Vol. 1, p.124).
- e. Tolbert Fanning (1810-1874) was a large and powerful man, standing six foot six; he possessed a powerful intellect. His parents moved from Virginia to Cannon County, Tennessee, where Tolbert was born.
- 1) He began to preach soon after his baptism, but was discouraged by some who thought he could never do well as a preacher. One lady told him, "Brother Fanning, you never can preach, and will always run your legs too far through your breeches. Do go home and go to plowing" (West, Vol. 1, pp.111f).
 - 2) He became a powerful preacher. He also started Franklin College, which had an immense influence for many years. Together with William Lipscomb, Fanning started the *Gospel Advocate* in 1855.
- f. Benjamin Franklin (1812-1878) became one of the ablest preachers in a generation of great preachers. In his early attempts to preach, his lack of education and backwoods upbringing showed. In one sermon he repeated one hundred and fifty times, "My dear friends and brethering." (West, Vol. 1, pp.101f).
- 1) What highly esteemed brethren said about him shows his value to the Lord. Alfred Ellmore: "Benjamin Franklin was the greatest gospel preacher I ever heard." David Lipscomb: "Earnestness, clearness, simplicity, with a strong reverence for and determination to know nothing in religion save what the Bible teaches, were the striking characteristics of his discourses" (West, Vol. 1, pp.103f).
 - 2) Franklin was an editor for many years, as well as a "preacher's preacher." His editorial work is especially known by his weekly paper, *American Christian Review*.
 - 3) At his death, Jacob Creath wrote of Franklin: "He has left no one who can fill his place, and we shall not see his like soon again" (*ibid*, p.108).
- g. Moses E. Lard (1818-1880) was born in Bedford County, Tennessee, near Shelbyville. Moving with his family to Missouri when he was eleven years old, Lard's father died of smallpox. His mother was unable to take care of Moses and his brother; they had to leave home and make their own way.
- 1) "As my brother and myself stood beneath the eaves of our little cabin, just ready to take leave of the only objects on earth dear to us, and thus close the saddest scenes of our lives, my mother said to us: 'My dear boys, I have nothing to give you but my blessings and these two little books.' She then drew from her bosom two small Testaments and placed them in our hands, and, as her tears were streaming down her cheeks, and her lips quivering, she screamed as if it were her last, and that family was forever broken on earth" (Boles, p.175).
 - 2) He attended Bethany College after he was married and had a family. He completed four years of studies in three years, was graduated in 1848, and was class valedictorian.
 - 3) He was one of the most eloquent speakers of his age. "Once when he finished an eloquent discourse, he called suddenly on the audience to stand and sing. Not a word was uttered. It took several minutes for that great sea of emotion to calm down enough that the people could
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sing” (West, Vol. 1, pp.289f).

- 4) He published a quarterly paper for a few years, but it was not greatly received due to some peculiar circumstances at the time. These writings have been made available today in book form. He also authored an outstanding commentary on the book of Romans, which is in print.
- h. J.W. McGarvey (1829-1911) was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. He was only five feet seven inches, a little round-shouldered, but was brilliant of mind. He graduated from Bethany College in 1850, and was chosen to deliver the Greek oration.
- 1) Living in Kentucky during the war, he remained neutral politically. He did not antagonize either side in the conflict, but taught both to lay down their arms and settle their differences peacefully.
 - 2) He excelled as an educator, a gospel preacher, and Bible scholar. His books are still being printed. His original commentary on Acts is outstanding, as well as the one on Matthew and Mark. He went to Palestine, and wrote *Lands of the Bible* from the information he gathered. He also wrote *Jesus and Jonah*, *The Authorship of Deuteronomy*, and *Biblical Criticism*. He also published a book of sermons that is still highly prized by Bible students.
 - 3) Although he opposed instrumental music in worship all his life, at his funeral service three songs were sung, accompanied by an organ. Those responsible for this travesty were surely imbued with a strong party spirit (Boles, p.237).
- i. David Lipscomb (1831-1917) was born in Franklin County, Tennessee, near Winchester. In his early years, he memorized the first five books of the New Testament. “He had a natural timidity. In later years he could rarely stand before an audience without a feeling of embarrassment. He never viewed himself as a professional preacher.
- 1) He was strongly opposed to a Christian taking part in war. When the War Between the States came, “He publicly spoke out against the war, and took no part either in Southern or Northern politics. He was, however, denounced by men of both sides, but this did not deter him from preaching his convictions” (West, Vol. 2, p.13). “A military officer was sent one Sunday to hear him preach. He took a seat near the front and listened attentively. At the conclusion he said: ‘I am not sure that the sermon is loyal to the Southern Confederacy, but I am profoundly convinced that it is loyal to the Christian religion’” (Boles, p.245).
 - 2) “On January 1, 1866, he began his work as editor of the Gospel Advocate, and continued his work as editor for a little more than fifty years” (Boles, p.246).
 - 3) “In 1891, with the help of J.A. Harding, he founded the Nashville Bible School, now known as David Lipscomb College. He taught daily the Bible in the school” (Boles, p.246).
 - 4) “He was a successful business man and farmer....While farming he also preached, and, as a result of his preaching, many churches were started. He continued to preach and encourage the churches until many strong churches were built up in and around Nashville” (Boles, p.245).
- G. How can we know whether the true church has been restored?
1. To identify a stolen car we would need to compare the make, model, color, and the identification number. To identify a certain individual we would compare the various identifying features of the one we are seeking with the one we have found. To identify the New Testament church, we would need to use the New Testament descriptions as the standard.
 2. We would be interested in its origination.
 - a. An unbroken line of succession back to A.D. 33 is unnecessary. To have Georgia watermelons in Texas we would only need the proper seed.
 - b. All institutions are perpetuated by seed. Compare this to the ELKS organization. To play the game of baseball 2000 years in the future we would not need a team that could trace its history unbroken back to this century; we would only need the rule book which contains all the pertinent information.
 - c. The church (kingdom) has its seed and its rulebook; the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11) and
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- its manual is the same (Phil. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).
- d. Where this seed is planted, this book is followed, the result is the Lord's church!
3. We would be interested in its organization.
 - a. The New Testament church had elders to oversee the church, and deacons to assist. "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1).
 - b. It was comprised of Christians in a given locality (Phil. 1:1).
 - c. To do its work properly there are preachers and teachers.
 4. We would be interested in the plan of salvation that is taught and practiced.
 - a. The same requirements which produced Christians in the first century are the requirements needed to produce Christians today.
 - 1) Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
 - 4) Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - 5) James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
 - 6) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 7) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - b. The only additions the Lord makes are by baptism: "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" (1 Cor. 12:13).
 5. We would be interested in its pattern of worship.
 - a. Same items engaged in by the church in the first century are those which are necessary today.
 - 1) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."
 - 3) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
 - b. To go beyond this pattern is to destroy this identifying feature: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).
 6. We would be interested in the name that is worn.
 - a. Acts 11:26: "And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the
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- disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." This is the name of individual members; it was gladly worn by the saints in the first century, and should be so-worn today. "Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (1 Peter 4:16).
- b. Collectively, the saints were known as the church of God, churches of Christ, the bride of Christ, the church. In each designation, the term used gives glory to Deity.
7. We would be interested in the creed (standard of authority) by which it operates.
- a. Every human creed is a formulated and faulty interpretation of the Bible. If the creed (church manual, confession, etc.) is the same as the Bible, we do not need it; if it is more than the Bible, it is too much; if it is less than the Bible, it is too little. The standard of authority of the New Testament church is the Bible—without addition, subtraction, or perversion.
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."
 - c. 1 Timothy 6:20: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."
 - d. 1 Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
 - e. 2 Peter 3:16: "As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."
 - f. Revelation 22:18-19: "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."
8. If we are right in these matters, and if we do the work given us to do, and if we personally measure up to the divine standard, then we are the New Testament church!

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The Restoration is illustrated by a pioneer experience.

1. A wagon train became lost in the desert; some water was found but it was too bitter to drink. One man went upstream a considerable distance and found pure, unpolluted water. The stream was pure at its source, but became bitter and polluted as it proceeded farther from that source.
2. Just so with the present religious situation in our world: the source remains as pure and unpolluted as ever; as time went by men went farther and farther from the purity of the original. We must get back to the pure unpolluted spring of truth which is the New Testament!

B. As Israel left God's way and was called back, so many have departed today and need to be called back.

1. Jeremiah 2:13: "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."
 2. Jeremiah 6:16: "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*."
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New Age Movement

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The false religions and philosophies of man have long opposed the truth of God's word.

1. Romans 1:18-32: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; *19* Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them. *20* For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: *21* Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. *22* Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, *23* And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. *24* Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: *25* Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. *26* For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: *27* And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. *28* And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; *29* Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, *30* Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, *31* Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: *32* Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."
2. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. *19* For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. *20* Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? *21* 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. *22* For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: *23* But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; *24* But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. *25* Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. *26* For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: *27* But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; *28* And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: *29* That no flesh should glory in his presence. *30* But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: *31* That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

B. The gospel of Christ has faced many adversaries since its arrival in our world 2000 years ago.

1. The Jews opposed it in its incipient stage as Christ first began to introduce it.
 2. When it was fully announced and offered to the world in general by the apostles, great opposition from the Jewish religious and civil leaders arose with a vengeance.
 3. Pagans who worshipped the various idols of the land perceived that if the gospel were accepted, their
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business and religion would be harmed. They strongly opposed the gospel.

4. Roman authorities lifted their iron fist against the gospel, persecuting those who followed it, and erecting barriers to hinder its spread.
 5. Various false doctrines have been invented by the fertile minds of false teachers, which undermines and opposes the progress of the true gospel.
 6. Rival religions have been developed which oppose and hinder the gospel of Christ: Mohammedanism; Mormonism; Catholicism; Protestantism; Adventism; WatchTowerism.
 7. For the last two hundred years, such philosophies as naturalism, agnosticism, atheism, humanism, and evolution have raised their oppositions to New Testament Christianity.
 8. C.S. Lewis, a renowned author, stated many years ago that the next real threat to New Testament Christianity would not be agnosticism or atheism, but the mystical religions of the East, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shintoism. True to his prediction, certain aspects of these religions are enjoying great and growing prominence in the United States in our present day.
- C. The New Age Movement is a name applied to the mongrel religion that has developed in recent years.
1. The New Age Movement (NAM) has many facets and tenets; all of these are not accepted by everyone who holds to the general view.
 2. Some of the things included in the NAM are these:
 - a. Astrology.
 - b. Spirit mediums or channelers; people who think they talk to the dead.
 - c. Reincarnation.
 - d. Denying the reality of death and sin.
 - e. Extra Sensory Perception.
 - f. A host of others are included, some of which shall be discussed in this study.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The importance of such a study is seen from the following facts.

1. The NAM is growing by leaps and bounds in our country.
 - a. About 60 million Americans believe in one or more tenets of the NAM.
 - b. About 42% of Americans believe they have been in contact with someone who has died. Many of us remember James Pike (an Episcopalian bishop). Pike lived an immoral life; he was married several times. His son, a drug addict, committed suicide in a New York hotel room. This tragedy severely upset Pike, who tried to make contact with his dead son. He went to a woman medium in England who convinced him that she had made contact with the dead son.
 - c. About 30 million Americans believe in reincarnation.
 - d. In 1978, the Gallup poll reported that 67% of Americans read astrology reports; 36% believed that these readings were scientific.
 - e. More than half of Americans believe that earth has been visited by extra-terrestrial beings sometime in the past. Belief in ETs [Extra-Terrestrials] and UFOs [Unidentified Flying Objects] is a major part of the NAM.
2. The New Age Movement is being promoted in movies, on television, and in many books and magazines.
 - a. Ted Turner, who has several TV cable networks, is a strong advocate of the NAM. He stated that by the year 2000, the United States must elect a New Age president. Through his networks, he is able to exert tremendous influence in behalf of his theory.
 - b. Walden Books, a nationwide chain of book stores, has a complete section in their stores promoting the NAM. There are about 25,000 separate books in print on the subject. There were about 2,500 New Age bookstores around the country in 1989, double the number of just five years earlier (Martin, p.21).
 - c. The NAM is promoted in music. Willie Nelson had a song a few years ago entitled, "Good Old Fashioned Karma Coming Down." *Karma*, which will be discussed later, is one of the key words

- and doctrines of the NAM. Soothing New Age music is on the market, designed to make it easier for one to work up a trance, or commune with himself.
3. The New Age Movement has many advocates in the entertainment field, and in virtually every other field.
 - a. There are MDs, physicists, psychologists, and theologians who follow the NAM.
 - b. In the entertainment field, such personalities as Shirley MacLaine, Tina Turner, Lisa Bonet, and John Denver promote the NAM. Other well-known advocates of the NAM include Merv Griffin, Linda Evans, and Phalicia Rashad (Martin, p.21).
 - c. In the political arena, there are those who maintain close ties to at least one feature of the NAM, astrology. A French president admitted publicly that he consulted with an astrologer before making important speeches or making state decisions. Nancy Reagan is reported to have consulted with an astrologer before scheduling important appointments and before her husband signed an important treaty with Russia.

B. Some of the more important tenets of the New Age Movement.

1. **Reincarnation** (this will be discussed in greater detail later in the study).
 - a. About 30 million Americans believe in reincarnation; their concept of the theory is not as drastic as that held in other lands, where they accept the transmigration of souls after death into animals, stones, some structures, and other human bodies; American advocates think that a human will come back only as another human.
 - b. The theory claims that no soul ever dies or ceases to exist; at the point of death, they think a soul returns to the great cosmos of the universe, and later will be infused into another human body. This process continues over and over, perhaps millions of times, until the person reaches the state of absolute perfection, the 7th state, known as *Nirvana*.
 - c. In one life, the person might be a man; in another, a woman; in one state, he might be rich; in another, he might be extremely poor; in one life, he might be terribly afflicted with some physical malady, but in another, he might have perfect health.
 2. **Astrology.**
 - a. This doctrine asserts that the stars and planets exert a particular influence on a human being, based on their positions at the moment of one's birth. It further claims that the stars and planets have the ability to foretell terrestrial events by their positions and aspects on a given day.
 - b. In other words, your life is predetermined by the positions of the stars and planets at the moment of your birth. Your lot in life, therefore, is beyond your control—to some degree. However, astrologers say that the stars never compel, they impel. That is, they stars do not force you in any direction, but they lead you in that direction.
 - c. About 29% of Americans believe in astrology; about 67% of Americans read astrology reports regularly.
 - d. We will discuss this subject more thoroughly later in the study.
 3. **Karma.**
 - a. This term refers to the record one accumulates as he lives on earth. One who does something that is bad, will accumulate bad karma; one who does good things, will accumulate good karma. If one develops good karma in one lifetime, when he is reincarnated his new state on earth will be an improvement over the former.
 - b. One who accumulated bad karma in one life, will be reincarnated in a less-desirable condition in the next life. He might come back in a body that is afflicted with some deformity; he might be born into a poverty-stricken condition; he might be aborted before he is born; he might die young.
 - c. We will consider the implications of this devil's doctrine when we study reincarnation in greater detail.
 4. **Channeling.**
 - a. This was formerly called necromancy, or mediumship. It is the belief that some people have the
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- ability to communicate with the dead.
- b. King Saul went to the Witch of Endor in order that he might possibly be able to obtain some guidance from the deceased prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 28). That this witch was a fake is clearly seen in verse 12, when Samuel actually appeared. "She cried with a loud voice," which indicated her surprise and fright over his appearance; obviously she had never seen anything like this before!
 - c. The so-called channelers hypnotize the subject, and while the person is in this semi-conscious state, the supposed communication with the dead takes place. The channeler has to tell the subject what was said, and he can tell anything he wishes! This is no better than the old-fashioned seances, in which a group of people sat around a table in a darkened room.
 - d. A professional magician offered \$10,000 to anyone who could demonstrate such powers under controlled conditions. No one ever earned the money!
5. **Psychic healing.**
- a. This is the supposed healing of a mental or physical illness using the cosmic energy which emanates from the healer's hands.
 - 1) In the Philippines, there are *psychic surgeons* who claim the ability to operate on people without actual surgery taking place. "The patient lies on a table, and the surgeon makes an imaginary incision in the abdomen with his bare hands. Suddenly, some internal tissue appears, it's discarded, and the wound closes without scarring. The patient walks away without sedation or anesthesia" (Larson, p.66).
 - 2) Larson offers this report one such patient gave: "We attended a service with a hymn sing and a sermon, stressing the power of belief. We were taught a mantra {'a word or phrase that is to be chanted repetitively in an effort to empty the mind and attain 'cosmic consciousness' (one with God and the universe)" (Martin, p.130)} to chant during the procedure. When they operate, they part the skin, stretching a pore. Their fingers are like laser beams. They feel the damaging clots, lumps, and scar tissue, and within 30 seconds they scoop them out, right in front of you. I got off the table, into my wheelchair, and had lunch. I felt fine" (p.66).
 - 3) Andy Kaufman, who was a regular on the TV show "Taxi" several years ago, might be alive today if he had not watched another television show, hosted by Burt Lancaster, featuring a sequence on psychic surgery. Andy flew to the Philippines, and underwent psychic surgery; two months later, he died at the age of 35.
 - 4) Larson gives this interesting summation of the subject: "Adept magicians, such as Henry Gordon, have easily debunked some psychic surgery. Gordon demonstrated for television cameras how he removed a huge piece of diseased tissue from the upper arm of a man, while a camera watched from two feet away. Gordon admitted later the 'tissue' was a piece of chicken liver. The blood came from a tiny plastic vial broken at an appropriate time. Gordon's fingertips had pressed into the soft flesh so they disappeared from view, appearing to penetrate the skin without actually doing so" (p.67).
 - b. **Reflexology.**
 - 1) Reflexology claims that the foot is a representation of the entire human body. If, for example, the big toe represents the head, the doctor merely needs to examine the big toe closely to determine what is wrong with the head.
 - 2) "Reflexology, in alternative medicine, a healing system in which specific points on the feet or hands, known as reflex points, are manipulated to bring about changes in other parts of the body. These reflex points are believed to correspond to every major organ, gland, and area of the body. Reflexology was first introduced to the United States in the early 1900s as Zone Therapy. It is based on the principle of ancient Asian medicine in which a life force circulates throughout the body, connecting one part to another; when this energy is blocked, disease develops. By stimulating reflex points on the feet or hands, reflexology is thought to restore the energy flow and the body's own natural ability to heal itself. Reflexology is viewed primarily as a general healing
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therapy that helps the body regain its natural balance, harmony, and health. It stimulates circulation in the blood and lymph systems and is considered especially useful for migraine, sinus trouble, and constipation. During a reflexology session, the therapist uses fingers, thumbs, and palms to stroke or lightly press the reflex points on each foot. Where energy blocks—commonly felt as tiny crystalline deposits—are found, the reflexologist applies deep pressure for seconds or minutes until these deposits are broken down. Reflexology sessions generally last about 50 minutes. The benefits of reflexology are said to include an overall feeling of well-being, released tension, increased energy, and pain relief. Often one or two reflexology sessions are enough to produce results. Persistent conditions may require weekly treatment at first. Reflexologists recommend regular maintenance sessions to strengthen and balance the energy flow. Reflexology is widely practiced in Europe and North America, often by massage therapists. It can also be practiced on oneself—training is given at reflexology centers, and various instructional books with maps of the reflex points have been published for the lay person.” (*Encarta*, 1999).

c. **Iridology.**

- 1) This follows the same concept of reflexology, only it is the iris of the eye that displays the condition of the rest of the body; thus, the doctor examines the eye to learn the condition of other parts of the body.
- 2) “Iridology, in alternative medicine, a diagnostic system that analyzes the iris, the colored part of the eye, to understand the overall health patterns of the body. Study of the eye as a window into the health of the body dates back more than 6000 years. It was practiced in ancient China, and by the physician Hippocrates in ancient Greece. Modern iridology, as developed in Europe and North America since the late 1800s, includes the theory that specific regions of the iris correspond to specific areas of the body. Iridology attempts to identify inherited strengths, weaknesses, and general illness patterns rather than to name specific diseases. Iridologists look for tendencies toward inflammation, congestion, or a buildup of toxins, as well as patterns related to nutrition and the endocrine system. Using a flashlight and magnifying glass, special photographic equipment, or a microscope, iridologists examine the iris for color and tissue structure appearance, as well as unusual markings such as specific pigments and irregular lines. The iris markings are compared to an iris chart that correlates specific zones of the iris with specific parts of the body. The iridologist then recommends preventive or supportive health practices, or further consultation with another specialist. Iridology is considered a rapid, safe, and painless assessment tool to be used in conjunction with other traditional or alternative methods of diagnosis and treatment. Practitioners of iridology are generally specialists in other fields, such as naturopathy, herbal medicine, or nutrition. In the United States, professional training and certification in iridology are given by the National Iridology Research Association” (*Encarta*, 1999).

d. **Acupuncture.**

- 1) This quasi-medical procedure is a development of the Chinese religious system, Taoism. The claim is that a supposed cosmic energy (called *chi*) permeates the universe, and instills life, vitality, and health to every living being. Chi exists in two other principles, *yin* and *yang*.
 - 2) If the yin and yang are in proper balance, the body is healthy; if they are out of balance, the flow of energy is disrupted and disease occurs.
 - 3) Ancient Chinese *medicine men* thought that the insertion of needles at certain places in the body would disrupt the flow of yin and yang, and return them into their proper balance, thus curing the disease.
 - 4) One myth accounts for the discovery of acupuncture when villagers noticed that a warrior lost his chronic maladies when he suffered spear wounds during a battle.
 - 5) “The primary use of acupuncture in China today is for surgical analgesia. Chinese surgeons
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estimate that 30 percent of surgical patients obtain adequate analgesia with acupuncture, which is now done by sending electrical current through the needles rather than by twirling them. American physicians who have observed surgery done under acupuncture have verified that it is effective in some patients, but put the figure closer to 10 percent. Brain surgery is especially amenable to this form of analgesia. Chinese surgeons claim that acupuncture is superior to Western, drug-induced analgesia in that it does not disturb normal body physiology and therefore does not make the patient vulnerable to shock. Chinese doctors also treat some forms of heart disease with acupuncture. As part of an attempt to put the practice on a more scientific basis, they studied the effects of acupuncture treatment on more than 600 people with chest pain caused by reduced blood flow to the heart. They claimed that almost all the patients greatly reduced their use of medicine and that most were able to resume work. Other physiological conditions treated with acupuncture are ulcer, hypertension (high blood pressure), appendicitis, and asthma. How acupuncture works remains uncertain. Both Western and Eastern scientists have shown, by producing acupuncture analgesia in rabbits, that the effects are not simply a matter of suggestion. After the discovery in 1975 of enkephalins and endorphins (natural pain inhibitors in the body), some neurophysiologists suggested that the needles may trigger the release of one or more of these substances, which inhibit pain signals by blocking their pathway through the spinal cord. This view is supported by both American and Chinese studies showing that placing acupuncture needles in certain parts of the brain of dogs causes a rise in the level of endorphins in the spinal fluid. Scientists in the U.S. have also shown that acupuncture analgesia is at least partly reversible by naloxone, a drug that blocks the action of morphine and morphinelike chemicals such as endorphins" (*Encarta*, 1999).

- e. New Age medical ideas also include such practices as Electromagnetic Healing, Therapeutic Touch, Music Therapy, Pyramid Power, Macrobiotics, Homeopathy, Polarity Therapy, Naturopathy, Rolfing, Chromotherapy, Orgonomy, Herbology, and Ayurveda.

6. **Human Potential.**

- a. This doctrine teaches that within each person is the ability or the inclination to become perfect; that we can be and do what we choose to be and do. The point in NAM is that we can become as perfect as God.
- b. Some in the Lord's church have gone to the extreme on this matter. One gospel preacher is on record as saying: "Whatever your mind can conceive and your heart can believe, you can achieve" (identified and quoted by Winford Claiborne, Tape 90-01, FSOP Lectures). Brother Claiborne also said that this kind of doctrine is being presented at youth conferences and retreats. It is true that we can all improve, but that does not mean we can become equal to God in perfection.
- c. The NAM asserts that life and reality are only what we perceive them to be; sickness is only an illusion; death is only an illusion; life is only an illusion; we create our own reality. There is no such thing as good and evil, or right and wrong. What a fatalistic view! If such is true, life has no meaning! No wonder the people of India are in such horrible straits!

C. Reincarnation versus the Bible.

- 1. Passages:
 - a. Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."
- 2. Reincarnationists claim that their theory explains some of life's great mysteries.
 - a. They assert reincarnation shows why some people have an orientation toward homosexual behavior. They claim that in your past lives, you have been a man several times and a woman several times; everyone has had this experience. "We are all basically the same sex, because we have all experienced both sexes. Both potentials reside within the human body" (Quote from Claiborne tape). Therefore, they conclude, homosexual behavior is perfectly acceptable.

- 1) Shirley MacLaine's channeler claims that the Apostle John speaks through him, and that the apostle said it was all right to be gay. They claim that Jesus and John were lovers; they say the same about Naomi and Ruth, David and Jonathan, and that the Twelve apostles were a band of roving homosexuals. [If someone wants to find justification for a sinful act, he will find something that he thinks does the job].
 - 2) Along the same line, reincarnationists say that an unusual attraction between a particular woman and man means that they were married to each other in another life. Or perhaps they were soul-mates: they were made at the same time, and are always looking for each other. If they are already married to other spouses, it is still all right for them to carry on an affair.
 - b. Reincarnationists claim their theory explains why some children are born with an unusual talent.
 - 1) Mozart wrote masterpieces in every branch of music. Beginning at the age of eight, he wrote forty symphonies; at the age of twelve, he composed an opera at the order of the Emperor of Austria. How could he do such an extraordinary thing? Reincarnation! In other lives, he was a composer; he had developed the talent and skill in other lifetimes!
 - 2) Samuel Taylor Coleridge was able to read the Bible, with comprehension, at the age of three; he could read Latin at the age of six. No problem! He probably lived one lifetime in Palestine when the Bible was being revealed; and another life was lived in Rome where Latin was spoken. If you are born with such an ability, that means you have already lived several lifetimes in which you developed and honed your talent to an extremely high level.
 - 3) But if such is true, why does not everyone have a measure of ability of whatever it was they did in their former lifetimes? Why does virtually every one of us have to learn things from the simplest basics before we can do the job or develop the skill?
 - c. Reincarnationists say that their theory explains the feeling many of us get occasionally that we have seen, heard, or experienced something before. They say you did—in another life!
 - 1) In 1956, a book was published which caused a minor sensation, and became a best-seller. *The Search For Bridie Murphy* gave the story of Ruth Simmons, who claimed to have lived before in Ireland under the name of “Bridie Murphy.” She could tell the color of the house next door to where she lived in Ireland, and could even name the neighbors up the street. This story was proclaimed as proof of reincarnation, until it was discovered that Simmons had obtained her information from an Irish nanny who reared her. New Agers now admit Bridie Murphy was a fraud.
 - 2) Other such stories have been advanced to prove reincarnation, many of which are doubtless fraudulent and others are cases of self-deception or misinterpretation.
 - d. Reincarnationists say that their theory solves the problem of justice.
 - 1) They make a great deal about the many *injustices* of earthly life. Some are born in slums, and know nothing but hardships and dangers, learning to lead lives of crime from their youth. Others are born with deformed bodies; others are afflicted with crippling injuries or diseases; and others live out their lives in absolute poverty. But there are those who are born into wealthy and caring families; who are healthy, strong, and attractive; who never have a serious care, accident, or disease.
 - 2) If the God of the Bible is the loving and just being he is said to be, why does he allow such problems to go uncorrected? Why does he not eradicate all crime, accidents, diseases, and problems?
 - 3) Reincarnation, we are told, solves this difficulty. Each person is born into a situation he has made for himself; with each earthly life, he is able to improve his lot, until finally everyone will reach the state of perfection and bliss known as *nirvana*.
 - e. Reincarnations say their theory solves the problem of destiny.
 - 1) "What is the meaning and purpose of life? Why am I here? How did I get here? Where am I going?" These are questions we all ask about ourselves. Evolution cannot answer the
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questions satisfactorily; human religions do not know the answers; no man can answer these questions with nothing but his own natural intelligence and wisdom.

- 2) "Furthermore, what is the value of physical existence to a soul who inhabits the body of an infant that lives but a few hours, or the body of a child criminal born and reared in the slums? If we live but one life, there is no satisfactory explanation; but if this life is one of many arranged in an ascending series, then we see in the two conditions just mentioned, the payment of a debt in one case, and the first efforts of an ignorant untaught soul in the other" (*Theosophy Simplified*, quoted by Brad Bromling in "Reason & Revelation," August, 1988). This is the "New Age" answer to the questions.
 - 3) But only Almighty God, who gave man his existence, knows the answers; those answers are supplied in the Bible.
3. The Bible supplies the answer to the problem of justice.
 - a. God created a perfect world in which to place Adam and Eve who were also perfect (Gen. 1:32).
 - 1) He created man to be a free moral agent (Gen. 2:16-17; Josh. 24:15; John 5:39-40).
 - 2) Free moral agents have the power to make bad choices; they often do so.
 - 3) Adam and Eve's bad choice led to their expulsion from their garden Paradise and brought sin into the world (Gen. 3:6; Rom. 5:12). All of their descendants are born into this world which has become filled with the consequences of sin.
 - 4) The consequences of sin include more sin, pain, death, disease, and suffering.
 - 5) Christ gave his life on the cross to redeem fallen men from their folly (John 3:16).
 - 6) God offers to mankind through Christ an escape from a life of sin, from the guilt of sin, and from the ultimate penalty of sin (Rom. 5:8-9). God is able through the sacrifice of Christ to satisfy the demands of infinite justice, and at the same time give man the mercy he needs to be saved.
 - 7) The home of the soul is not earth, but heaven; in God's wise plan, it is often incumbent upon his people to suffer because they are Christians, so as to enhance their spiritual strength, and obtain greater devotion to their Heavenly Father.
 - 8) The reality of these truths is proved by an abundance of evidence that undeniably establishes the fact that the Bible is the inspired word of God.
 - b. What evidence does the theory of reincarnation have to justify its claims? Nothing but the empty assertions and assumptions of confused men! Even if we were to accept the assumptions of reincarnation, how could this theory solve the problem of justice?
 - c. Reincarnation is a barbaric system which affirms that every deformed child, every assaulted woman, every cancer victim, and every casualty of crime and war is only getting what he deserved!
 - d. Reincarnation offers to mankind only a fatalistic system based on the warped wranglings of worldly wisdom, which is a futile effort on the part of those who follow it to save themselves.
 - e. But the gospel plan of salvation is rational, provable, and effective; it lifts man to a higher plane of life, and offers genuine help for the present and hope for the future.
 4. The Bible and common sense answer the problem of child prodigies.
 - a. We all are given different levels of intelligence, ability, talent, and opportunity. What matters in life is not the talents and abilities we are given, but how we use them.
 - 1) Matthew 25:14-30: "For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. *15* And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. *16* Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. *17* And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. *18* But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. *19* After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. *20* And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord,

thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strowed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. 26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strowed: 27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

- 2) Galatians 6:10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
- 3) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
- b. If reincarnation is true, why is it that there are so very, very few who are born with exceptional skills and talents? Why is it that all of us do not bring with us into our new life the skills and abilities we learned in our previous lives? The reason: None of us had a former existence!
- c. Those few who have the inherent talents to learn extraordinary skills early in life are simply given that ability. The talent, if used properly, can be a great boon to the individual and to mankind; but if it is abused, it may become a curse to all concerned. Child geniuses have been known to pursue the sorriest kinds of lives.
5. The Bible and common sense offer solutions to the problem of *retrocognition* (the feeling that we have seen or experienced a certain matter before).
 - a. The extreme cases used by reincarnationists to justify their theory are often fraudulent, or misapplied. They cannot explain why it is that we all do not bring with us a detailed memory of our activities from our previous lives.
 - b. The *dim memories* that are felt within us may very well be explained as the products of an overactive imagination which mixes information which our conscious mind does not know. The human mind is so marvelous and mysterious that no one understands it well. It is far more complicated than the most complex computer; no machine will ever be able to match it.
 - c. God did not see fit to include in his word, details about the workings of the human mind. Retrocognition has nothing to do with life and godliness.
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
 - 3) Jude 3: "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."
6. The Bible answers the question of why some follow homosexual behavior.
 - a. When men decide they do not want to retain God in their knowledge, they will turn to lives of

- rebellion against God. One sin leads to another sin; one degree of sin is followed by deeper degrees of sin. The result is, that any evil thing the human mind can conceive, men will practice.
- 1) Genesis 6:5: "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."
 - 2) Romans 1:18-32: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; *19* Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them. *20* For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: *21* Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. *22* Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, *23* And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. *24* Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: *25* Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. *26* For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: *27* And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. *28* And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; *29* Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, *30* Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, *31* Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: *32* Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."
 - 3) Ephesians 4:17-19: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, *18* Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: *19* Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 3:13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
 - b. It is not because of some deformed gene that one takes up a life of homosexuality; it is because he has been deceived and misled by the devil!
7. The Bible answers the questions about man's destiny.
- a. It tells us plainly where we came from:
 - 1) Genesis 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."
 - 2) Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
 - b. It reports clearly why we are here:
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man."
 - 2) Micah 6:8: "He hath showed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
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- 3) John 9:4: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
- c. It reveals where we are going:
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 2) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."
8. Reincarnationists will sometimes try to use Bible passages to justify their doctrine. But a correct understanding of the verses involved will reveal the truth.
 - a. Matthew 11:8-14 is made to teach that John was the reincarnation of Elijah: "But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come."
 - 1) John was no more the reincarnation of Elijah, than Elisha was of Elijah.
 - a) 2 Kings 2:15: "And when the sons of the prophets which *were* to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him."
 - b) Luke 1:17: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."
 - c) Where did the spirit of Elisha go when the spirit of Elijah entered his body? How can one explain the fact that Elijah and Elisha were alive as separate beings at the same time before Elijah was carried to heaven?
 - d) John even denied being Elijah: "And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No" (John 1:21).
 - 2) John and Elijah had certain similarities in common; both were rough-hewn men who spoke strong words that offended many who did not want the truth.
 - b. "And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:1-3). They assert that the disciples expressed a belief in reincarnation, and that Christ did not correct them; therefore, Christ tacitly affirmed the doctrine of reincarnation.

- 1) In the text, the disciples are shown to be more concerned with how this man came to be blind, than in the need he had to be healed. They asked the cause of his having been born blind, thinking his affliction was due to sin, either on his parents' part or his own.
- 2) But the Lord denied that his malady was due to sin on anyone's part. Instead, Christ said that his blindness was for the purpose of giving him [Jesus] occasion to manifest the power of God. The Lord said the affliction was not due to any sin on the man's part; reincarnationists say just the opposite.
- c. Reincarnationists say the following passage shows that evil men will be punished for their evil in future lives: "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me" (Exod. 20:5).
 - 1) The passage teaches the fact that the sins of one generation often have harsh consequences on those of succeeding generations.
 - 2) Suppose a man robs a bank, and spends twenty years in prison for his crime. His wife and children have to get by without the help of that imprisoned father. The children grow up in poverty; when they marry and have children, that third generation faces a life of poverty.
 - 3) Suppose a young girl experiments with LSD; ten years later she gives birth to a child who is deformed as a result of the mother's use of LSD. The child bears none of the mother's guilt, but does indeed suffer consequences of the mother's sinful conduct years earlier.
- d. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). They claim that the Lord was promising [in Matt. 5:48] ultimate perfection for us all as we progress through various lives of spiritual improvement. But all the Lord is showing in this passage is that if we show love toward our friends and our enemies, we will be like God is in this practice; he loves all, whether friend or foe. Nothing about reincarnation is even remotely hinted at by the passage.
- e. "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 3:3). They think that Jesus was describing reincarnation in his statement to Nicodemus. Christ is only saying that one must receive the new birth (con-version; obey the gospel) in order to enter the kingdom of God (the church). Nothing about reincarnation is in the passage.
- f. They see in Galatians 6:7, Matthew 16:27, and Romans 2:6 teachings on the doctrine of *karma* upon which reincarnation rests. These passages teach the truth that actions have consequences.
 - 1) The passages:
 - a) Matthew 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."
 - b) Romans 2:6: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds."
 - c) Galatians 6:7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
 - 2) This is not akin to karma, which teaches that every good deed will be blessed and every evil deed will be punished. No one can be saved (according to the gospel) by perfecting his 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" (Tit. 3:5).
 - 3) Karma says we earn our own salvation; the gospel says we are saved by the grace of God when we obey the gospel and walk in its light.
 - a) Romans 10:13-18: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 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? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they

have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

- b) 1 John 1:6-10: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 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."
9. Bible passages which clearly refute the theory of reincarnation.
- a. Deuteronomy 18:9-13: "When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you [any one] that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee."
 - b. Galatians 5:19-20: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies." Witchcraft and such like will keep one out of heaven.
 - c. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - d. Ecclesiastes 3:1-3: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die...." There is just one birth and one death for each person.
 - e. Ecclesiastes 7:1: "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Only one death is indicated.
 - f. Jeremiah 20:14: "Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed." He did not speak of more than one birth.
 - g. Ecclesiastes 4:2-3: "Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun." This certainly does not encourage belief in reincarnation.
 - h. Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." God is the father of our spirit; it is formed with the body; it does not exist prior to the body: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9).
 - i. James 4:14: "Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
 - j. Psalms 90:10: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
 - k. Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
 - l. Genesis 5:5: "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."
 - m. Isaiah 38:1: "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." Hezekiah had only one life.
 - n. Job 10:20-21: "Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death."

- o. Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
 - p. 1 Corinthians 15:14, 51-54: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain....Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."
 - q. 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The judgment will be according to what an individual in his body (not bodies).
10. Some of the conflicts between the Bible and the theory of reincarnation. [These points are developed from Bromling's article in "Reason & Revelation" cited above].
- a. Reincarnation makes no real distinction between God and man.
 - b. It eliminates the need for the sacrifice of Christ since we save ourselves by good karma.
 - c. It pays lip-service to Jesus, but denies the truth about him.
 - d. It fails to account for the perfect life Jesus obtained in only one life.
 - e. It contradicts the Bible's teachings on the Creation, the Fall of man, and the Plan of Salvation which God developed and revealed through the centuries.
 - f. It cannot account for the cruel treatment Jesus received in connection with his arrest, trials, and horrible crucifixion.
 - g. Reincarnation denies the reality of hell; it denies the inspiration of the Bible.
- D. Astrology and the Bible.
1. Passages:
 - a. Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."
 - b. 1 Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
 2. Astrology is a popular phenomenon in modern America.
 - a. The following estimates have been given of just how popular it is.
 - 1) There are more than 10,000 full-time astrologers who earn their living by plying their "trade." There are about 175,000 part-time astrologers.
 - 2) America has about 10 million hard-core followers of astrology, and about 40 million dabblers.
 - 3) Regular astrology articles and charts appear in about 1,200 of the 1,750 daily newspapers in the USA.
 - 4) A Gallup poll taken in 1984 showed that 55% of American teenagers (ages 13-18) believed that astrology works.
 - 5) Another poll showed that 29% of Americans believe that the position of the stars influence their lives.
 - 6) It was reported that people in New York make about one million telephone calls each month to a dial-a-horoscope; each call costs 28 cents.
 - b. Astrologers earn large salaries advising people in making such decisions as:
 - 1) Deciding on a potential spouse or lover.
 - 2) Picking out a pet dog.
 - 3) Advising a president or other national leader when or whether to make a state decision.
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- c. There are many people in our *enlightened* land that insist on beginning each day by investigating their horoscope for the day; they order their lives by the information contained in the reading.
 - d. If Americans show such an interest in astrology, we may well imagine that other less-enlightened societies show an even greater preoccupation with it. It seems that the greater our education and wealth, the less likely we are to investigate the truths of the Bible, and order our lives by them.
3. Why is it that our modern society, with all its advantages, has turned to such occult practices as astrology?
- a. Evolution has been foisted off on our young people for many years now, and those who accepted it have been convinced that they are nothing more than highly-developed animals.
 - 1) They have been robbed of any objective standard of morality; if we merely evolved into being, then the Bible is untrue; if the Bible is false, it does not reveal a dependable, objective standard. The moral standards of other religions are subjective, being developed by human prejudices and notions. Believing in astrology tells man that he is not responsible for his actions; the stars have dictated his affairs.
 - 2) They have been robbed of any real purpose in life, but a right-thinking man wants to believe that there is more to his life than existing from day-to-day as the animals do. Believing astrology may seem to give man a purpose for living—the satisfaction of the ultimate will of the stars! But that's not much to live for!
 - b. Humanism is a man-made substitute for Christianity (the only true religion). It denies there is any objective standard of right and wrong; it attributes our existence to evolution.
 - 1) It tries to set up an arbitrary standard of ethics by which man is supposed to live. But its moral standard is purely subjective and is utterly inconsistent. Lying, stealing, murdering, etc., are usually wrong, but they become right if the circumstances (the situations) are right.
 - 2) Astrology claims to give man an "out"—what he does is ordained by the stars, and he is not totally responsible for his actions.
 - c. Materialism has contributed to the problem. If one orders his life entirely around material concerns, a high-paying job, fancy house, the latest gadgets, etc., to the neglect of spiritual concerns, the inner man is strangled; the inner desire to worship God is stymied. When one realizes that something is missing, he is more apt to grab any sort of system, including the New Age, to satisfy his spiritual needs.
 - d. Modern Americans have been fed a steady diet of liberalistic and modernistic religion by most of the sectarian churches.
 - 1) They have been told by theologians that the Bible is not to be taken literally; that sincerity is more important than truth; that truth is unattainable; that the Bible was never intended to be a guide book or roadmap to take us to heaven; that we are to seek unity in diversity. They offer nothing but empty religion that many have properly rejected.
 - 2) All of this drivel has been seen to be clearly at variance with the Bible, hence many have turned to those religions which claim to give definitive answers to their questions. People have lost faith in the old beliefs, and many have turned to astrology to fill their "felt needs."
 - e. Some prominent modern preachers have made a sham of religion; some televangelists and other worldly-minded religionists have poisoned many minds against the truth. The point is that these false teachers are seen as representatives of the true gospel, when the very opposite is true.
 - f. Many have believed the attacks made against the Bible, thinking that it has been exposed as being self-contradictory and full of mistakes. Having rejected the Bible, but still having an innate longing for spiritual fulfillment, many misguided folks have turned to the New Age Movement.
4. What exactly is astrology?
- a. It is the belief in the supposed occult influence of heavenly bodies on human affairs and the practice or method of predicting future events from observing these heavenly bodies.
 - 1) Men have learned that the sun and moon have definite effects on the sea and earth; we have
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- more recently learned of sun spots and their effect on radio transmissions.
- 2) Astrologers suppose that the stars must likewise bring to bear certain influences in shaping the fortunes and destinies of human beings.
- b. We have all heard of the 12 signs of the zodiac. Centuries ago, men thought that the earth was the center of the universe, and that the sun and all heavenly bodies revolved around the earth.
 - 1) They divided the heavens up into a *belt* which extends around the earth in which they supposed the sun, planets, and moon traveled in their orbits around the earth.
 - 2) This belt was divided into 12 equal parts which they called *houses*; each house is named for one of the constellations in it, and these names are referred to as the "signs of the zodiac." These twelve names are familiar to us all: Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpius, Sagittarius, and Capricornus.
 - 3) A *horoscope* is a chart prepared by an astrologer which supposedly shows a person's character and foretells certain events relative to an individual's life determined by the positions of the stars at the time of his birth.
 - c. Each of the signs of the zodiac supposedly determine the kind of person you are. If you were born under the sign of Aries, you are said to be *headstrong and impulsive*. One who is born under the sign of Gemini is supposed to have a *split nature*.
5. Astrology is nothing more than ancient idolatry with a modern face.
 - a. Astrology began with the ancient Akkadians and Sumerians who lived along the Euphrates River. The Assyrians and Babylonians continued the system, developing it into a complex program.
 - b. These and other ancient people worshiped heavenly bodies, attributing to them certain powers which they were thought to exert on humanity.
 - c. The root of modern astrology was the worship of the sun, moon, and stars; while our countrymen are not apt to burn sacrifices in homage to these heavenly bodies, they nevertheless ascribe to them powers that pertain only to the God of heaven! Hence, astrology is a form of idolatry. Anything that supplants Almighty God is idolatry.
 - 1) Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:5: "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."
 - 3) Colossians 3:5: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."
 - d. To worship the creation rather than the Creator is idolatry: "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen" (Rom. 1:25).
 6. Astrology is unscientific.
 - a. "Legitimate statistical studies of astrology have found absolutely no correlation between the positions and motions of the celestial bodies and the lives of men" (Lawrence E. Jerome, "The Case Against Astrology," *Memphis Commercial Appeal Mid-South Magazine*, pp.60f, Nov. 23, 1975).
 - b. "'Astrology, say the astronomers, is not a science at all but a superstition. What we have learned about the stars and planets in the last 500 years completely destroys any possibility that astrology contains a grain of truth'" (*Science Digest*, quoted by Wayne Jackson, "Christian Light," July, 1987).
 - c. Modern astronomy has shown that the earth is not the center of the universe; the sun and planets do not revolve around the earth as the astrologers first claimed. "Undaunted, astrologers merely shifted their frame of reference from a stationary Earth about which the heavens rotate to one in which the heavens rotate and revolve with the Earth" (Jerome, *ibid.*).
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- d. "Due to the position of the earth's axis having changed, astronomers tell us that the positions of the constellations have slipped westward to the extent that the 'houses' of the zodiac named after them are about a full division off what they were when the houses of the zodiac were mapped out by the early astrologers" (Joe Galloway, "Words of Truth," June 7, 1985).
7. Astrology is worthless.
 - a. The "reading" given by different writers of horoscopes often contradict. If the method is authentic, how is it that different readings are possible? Do not the stars say the same thing to all the astrologers? And why are the readings so very vague and general? If the stars exert such influences on us as they claim, why cannot the astrologers give us exact prognostications? The reason: The whole system is false!
 - b. If astrology is accurate, since twins are born under the same identical sign, they ought to have the identical readings. But sometimes one will die young; one will be successful in life, the other have many troubles.
 - c. Those born north of the Arctic Circle during some months are not born under any of the zodiac signs, yet astrologers still claim that everyone of us is under the influence of the system.
 - d. It is claimed that those who are born under certain signs are supposed to be more compatible as marriage partners. A psychologist at Michigan State University conducted a study in which he examined the records of 2,798 couples who had married and 478 couples who had divorced in Michigan in 1967-68. Marriage and divorce were the same for those with compatible signs as for those with incompatible signs.
 - e. Since astrological readings are so vague, do not measure up to the claims, and are often inconsistent, they are without value in any practical sense; they are worthless.
 8. Astrology is dangerous.
 - a. Supposedly, those born under the sign of Aries are headstrong and impulsive. What if a timid Aries person learns he is supposed to be aggressive? What kind of psychological damage is apt to occur when he tries to become assertive and headstrong, only to find that he does not have that capability?
 - b. Supposedly, a Gemini bears a "split nature." What if he is constantly reminded that he has that destiny, will he not be thus encouraged toward becoming genuinely schizophrenic?
 - c. Astrologers predicted that the earth would be destroyed by a flood in 1524 (Galloway, *ibid*). Astrologers claimed that the worst combination of planetary influences would occur in 1962-3, which meant the virtual end of the world. It was reported that about half of India's population sat up all night in anticipation of the tragedy. In America, stargazers were predicting everything from the drowning of California to the end of the world.
 - 1) They all overlooked one important factor: Mankind is not governed by the stars, but both man and the universe are under the indisputable authority of Almighty God!
 - 2) It is foolhardy to take the word of misguided stargazers rather than the word of God! Nothing is as hazardous to the soul than to deny or disbelieve what God said!
 9. Astrology is condemned by God's word.
 - a. Deuteronomy 18:9-12: "When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee."
 - b. Isaiah 47:13-14: "Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from [these things] that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver
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- themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it."
- c. 2 Kings 17:16-18: "And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only."
 - d. 2 Kings 23:5: "And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places...them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets {"twelve signs"—ASV, fn.}, and to all the host of heaven."
 - e. I Chronicles 10:13-14: "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, *even* against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking *counsel* of *one that had* a familiar spirit, to inquire *of it*; And inquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse."
 - f. Galatians 5:19-21: Witchcraft and such things will keep one who practices it out of heaven.
 - g. Deuteronomy 17:2-5: "If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded. And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and inquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die."
 - h. Jeremiah 10:2: "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them."
 - i. Daniel 2:27: "Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king."
 - j. Other passages:
 - 1) 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 3) James 4:14: "Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
 - 4) 2 Peter 1:3-12: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our
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Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth."

- 5) Jude 1:3: "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."
- 6) Revelation 22:18-19: "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."

E. New Age Theology Perverts many basic Biblical Truths.

1. Their doctrine of God.

- a. Their view of God is that he is not a person; he is an energy. This "energy is so unbelievable that it does indeed form all universes; and because its energy is within and behind all universes, systems, and fields, it is indeed aware of each sparrow that falls, for it *is* each sparrow that falls" (Jane Roberts, quoted in *The New Age Cult*, pp.25f).
- b. Benjamin Creme: "In a sense there is no such thing as God, God does not exist. And in another sense, there is nothing else but God—only God exists....All is God. And because all is God, there is no God" (*ibid.*, p.26)
- c. Shirley MacLaine: "For me to deny that Divine Force now would be tantamount to denying that I exist. I *know* that I exist, therefore I AM. I *know* that the God-source exists. Therefore IT IS. Since I am part of that force, then I AM that I AM" (*Dancing in the Light*, p.420).
- d. The New Age view of God is not the Bible's view of God. The God of the Bible is a real person, possessing all power, the Creator of us all, loving all of his offspring, and is able to help us with our difficulties.
 - 1) Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
 - 2) Exodus 3:13-14: "And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."
 - 3) Psalms 46:1-2: "God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."
 - 4) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 5) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

e. To believe New Age theology is to deny what the Bible says about God.

2. Their doctrine of the Trinity (the Godhead).

- a. "Eternal Thought is one; in essence it is two—Intelligence and Force; and when they breathe, a child is born; this child is Love. And thus the Triune God stands forth, whom men call Father-Mother-Child" (Levi, quoted in *The New Age Cult*, p.26).
- b. The Bible gives us a clear and distinct picture of the Godhead. It is comprised of God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) Matthew 3:15-17: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and

- he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
- 2) Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Romans 15:30: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen."
 - 5) Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."
- c. To believe New Age theology is to deny what the Bible says about the Godhead.
3. Their doctrine of Christ.
- a. Jane Roberts: "People have been led to leave the churches in large numbers because the churches have presented a picture of the Christ impossible for the majority of thinking people today to accept—as the one and only Son of God, sacrificed by His Loving Father to save Humanity from the results of its sins; as a Blood Sacrifice straight out of the old and outworn Jewish Dispensation; as the unique revealer of God's nature, once and forever, never to be enlarged and expanded as man himself grows in awareness and ability to receive other revelations of the Divine nature; and as waiting in some mythical and unattractive Heaven until the end of the world, when He will return in a cloud of glory to the sound of Angels' trumpets, and descending from these clouds, inherit His Kingdom. The majority of thinking people today have rejected this view...." (ibid.).
 - b. David Spangler: "The true birth of Christ was not the birth of Jesus. Jesus was an individual who himself had to recapitulate certain stages. He built upon the pattern the Buddha had established" (ibid., p.27).
 - c. Levi: "Jesus was an ideal Jew, born in Bethlehem of Judea. His mother was a beautiful Jewish girl named Mary. As a child Jesus differed but little from other children only that in past lives he had overcome carnal propensities to such an extent that he could be tempted like others and not yield....In many respects Jesus was a remarkable child, for by ages of strenuous preparation he was qualified to be an avatar, a saviour of the world...." (ibid.).
 - d. To believe New Age theology is to deny what the Bible says about Christ:
 - 1) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 2) John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."
 - 3) John 8:58: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."
 - 4) John 10:30: "I and *my* Father are one."
 - 5) John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
 - 6) Acts 4:12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
4. Their doctrine of the atonement.
- a. They have Jesus say about his crucifixion: "God does not believe in retribution. His Mind does not create that way. He does not hold your 'evil' deeds against you. Is it likely that He would hold them against me?....Sacrifice is a notion totally unknown to God. It arises solely from fear, and frightened people can be vicious. Sacrificing in any way is a violation of my injunction that you should be merciful even as your Father in Heaven is merciful" (ibid., p.28).
 - b. To believe New Age theology is to deny what the Bible says about the atonement Christ accomplished on the cross (Isa. 53:1-12):
 - 1) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the

- remission of sins."
- 2) Romans 5:8-9: "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."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:9: "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."
 - 4) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - 5) Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."
 - 6) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - 7) 1 Peter 1:18-22: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently."
5. Their doctrine of salvation.
- a. They have Jesus say: "The real world is achieved when you perceive the basis of forgiveness is quite real and fully justified" (ibid.). This means, they think you are God's Son and are really sinless and thus you deserve forgiveness.
 - b. To believe New Age theology on salvation is to deny what the Bible says about this subject:
 - 1) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 2) Romans 5:8-9: "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."
 - 3) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 4) John 8:24: "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."
 - 5) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - 6) Matthew 10:32: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."
 - 7) Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - 8) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 9) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
6. Their doctrine of judgment, heaven, and hell.
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- a. Alice Bailey: "Christianity has emphasized immortality but has made eternal happiness dependent upon the acceptance of a theological dogma: Be a true professing Christian and live in a somewhat fatuous heaven or refuse to be an accepting Christian, or a negative professional Christian, and go to an impossible hell—a hell growing out of the theology of the Old Testament and its presentation of a God full of hate and jealousy. Both concepts are today repudiated by all sane, sincere, thinking people. No one of any true reasoning power or with any true belief in a God of love accepts the heaven of the churchmen or has any desire to go there. Still less do they accept the 'lake which burneth with fire and brimstone' (Rev. 21:8) or the everlasting torture to which a God of love is supposed to condemn all who do not believe in the theological interpretations of the Middle Ages, of the modern fundamentalists, or of the unreasoning churchmen who seek—through doctrine, fear, and threat—to keep people in line with the obsolete old teaching" (ibid., p.30).
 - b. Levi: "...Your heaven is not far away; and it is not...a country to be reached; it is a state of mind....God never made a heaven for man; he never made a hell; we are creators and we make our own. Now, cease to seek for heaven in the sky; just open up the windows of your heart, and, like a flood of light, a heaven will come and bring a boundless joy..." (ibid., pp.30f).
 - c. To believe this doctrine of the New Age is to deny the teachings of the Bible on these matters:
 - 1) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 2) John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.
 - 4) Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
7. Their doctrine of Satan.
- a. Spangler: "Man is his own Satan just as man is his own salvation.....Of course, yes, the forces of evil are part of God. They are not separate from God. Everything is God" (ibid., p.32).
 - b. To believe New Age theology on Satan is to deny what the Bible says about him:
 - 1) Genesis 3:1-6: "Now the serpent was more subtle 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. 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."
 - 2) Matthew 4:1-11: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but
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by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

- 3) Luke 22:31-32: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."
 - 4) Hebrews 2:14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."
 - 5) James 4:7: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
 - 6) 1 Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."
8. Their doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ.
- a. Spangler: "Any individual, any center, who so embodies the new that it becomes a magnetic source to draw the new out of the rest of the world, embodies the Second Coming" (ibid., p.32).
 - b. Creme: "In the esoteric tradition, the Christ is not the name of an individual but of an Office in the Hierarchy. The present holder of that office, the Lord Maitreya, has held it for 2,600 years, and manifested in Palestine through His Disciple, Jesus....He has never left the work, but for 2,000 years has waited and planned for the immediate future time, training His disciples, and preparing himself for the awesome task which awaits Him. He has made it known that this time, He himself will come" (ibid.). Supposedly, the second coming took place in 1977, in the person of Maitreya (ibid., p.130). The proponents of the New Age Movement must rely on assumptions and assertions, devoid of proof.
 - c. To believe this foolishness is to deny and forsake the Bible's teachings on this subject:
 - 1) Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
 - 2) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 4) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - 5) Hebrews 9:27-28: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he

appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

- 6) 2 Peter 3:10-11: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness."

F. The New Age Lies.

1. "Now the serpent was more subtle 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. 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" (Gen. 3:1-6). The day began as all others since Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, but its end was like no other that had gone before. It began in beauty and perfect happiness, and ended in doubt and heartache. It had begun with perfect fellowship between them and their Creator; it ended with separation from the Perfect Being and with the harsh prospect of living in a hostile world outside of Paradise.
2. The Devil's first lie was: "Ye shall not surely die."
 - a. He promised them immortality, but knew that to eat the forbidden fruit would certainly bring death to both them and their descendants.
 - b. The New Age theology promises immortality by claiming that we have all existed forever; we are all part of what they call *god*, and that after a certain number of reincarnations, we reach perfection, and are rejoined to the original whole.
 - 1) But the Bible teaches that there is a difference between the material and the spiritual:
 - a) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - b) Luke 24:39: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."
 - c) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - d) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
 - 2) The Bible teaches that there is a difference between flesh: man has one kind; birds another; beasts another; and fish still another: "All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is one kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds" (1 Cor. 15:39).
 - c. New Agers say we have always been, but the Bible says we have not always been (Gen. 1-2; Zech. 12:1).
3. The Devil's second lie: "Your eyes shall be opened."
 - a. He promised them that they would receive divine illumination; that they would no longer be limited with human knowledge only.
 - b. New Age theology asserts that if we will only listen to their message, our eyes will be opened; we will obtain knowledge we have never experienced before; that channels (spirit-mediums) will be accessible to us which will tap the wisdom of disembodied spirits in the great unknown.
 - 1) Ramtha: "I am Ramtha, the Enlightened One. Whatever you do not know, whatever you need, you will have" (Brad Bromling, "Reason and Revelation," October, 1989, 9.38). {Ramtha is

- the supposed disembodied spirit which spoke through J.Z. Knight; see Miller, pp.149ff.}
- 2) Ramtha: "In the hour to come...knowledge, enlightenment, understanding, truth as it is so seen this hour, shall be given unto you as the Lord God of my Perfect Being shall manifest it for you..." (ibid.).
 - 3) They claim that this knowledge is within each individual: "There is no teacher save **you** the teacher. And who be your master indeed? There is no master save **you**" (ibid.). Why, then, does Ramtha say he will give us knowledge? If we have that information already, why would we need his input?
- c. The Bible teaches the opposite (2 Tim. 3:16-17):
- 1) Deuteronomy. 29:29: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."
 - 2) Jeremiah 10:23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - 3) Proverbs 20:24: "Man's goings [steps] are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?"
 - 4) Psalms 119:105: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
 - 5) Psalms 119:130: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."
 - 6) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 7) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
 - 8) John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
 - 9) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
4. The Devil's third lie: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."
- a. To be like God, to be equal with God, was a powerful temptation to Eve. But it cannot be!
 - 1) Psalms 33:7-10: "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect."
 - 2) Psalms 139:6-9: "*Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*. If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea."
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."
 - b. Ramtha: "You be that which is termed Man, you be that which is termed God. Fallacy? Reality! You be of your importance and your value and your word far greater than that which you have first concluded yourself to be. You be the totality of all that The Father is: God Supreme. What else be there? What grander state is there?" (ibid., p.39). This is a convenient doctrine; it means that you are the greatest authority; you can do whatever you choose; there is no right and wrong except as you will it to be!
 - c. The Bible teaches the direct opposite to this foolish and devilish doctrine.
 - 1) Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God
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created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." God made in his image; we did not create ourselves.

- 2) Ezekiel 28:2: "Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God."
- 3) Acts 12:21-23: "And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them, And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."
- 4) Acts 14:11-15: "And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. *Which* when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard *of*, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein." Paul had just healed a crippled man who had never been able to walk. When the pagans saw that miraculous act, they sought to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas. But these two great men rent their clothes, and declared that they mere mortal men just at these people were.
- 5) Romans 1:18-23: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

G. The Bible Answers the New Age Theology.

1. One of the many proofs of the inspiration of the Bible is its anticipation of religious errors which would be introduced through the centuries. The Holy Spirit anticipated these errors, and included in the inspired revelation of the Bible, either a direct refutation of them, or gave principles which exposed them.
2. The Bible shows that God is distinct from his creation.
 - a. He created man, but he is not man; and man is not God.
 - 1) Genesis 1:1-2: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
 - 2) Psalms 8:1-2: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."
 - 3) Psalms 19:1-6: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there

- is nothing hid from the heat thereof."
- 4) Romans 1:19-21: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
- b. God created the universe, the earth, and all things of earth; but he is not the universe, and the universe is not God.
 - 1) Genesis 1:1-2: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
 - 2) Hebrews 11:3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."
 - 3) 2 Peter 3:10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
 3. The Bible shows that there is no salvation apart from Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God.
 - a. Salvation and hope cannot be obtained through human effort or potential.
 - 1) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - 2) Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Christ is the only Savior we have. Those who think they can obtain salvation and hope from some other source do not believe the Bible!
 - 1) John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 3) Ephesians 1:1-7: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 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, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
 - 4) Ephesians 2:11-12: "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
 - c. The way to greatness is through humble obedience to the written will of God:
 - 1) Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."
 - 2) Matthew 7:21: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."
 - 3) Matthew 20:24-28: "And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the

two brethren. But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 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."

- 4) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
4. We have a way by which to put the spirits (teachers) to the test.
- a. 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 - b. Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."
 - d. 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."
 - e. 1 Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
 - f. Jude 1:3: "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."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. Some evil consequences of the New Age Theology.

1. If the New Age system is correct, then reincarnation is true. But if reincarnation is true, then we ought never to do anything to help those who are starving, injured, being assaulted, or unclothed. Reincarnation teaches that we receive these troubles only if we lived an evil life in our previous earthly existence; we are getting just what we deserve. Therefore, it would be wrong to help someone in need!
2. If the New Age system is correct, there is no such thing as right and wrong, or good and evil. Each one defines what is right and wrong to him, and there is no objective standard. This is very convenient; it allows a person to do anything he chooses to do, or which he can do with impunity. Thus, there is no such thing as immorality; there is no disobedience to God; there is no heaven or hell; there will be no Judgment Day.
3. If the New Age system is correct, there is no God in heaven; there is no heaven; Christ did not die for your salvation, but you save yourself; the Bible is not the word of God; Christianity is a human invention, and runs contrary to the New Age system.
4. If the New Age system is correct, the church is non-essential; Christ's death for the church was in vain.
 - a. Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - b. Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
5. If the New Age system is correct, there will not be a resurrection: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have

testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:12-20).

B. What exactly is the New Age?

1. Martin defines the "Age of Aquarius" in these words: "Astrologers believe that evolution goes through cycles corresponding to the signs of the zodiac, each lasting from 2,000 to 2,400 years. New Age advocates say we are now moving from the cycle associated with Pisces into the one associated with Aquarius. The Aquarian Age will supposedly be characterized by a heightened degree of spiritual or cosmic consciousness" (p.123). And we thought the song, "The Age of Aquarius," was a pretty and pleasant and harmless piece of music!
2. Spangler: "Its meaning as a new age is that for the first time in human history we have a chance to take up a conscious creative recognition of this fact and can begin acting upon it. Up to this time we have moved with evolution. Now comes the time to become the servants of evolution and through our own consciousness to release the light, the love, and the wisdom that will bring our renunciation of spiritual estate (i.e., an attitude of self-sacrifice, to 'give up the good in order to get the best') to its fruition in the occult redemption of the world" (*The New Age Cult*, p.34).
3. The New Age Movement is in agreement with major issues of modern liberal politics in America. Many of the things that concern liberal politicians, are endorsed by New Agers, and vice-versa.
 - a. The New Age Movement is very interested in ecology, since they consider nature as part of their god.
 - b. The NAM is concerned about homosexual rights, for they think we are all basically one sex, and there is no right and wrong. Their theology makes homosexual life-styles acceptable and pure.
 - c. The NAM is interested in disarmament and world peace; their "all-is-one-theology" calls for a central world government. In their view of the world, national boundaries are obsolete. Having a centralized government for the world which they could control would foster their agenda, and outlaw the gospel.

C. What can we do to combat this grievous error?

1. Study, learn, believe and practice God's word.
 2. Teach and preach the truth of the gospel in all its purity and simplicity: "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:1-5).
 3. Warn others about the evils inherent in this false and hurtful religion.
 4. Treat it just as we treat every other religious and moral evil: expose it firmly but kindly.
 - a. Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
 - b. 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 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."
 - c. Jude 1:3: "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."
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MATTHEW 24

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Matthew 24 is one of the most abused, misused and misunderstood chapters in the Bible.

1. It is largely predictive in nature and spectacular events are discussed. It is a fertile field for those who twist the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:16).
2. Speculators claim it gives signs of the end of time, and assert that the end is now nigh. But if the passage gives any evidence of the end, why did Jesus say he did not know when that time would be (Mark 13:32-33)? It is argued that only the day and hour of his return is unknown. That implies that one can learn the week, month, year, decade, century, and millennium. But these sensationalists will not commit themselves to any definite time. In Mark 13:32, the Lord said only the Father knew that "day and hour." In verse 33 he warned that his followers must take heed "for ye know not when the *time* is." It is impossible for us to know when the Lord will return; we cannot learn the hour, the day, or the time!
3. The contents of the chapter are twisted to fit the millennial theories, with no regard being shown the context.
4. Certain songs reflect and further enhance a misunderstanding of the chapter among our own brethren: "Jesus is Coming Soon," especially the second verse.

B. A careful verse-by-verse study is necessary if we are to understand the chapter.

1. We must use the recognized rules of Biblical interpretation. We must start without any preconceived ideas.
2. Some suggestions to keep in mind which will help us to understand the chapter.
 - a. Mark 13 and Luke 21 should be consulted for additional information, for they also contain some of the same information given in Matthew 24.
 - b. Jesus answers more than one question in the reply he gave to the apostles' questions of verse 3.
 - c. The Lord gave definite signs with which the nearing end of Jerusalem could be known in time for the Christians to flee to safety.
 - d. The full context of verses 1-35 needs to be kept in mind, and the contrast between this section of the chapter and the section beginning with verse 36 should be noted.
3. Verse 34's statement regarding "this generation" must be emphasized, taking into consideration the contrasting statement given in verse 36.

C. Matthew 24 and 25 culminate a series of prophecies directed against the Jewish nation.

1. Matthew 3:7-10: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." John denounces the religious leaders and asks them who warned them to flee from the wrath to come. He states that the ax was lying at the root of the tree, preparatory to being used to fell the tree. The tree is figurative, representing the sinful nation of Israel. Matthew 24 gives more specific information on its overthrow.
 2. Matthew 8:10-12: "When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The Roman soldier's faith is commended, but the faith of the Jews is disparaged, and they are to be rejected.
 3. John 4:21: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this
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mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." Jerusalem was soon to cease to be the proper place for true worshipers to praise God. This implies the removal of the Jewish system. Under Christ there is no special or holy place for the worship of God.

4. Luke 13:6-9: "He spake also this parable; A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it*: And if it bear fruit, *well*: and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down." The story of the barren fig tree was given to represent the removal of fleshly Israel as God's special people. As the fig tree was slain, so Israel would be replaced as God's people by all those who would become followers of Christ.
 5. Matthew 21:28-46: "But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet."
 - a. In the parable of the two sons, the first son represents those in the Jewish nation who had gone into sin, but repented; the second son stood for the rebellious majority among the Jews who refused to repent.
 - b. The parable of the household shows that the Jews would be removed as custodians of God's spiritual vineyard and it would be given to others.
 6. Matthew 22: Christ debated with the various sects of the Jews, answered their deceitful questions, exposed their errors, and put them to silence.
 7. Matthew 23: The Lord gave a scathing denunciation of the religious leaders in which he summed up their many crimes, and pronounced a severe punishment on them: "*Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?... Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation" (verses 33,36).
 8. Matthew 23:37-39: "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
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chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

- a. Christ lamented the unwillingness of Jerusalem to repent. He charged them with having killed the prophets, in the persons of their forebears. He had already shown that they had the same condition of heart which those in previous times had had when they rejected and slew God's prophets, and these were now readying themselves to slay God's Son! They were just as wicked, if not more so, since they had greater information, as their evil forefathers.
- b. Jesus had come with a mission of mercy, inviting the sinful Jews to come under his wing of protection and blessing. The great majority of them utterly rejected his offer. As a result, Christ said their house (the temple) was left unto them desolate (deserted by God, and soon to be destroyed). It was no longer God's house (I Kings 5:1-5), but theirs. In Matthew 21:13, he called it God's house, but now God would forsake it. In a few years it was to be destroyed, and in its place a Moslem mosque (the Dome of the Rock) has been erected and has stood there for about 13 centuries. The Jewish temple was the center of the whole economy of Judaism, and without it the system was null and void.

II. MATTHEW 24:1-3: THE DISCIPLES ASKED THE LORD SOME QUESTIONS.

- A. Verse 1: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to show him the buildings of the temple."
 1. After his concluding public discourse presented in the previous chapter, the Lord departed from the temple, never to enter it again. His disciples sought to impress him with the grandeur of this great edifice. It had required 46 years to erect (John 2:20). The reconstructed temple erected by Zerubbabel was still standing when Herod the Great came to power in Palestine under the auspices of Rome. Herod had begun a restoration of the temple.
 2. "He tore away the old little by little and lavishly embellished each of the new parts. Work on it continued long after Herod's death. In fact work was still being done on it at the time of the Olivet Discourse and would continue for some years thereafter. Jesus and the surveying disciples might well have observed temple workers on the job as this dynamic discourse of Matthew 24 departed the Master's lips" (Robert R. Taylor, Jr., *Book of Matthew*, p.613).
 - B. Verse 2: "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
 1. The Lord's terse and frightful reply was that every one of these great stones comprising the temple buildings would be thrown down. Luke 19:43f. These buildings are said to have been very impressive, and the stones massive in size, the base stones measuring about 37 feet in length, 18 feet wide, and 12 feet high (Boles, p.457).
 2. The Rabbis asserted, "He who has not seen the temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building" (Coffman, p.381). Josephus described it as appearing from a distance like a mountain covered with snow, "the ungilded parts being exceedingly white. The golden facade reflected the rising sun with fiery splendor" (ibid.).
 - C. Verse 3: "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"
 1. The parallel accounts:
 - a. Mark 13:14: "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains."
 - b. Luke 21:7: "And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?"
 2. Christ's reply was astonishing to the disciples. When they arrived in the Mount of Olives, and after he had seated himself, some of the disciples approached him with certain troubling questions. Mark
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identifies the disciples as Peter, James, John, and Andrew (13:3).

3. "Their question is twofold, having reference first to the time, and secondly to the sign by which they might know that the event was near. He had said nothing about his own coming or the end of the world, but they inferred from the strength of the temple walls that the time when all these stones would be thrown down could not be sooner than the end of the world and the second coming of the Son of man. So much of this inference as was incorrect he corrected in the course of his answer: for he makes a very clear distinction, as we will see, between the time of his final coming and that of the destruction of the temple" (McGarvey, p.204).
 4. The parallel accounts (Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7) indicate they were thinking of one great event: the end of the world. That they were wrong in this assumption is seen in the fact that the Lord replied to their questions by discussing two great events: the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.
 5. Matthew's account gives three questions: When will the temple be destroyed? What sign will forewarn of your return? And what sign will signal the end of the world? Jesus' reply answers two questions: When will these things (the temple's destruction) be? And, what sign do you give for your return (and the resultant end of the world)? He answers the first of these two in verses 4-35, and the second beginning in verse 36 and continuing through chapter 25.
- D. The New Testament identifies several "comings" of Christ, with only two of them being literal.
1. His first literal coming was when he was born of the virgin Mary (Gal. 4:4); the second will be his coming at the end of time (I Thess. 4:16; Heb. 9:28).
 - a. Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."
 - c. Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."
 2. There are three figurative, or representative, comings:
 - a. On Pentecost day when he set up his church.
 - 1) Matthew 16:28: "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."
 - 2) Mark 9:1: "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."
 - 3) Luke 9:27: "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God."
 - b. In human experiences.
 - 1) Revelation 2:5: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."
 - 2) Revelation 2:16: "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."
 - 3) Revelation 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."
 - c. When Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.
 - 1) Zechariah 14:1: "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee."
 - 2) Matthew 24:30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."
 - 3) Matthew 26:64: "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of

heaven."

4) James 5:8: "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

E. Further information important to the study of the chapter:

1. The Lord answered their questions by discussing:
 - a. Two comings: one in the destruction of Jerusalem; the other at the end of time.
 - b. Two ends: that of Jerusalem and of the world.
 - c. Two worlds: the end of the Jewish world and of the material universe.
2. There is a very significant phrase in the context: "All these things." See Matthew 23:36; 24:2, 3, 6, 8, 33, 34. In each case, the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem (the entire system of Judaism) is meant.
 - a. Matthew 23:36: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."
 - b. Matthew 24:2: "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
 - c. Matthew 24:3: "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"
 - d. Matthew 24:6: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet."
 - e. Matthew 24:8: "All these *are* the beginning of sorrows."
 - f. Matthew 24:33: "'So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors."
 - g. Matthew 24:34: Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

III. **MATTHEW 24:4-14: GENERAL SIGNS OF THE APPROACHING END OF JERUSALEM.**

- A. Verses 4-5: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."
 1. The Lord cautioned against any of them being deceived by the claims of false "messiahs." Acts 8:9-11 describes Simon the Sorcerer as one who claimed to have some special greatness, and with his enchantments and tricks, he convinced many people into thinking he was "the great power of God." Josephus, a Jewish historian who lived during the first century and witnessed the overthrow of Jerusalem, describes several men who claimed to be "christs" and deceived many of the Jews during the turbulent weeks prior to the fall of the city.
 2. Other uninspired writers of the ancient past also spoke of these men, these scholars including Justin, Jerome, Irenaeus, and Origen. At the very outset of the Lord's statement he warned the disciples against their being deceived. If this deception was not hazardous to the soul, he would not have issued the warning. The Lord did not teach or accept any foolish theory such as the "impossibility of apostasy."
 - B. Verses 6-8: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these *are* the beginning of sorrows."
 1. The forty years (about) between the time Jesus uttered these words until the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. were filled with warfare and rumors of wars; there were also famines, pestilences and earthquakes. These were all general signs which have pertained to many periods of human history. They are put before the disciples as fairly common occurrences but which would be present prior to the "end" he is discussing in this part of the chapter. When they saw these signs, the end would not be immediately forthcoming; this end would occur only after the details of verse 14 were fulfilled.
 2. It is significant that peace prevailed in the Roman Empire at the time the Lord spoke these words, but this peace would not be long-lived. The wars Jesus mentioned involved first century kingdoms, not nations of our own twentieth century. "Between Olivet's discourse and Jerusalem's fall in A.D. 70
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smaller nations warred against Rome. Jewish wars in that period cost numerous lives. In just one battle against the Syrians 50,000 Jews were killed. These were decades filled with wars and war rumors" (Taylor, *ibid.*, p.615). Another 20,000 Jews were slain at Caesarea.

3. "Not wars in distant nations, but wars particularly affecting the Jews, as appears from the warning, 'see that ye be not troubled' (verse 6), and from the fact that the coming trouble of the Jews was the subject of discourse. The nations and kingdoms which were to rise up against each other were those whose military movements would affect the peace of Judea" (McGarvey, pp.204f). History shows that three threats of war were made against the Jews by three Roman emperors; three uprisings of Gentiles against the Jews are reported (*ibid.*).
 4. A severe famine is named in Acts 11:27-30, which occurred during the days of Claudius Caesar who died in 54 A.D. "One writer claimed it was the greatest the world had known up to that time" (Taylor, p.616). This famine is mentioned by Suetonius and Tacitus (Roman historians, unbelievers), and Eusebius. Josephus says that the famine was so severe in Jerusalem that many people starved to death. Four times during the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41-54) famines occurred in Rome, Palestine, and Greece (see Barnes, p.252).
 5. Several great earthquakes are reported for that time period by ancient writers. "Tacitus mentions one in the reign of Claudius, at Rome, and says that in the reign of Nero the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown, and the celebrated Pompeii was overwhelmed and almost destroyed by an earthquake...Others are mentioned as occurring at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, and Samos" (Barnes, p.252). Josephus described in detail an earthquake in Judea during this same time frame.
 6. The Lord said pestilences would occur. Epidemic diseases often follow earthquakes. Josephus speaks of a pestilence that afflicted Babylonia in 40 A.D. (*Antiq.* 18. 9,8). And Tacitus describes one that took place in Italy in 66 A.D. One pestilence in Rome resulted in 30,000 deaths.
 7. These awful tragedies would not be the end itself, but merely the beginning of sorrows. Worse things were yet to come!
- C. Verse 9: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."
1. Persecution would be brought to bear on the saints. Some of them would be slain, and they all would be hated by the general population of the world. Some of these persecutions are named in Acts 4 (Peter and John), Acts 5 (the twelve), Acts 7 (Stephen), Acts 12 (James is slain and Peter is imprisoned), Acts 8 (the whole church was scattered).
 - a. 2 Corinthians 4:8-11: "*We are* troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 11:24-27: "Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."
 - c. 1 Peter 4:16-19: "Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."
 2. Tacitus says the Christians were "a class of men hated on account of their crimes" (McGarvey, p.205).
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- D. Verse 10: "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another."
1. Many of the saints would stumble, some would betray others, and some would hate the others. Luke 21:16 says that they would be betrayed by parents, brethren, kinsmen, and friends.
 2. For instances of Christians falling away, read:
 - a. Acts 20:29: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."
 - b. Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - c. 1 Timothy 1:19-20: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."
 - d. 2 Timothy 1:15: "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes."
 - e. 2 Timothy 4:10: "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."
 - f. 2 Timothy 4:16: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge."
- E. Verse 11: "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."
1. Many false teachers would arise. There has probably never been a time in which there were so many false teachers as our own time, but there were many present at the time of Jerusalem's destruction.
 2. The New Testament shows many cases of this in that time, including:
 - a. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
 - b. Galatians 1:6-9: "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."
 - c. 2 Timothy 2:17-18: "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."
 - d. 2 Timothy 3:13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
 - e. Titus 1:10-11: "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
 - f. 2 Peter 2:1: "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."
 - g. 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 - h. Jude 1:4-8: "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. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once
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knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities."

- F. Verse 12: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."
1. Iniquity means "lawlessness, unrighteousness" (Vine, p.260). When iniquity abounds, the love of many grows cold—people are influenced away from their love of God. The song "Jesus is Coming Soon" twists this passage to fit the time just before the coming of Christ, and thus promotes one of the greatest errors of modern times—premillennialism. Since the Lord later taught that there will be no signs warning of the approaching end of time, then this passage could not have application to then; if it did, we would have a sign of the Lord's coming (verses 36-44).
 2. "It is the universal experience of the Church, that when iniquity abounds the love of many grows cold; and it is also true that under such circumstances the love of some grows warmer, thus reserving and concentrating a sufficient amount of warmth to produce a reaction by and by, and to save the body from utter destruction" (McGarvey, p.206). In our day, sin has infiltrated the church, and error has also afflicted many of our members; the result is that many others have become confused, discouraged and weak, and some have given up their faith.
 3. The trials of that period would wreak havoc on many erstwhile servants of God. Their faith and love would not be sufficient to sustain them.
- G. Verse 13: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."
1. The "end" the Lord is speaking of in this section of the chapter is limited by the statement in verse 34 to "this generation." While it is true that a Christian must endure to the end of his life if he expects to go to heaven (Rev. 2:10; Matt. 10:22), this is not the "end" being discussed in this setting. It is the end of the Jewish system, for this is the subject of the context.
 2. The salvation is the preservation of their physical lives (cf. verses 15-20; Luke 21:18-24). The end the Lord is contemplating is connected to the proclamation of the gospel throughout the world; it will come only after that great effort has been completed.
- H. Verse 14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."
1. During the almost forty years from the time of this discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostles and other faithful saints had been busy proclaiming the gospel in their world. Romans 1:8 speaks of the faith of the Romans saints as having been spoken of "throughout the whole world." Romans 10:18 describes the fact that the sound of gospel preaching "went into all the earth."
 2. Colossians 1:5-6 says that the gospel had been taken into all the earth (cf. Mark 16:15). Colossians 1:23 declares that the gospel had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven." The book of Romans was written about 56-58 A.D. and Colossians was written about 62 A.D.
 3. The condition of verse 14 was fulfilled prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. About seven or eight years before the end, the condition had been met. This is not something which still lies in the future from our day; it has already been fulfilled.
- I. Each of the foregoing signs was present prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.
1. These general signs would presage the destruction of Jerusalem. It is perfectly logical and in full harmony with the text to say that these signs are past, and never were intended to refer to our day or to some day future to our time. This is in keeping with the context and is the only tenable position to take in view of Matthew 24:34-35: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 2. These signs are generic, and could be misleading because wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes

are fairly common occurrences. Hence, the words of caution given in several of the preceding verses regarding the possibility of their being deceived. The Lord next gives a specific sign which would be certain, and easily recognized. This would be the real sign for them in knowing the time to flee.

3. The end under consideration is not identical with the wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, or earthquakes; it is not identical with the troublesome persecutions the saints would face; they would be able to endure these several difficulties; salvation is promised to those who endure to this "end."
4. The end would come after the gospel had been preached in the whole world. Having discussed the generic signs, he next turns to the sign which was specific and which was not apt to be misunderstood or which they would fail to see.

IV. MATTHEW 24:15: THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION.

A. Verse 15:

1. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)" [KJV].
2. "When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place(let him that readeth understand)" [ASV].

B. Notice that Jesus did not say, "Daniel said," but reported what was spoken "through" Daniel (ASV).

1. Parallel records of the Lord's statement are found in Mark 13:14-20 and Luke 21:20-24.
 - a. Mark 13:14-20: "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house: And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days."
 - b. Luke 21:20-24: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
2. "This abomination cannot refer to something happening today or soon to transpire. Yet one of the most prominent preachers in the world today, Billy Graham, suggested in 1969, that the defilement of the holy place is certainly one of the sure signs of Jesus' second coming. He listed nine other things which will herald the Lord's second coming, and all ten of the Graham indicators are taken from Jesus' description of Jerusalem's fall and the temple's demolition in A.D. 70" (Taylor, *ibid.*, p.618).

C. Daniel spoke of this abomination of desolation (Daniel 9:24-27).

1. "God, through Gabriel, told Daniel: 'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon the holy city.' The 70 weeks are divided into 3 sections: 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week. The 70 weeks were determined with a view to six things: (1) to finish the transgression, (2) to make an end of sins, (3) to make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) to seal up the vision and prophecy, and (6) to anoint or consecrate the Holy of Holies. These six things obviously relate to the Christ—His being, His mission, and His church. He came to deal with the problem of sin, to make possible God's plan for man's righteousness, to establish His church. The 70 weeks would bring to a completion the development of the Scheme of Redemption. Likely, the 'anointing of the Holy of Holies' refers to the establishment of the church. The 7 weeks span the time from the decree of Cyrus

to the end of Nehemiah's work. The 62 weeks span the time from the end of Nehemiah's work to the coming of the Messiah. The 1 week clearly is the personal ministry of the Christ. The 62 weeks come after the 7 weeks, and the 1 week comes after the 62 weeks (thus, after 69 weeks). During the final week the Messiah would confirm the covenant with many. In the midst of the week He would cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. In the midst of the week the Messiah would be cut off. In this connection the prophecy stresses that '...the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined' (v. 26). The Record further says, '...and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate' (ASV, v. 27). It should be pointed out that the prophecy does not say that the city would be destroyed within the span of the one week. Rather, it says that within that week the destruction of the city was determined. One could hardly read verses 26 and 27 without recalling our Lord's words: 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate' (Mt. 23:38)" (Deaver, **Biblical Notes**, June, 1977, pp.24f).

2. That Daniel's prophecy pointed to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 is undeniable in view of the Lord's divine interpretation. Further evidence is seen from Luke's inspired description of this same statement: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains...for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon **this** people" (Luke 21:20-23). Add to this the uninspired comment by Josephus, the Hebrew historian: "In this very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them" (Book X, Chap. XI, 7, p.227). These facts, taken together with the context of Matthew 24:15, show conclusively that the "abomination of desolation" was experienced when the Roman army surrounded the city of Jerusalem for the purpose of conquering it with force.

D. Armies are shown to be present in connection to the great events portrayed.

1. "The armies referred to [Luke 21:20] are unquestionably the Roman armies which finally besieged and destroyed the city. They are called the abomination of desolation because, being heathen armies, they were an abomination to the Jews, and because they brought desolation on the country. The 'holy place' in which they were to stand is the holy territory round about the holy city" (McGarvey, p.207).
 2. The Romans worshiped the ensigns they carried before their armies. All Gentile idols and objects of worship were considered abominable by the Jewish people (Jer. 4:1; 2 Kings 23:13; I Kings 11:5,7). When these ensigns of idolatry were seen by the Jewish Christians, the next verses tell them to flee from Jerusalem. Perhaps most of them would be able to escape when the Roman army was first sighted; but historians record that the Roman army withdrew for a spell, and that during this break in the siege, the remainder of the Christians escaped. The escape was possible in either case only because of the Lord's forewarning given here.
 3. In Daniel 9:24-27 and 11:31, predictions concerning the cessation of the daily sacrifice and oblation, and the pollution of the sanctuary, are connected with the abomination; and this is connected with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army in A.D. 70. The sacrifices legally ended at the cross (Col. 2:14); they literally ended when the temple was destroyed, many of the Jews were slaughtered, many others taken as captives, and the rest of them dispersed—in A.D. 70.
 4. Josephus gives an added detail to the pollution of the sanctuary: "And now the Romans ...upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings laying round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus emperor, with the greatest acclamations of joy" (Wars, Book VI, Chap. VI,1, p.583).
 5. Inspiration inserted a word of caution: "Whoso readeth, let him understand." Thus a warning against being deceived is issued. We are to be careful about jumping to a wrong conclusion regarding Daniel's prophecy and the New Testament's interpretation. We must examine all the evidence given, and take the natural meaning in the light of the clear New Testament information provided, taking into
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consideration also the historical facts relating to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. "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).

- E. The millennial view requires certain particulars which are denied by the sacred text.
1. It requires the restoration of the Jews, the rebuilding of the temple, the return of Old Testament priesthood and worship, etc.
 2. But John 4:21 says that under Christ's system, the place of worship would no longer be in Jerusalem, and the book of Hebrews shows that the Old Testament system ended forever! "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father" (John 4:21).

V. **MATTHEW 24:16-22: THE SAINTS TO FLEE WHEN THE ABOMINATION APPEARED.**

A. The abomination of desolation is described in vivid detail and would be easily recognized.

1. The approach of the Roman army is meant: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24).
2. The information which follows would be useful only if the saints quickly recognized the sign the Lord had just given. Having previously discussed some general signs which would be before "the end" being described, he has now given the disciples a practical sign which would signal the destruction of the temple. This sign (vs. 15) is not a universal sign, but one which would only be locally observable. If reference is to the second coming and end of the world, there would be no need for the flight commanded.

B. Verse 16: "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains."

1. This command never applied to anyone who did not live in Judea; it was limited to a particular place, people, occasion, and time. The Christians in and around Jerusalem were to flee to the mountains, since there they would find greatest safety from the invading Roman army.
2. Millennialism ignores these verses. These statements (verses 16-22) simply will not fit into the millennial theory! At the Lord's return, the saints will rise to meet him in the air (1 Th. 4:16-17). There will be no need, no time, and no way for anyone to flee to the mountains at **that** end. The mountains had many caves in which to take shelter, and passing through the mountains, escape to other regions could be effected.

C. Verse 17: "Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house."

1. The houses of Palestine were so-constructed that one could walk on the roofs, and even from roof to roof. The roof was a place where one could take advantage of the evening breezes during the summer, and have the sun's warmth during the colder times. If one was on the roof when the Roman army appeared, he was not to take the time to enter his house to get clothing or provisions; he would not have sufficient time. He could escape from the city by walking from roof to roof, at least for a distance, thus avoiding the jammed streets and turmoil below.
2. He must trust the Lord for the necessities of life as the journey was made. Modern houses are not constructed as in that day; the situation does not fit our time.

D. Verse 18: "Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes."

1. Those addressed are the Lord's people. If the "rapture" theory were true, they would not need to go back to their houses for clothes. There would be no reason for them to flee. They would suddenly be whisked away from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. If this is the end of time, there would be no need to flee for there would be no place to go: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10).
 2. This passage is describing a local event, directly affecting only those who lived in Judea when the Roman army approached to lay siege to the city. There is no such thing as the "rapture" taught in the Scriptures! Farmers of that time would take to the fields only such clothing as were necessary. If the Romans came while they were working their crops, they were to quickly leave the area, trusting God to provide for their necessities, for they would not have time to go home and make proper preparations.
- E. Verses 19-20: "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."
1. They were to pray that the day of their flight would be on a weekday and in a time of good weather. The flight would be difficult for those who had small children and women who were pregnant. If they had to flee during winter time, greater hardships would be met, and difficulties in travel would be experienced due to cold and rain. If it were on the Sabbath, they would have difficulty escaping Jerusalem, for the gates of the city were closed on those occasions.
 2. The Jews could even be expected to offer hindrance to their escape since they still enforced the rules limiting travel on the Sabbath. This detail shows that the time period involved was when the Sabbath would have been a problem for the Christians. Sabbath keeping was officially removed when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-7).
 3. Today, even those who claim to observe the Sabbath do not enforce it on others and even they do not observe the limitations which were followed by the ancient Jews. A Sabbath day's journey was only about a half mile. This detail removes the event described from our day, and places it in the first century. "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day" (Neh. 13:19). At least part of their prayers was answered for the city fell during the summer (September). The siege began when many Jews were attending the feasts.
 4. We are told that all the Christians escaped from Jerusalem, fleeing to Pella, which was about 100 miles away. When the Romans temporarily withdrew, the rest of the saints were able to escape. The Romans returned, laid siege to the city from April to about September, when the city fell. The Lord had promised in Luke 21:18 that the saints would be preserved, provided they followed his directions: "But there shall not an hair of your head perish."
- F. Verse 21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
1. The parallel passages shed light on the subject.
 - a. Mark 13:19: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."
 - b. Luke 21:23: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people."
 2. Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to be is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding its mention and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that period of time was unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood
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(those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly).

3. In fact, when Josephus' record is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. Josephus gave the following reports:

- a. 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
- b. Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
- c. Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
- d. Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
- e. By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
- f. Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
- g. Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 14:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.

G. Verse 22: "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

1. God mercifully shortened the tribulation.

- a. "History records that Titus determined to reduce Jerusalem by famine, a long and destructive mode of conquest, and for this purpose he surrounded it with a wall and ditch. After completing his preparation for this attack on the city, he received news from Rome which urged him to hasten to Rome. He changed his plan and pressed the city by assault, that he might return to Rome, where his presence was greatly needed; hence, 'those days had been shortened.' The overruling providence of God shortened these days 'for the elect's sake.' 'The elect' has reference to the Christians who were among the Jews at that time. This elect group were to be preserved in order that the gospel might be handed down to future ages" (Boles, pp.466f).
 - b. Peter may be describing this very even: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of
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- their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Pet. 4:15-19).
2. Titus, the Roman general, acknowledged that the speedy overthrow of Jerusalem was to be attributed to the power of God: "We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications, for what could the hands of men, or any machines, do toward over-throwing these towers?" (Quoted by Kik, p.120).
 3. "As it is Jewish flesh alone whose sufferings are the subject of discourse, this passage means that but for the shortening of those days no Jewish flesh would be saved; and it follows that the elect, for whose sake those days were to be shortened were the elect Jews, or Jewish Christians. The Romans made no distinction between believing and unbelieving Jews, but slaughtered all alike. The only safety for Christian Jews, then, was in flight, and even this might not have saved them but for the providence by which those days were 'shortened'" (McGarvey, p.208).

VI. MATTHEW 24:23-28: WARNINGS ABOUT DECEPTION DURING THESE FRIGHTFUL TIMES.

A. If truth is unimportant, why did the Lord issue so many warnings against false teachers?

1. Why so many warnings against being deceived?
 - a. Matthew 7:15-23: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - b. Acts 20:28-32: "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. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
 - c. 1 Timothy 4:1-3: "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."
 - d. 2 Timothy 3:13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
 - e. 2 Peter 3:16: "As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."
 - f. 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 2. Sincerity alone or just believing *something* about Christ, is not enough; we must have and believe the truth.
 - a. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b. Romans 1:16: "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."
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- c. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not *to go* beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
- B. Verses 23-25: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before."
1. In connection with the siege of Jerusalem, deceivers would come. Josephus tells of one who got many to climb atop the temple, claiming God would show a miraculous sign to indicate their deliverance (p. 582). Jewish leaders hired men to say God had spoken to them, promising deliverance. This was done to deter desertion to the Romans (p. 582). Jesus predicted that false Messiahs would arise, claiming great signs and wonders. These would be false wonders (2 Thess. 2:9). So powerful would be the "signs" and "wonders" that the elect would almost be persuaded to believe them.
 2. "The former reference to these pretenders (verse 5) was indefinite as regards the time of their appearance, but this shows that some of them would appear at the time of flight just preceding the final catastrophe. These may have been either pretended signs and wonders, or real signs and wonders of which these men pretended to give the interpretation. That a great many such signs and wonders and such prophets did during the siege of Jerusalem, and for some years previous, is attested by Josephus....The elect are those who would maintain their faith in Christ, and who, however they might be puzzled and distressed by the signs and wonders of the pretenders, could not be deceived into the recognition of false Christs. The believer in Jesus in all ages and countries had this advantage, that no pretenders can present credentials equal to his, nor give us ground for such confidence in them as we have in him" (McGarvey, pp. 208f).
 3. "Many persons, impostors, and self-deceived, aspire to fill the places of persons of honor. Many did come claiming to be the Christ. There is still a constant stream of men claiming to be God's chosen servants, leading multitudes into sin and infidelity with pretended claims" (Boles, p.469).
 4. Christ had forewarned his disciples about false prophets on other occasions, but yet another warning would not be superfluous.
- C. Verses 26-27: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
1. If someone tells you that Christ is in some desert place, or in some secret room, do not believe them. When the Lord returns, no one will need any announcement from any human about his arrival! As the lightning comes from the east and shines far into the west, so shall his coming be. No one has to tell a man with normal faculties when the lightning has flashed across the sky; he sees it for himself. The description given in verse 27 is offered as a contrast to the claims of the false teachers regarding a secret return of the Lord.
 2. A prominent false teacher deceived people just after the turn of the twentieth century with the notion that Christ was returning in 1914; when that year passed with no indication of the Lord's presence known, his successor claimed that Christ did return—but only selected ones were privileged to see him! The Lord's present statement ought to forever put to silence any who think his coming will in any way be secret. Revelation 1:7 says that every eye shall see him, even those who pierced him, and that all the families of earth would wail because of him.
 - a. Acts 1:11: "who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first;"
- D. Verse 28: "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."
1. Christ gives a picture of a carcass and the eagles (vultures) gathering around it. Two possible

meanings may be indicated: (1) The carcass being a symbolic reference to Israel, with the birds representing the Romans who were about to feast upon it (Cf. Deut. 28:49; Hab. 1:8); or (2) the birds represent the false teachers and the carcass being representative of the Jews, whose bones were about to be picked by the deceivers. The former is more likely the correct picture.

2. "It is claimed that eagles do not feed on dead bodies; this is true, but the Jews and Greeks made no distinction between the word 'eagle' which included the entire species of birds of prey, which included vultures. Some think that the giffon vulture is meant which surpasses the eagle in size and power. Aristotle notes how this bird scents its prey from afar, and congregates in the wake of an army" (Boles, p.469).
3. "Strangely enough, eagles were the invariable decorations of the Roman standards under which the veteran legions of Titus gathered to press the siege of the city" (Coffman, p.390).
4. "As sign after sign appeared, they were able to read it in the book as plainly as they saw it with their eyes. We are not slow, therefore, to believe the statement of Eusebius, that the whole body of the church at Jerusalem removed from the city before the final siege began. (Ec. Hist. B.iii, c. v.) Nor can we fail to recognize these fleeing Christians among those persons of whom Josephus speaks when he says that, 'Many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city as from a ship when it was going to sink.' (B. ii, ch. xx, 1.) This flight occurred at the very crisis at which Jesus had warned his disciples to flee to the mountains (verses 15-22); that is, after Cestius Gallus, having laid siege to Jerusalem, with every prospect of taking it, suddenly, as Josephus expresses it, 'retired from the city without any reason in the world.' (Book ii, ch.xix, 6,7.)" (McGarvey, p.210).

VII. MATTHEW 24:29-31: PICTURES ARE GIVEN OF SOME MARVELOUS EVENTS.

A. The first word of this context is very significant in understanding the statements which follow.

1. If the word "immediately" is interpreted as strictly literal, then the descriptions thereafter given must be understood as figures of speech since nothing of a literal nature as described have happened since then (the first century). On the other hand, if the events pictured are taken as literal events pertaining to the second coming of Christ, then a figurative interpretation must be forced upon the word "immediately." Both cannot be taken literally; both cannot be taken as figures. The context demands that one or the other be taken figuratively.
2. Some ingenious writers try to make the events described throughout the chapter apply to both the destruction of Jerusalem and to the second coming of Christ. Verse 34 shows that all the things of the preceding verses were to take place during the time "this generation" was inhabiting the earth. Since that is so, then the things of the preceding verses have already taken place, thus no dual fulfillment was intended. A stark contrast exists between verses 4-35 and verses 36-51.
3. It is obvious that the former signs apply to the destruction of Jerusalem and the latter to the second coming of Christ and the end of the world. Hence, the Lord is answering the disciples' first question in verses 4-35, and the second and third questions (which are equal since the end of time will occur at Christ's second coming) in verses 36-51. Verses 29-31 are the most difficult in the chapter.

B. Verse 29: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

1. The Greek word the Lord used (*eutheos*) means "directly, straightway, forthright, at once" (Young's Concordance, p.509; Vine, p.127). Uses of the word help us to appreciate the fact that it depicts events which quickly take place, without any extensive delay.
 - a. Matthew 8:3: "And *immediately* his leprosy was cleansed."
 - b. Matthew 20:34: "*Immediately* their eyes received sight."
 - c. Mark 2:12: "*Immediately* he arose, took up the bed..."
 - d. Acts 12:10: "And *forthwith* the angel departed from him."
 - e. Acts 21:30: "And *forthwith* the doors were shut."
 - f. As used in Matthew 24:29 (as in these other verses), the events described would occur soon after the ordeal previously identified (i.e., the tribulations involved in the destruction of the temple).

2. **Immediately after the tribulation of those days.** The tribulation was that which was forced upon the Jews when their holy city was besieged and taken by the Romans. The horrible circumstances that occurred there were greater than had ever been (or ever to be) experienced. Nowhere else has a people suffered so much in such a short period of time.
 - a. Notice the plural "days." The coming of Christ, the resurrection, and the Judgment are spoken of in the singular: hour, day. The period of time in which the hardships of this passage occurred was described by the plural "days."
 - b. Some writers think that the tribulation referred to is some period of severe hardship which will descend upon the inhabitants of earth just prior to the Lord's return. But this is not so because it would constitute a sign of the nearing end of time, a fact which Christ said would not be; there are no signs of the approaching end of time and the Lord's return. "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:36-39).
3. The four images presented in the remainder of the verse all have precedents in Old Testament usages. By showing that "immediately" is used in other contexts with the same meaning as our use of it today, and by also showing that the phraseology of the rest of the verse is also used in the Old Testament to describe figuratively the overthrow of ancient cities and nations, it is reasonable to understand the present verse in the same light.
 - a. The same terminology was used in predicting the eventual destruction of Babylon:
 - 1) Isaiah 13:6-11: "Howl ye; for the day of the LORD *is* at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces *shall be as* flames. Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible."
 - 2) Isaiah 13:13-22: "Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined *unto them* shall fall by the sword. Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished. Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and *as for* gold, they shall not delight in it. *Their* bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in *their* pleasant palaces: and her time *is* near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged."
 - b. In foretelling the overthrow of Idumea, God used similar descriptions: "And all the host of heaven

- shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fadeth from off the vine, and as a fading *leaf* from the fig-tree. For my sword hath drunk its fill in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Edom, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment" (Isa. 34:4-5, ASV).
- c. The same kind of figures are used in the Lord's picture of Egypt's overthrow as given in Ezekiel:
- 1) Ezekiel 32:2: "Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou wast likened unto a young lion of the nations: yet art thou as a monster in the seas; and thou didst break forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers."
 - 2) Ezekiel 32:7-8: "And when I shall extinguish thee, I will cover the heavens, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord Jehovah."
 - 3) Ezekiel 32:11,15: "For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee....When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate and waste, a land destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, then shall they know that I am Jehovah."
4. Since the Bible has already used this language in describing the overthrow of ancient cities and nations, and since the term "immediately" cannot logically be used to describe events at least two thousands years in the future (and possibly many thousands more than that), and since the context makes it difficult to place this passage after the destruction of Jerusalem (vs. 34), it is far more reasonable to apply this verse to the Lord's overthrow of Jerusalem by means of the Roman army in 70 A.D.
5. Therefore, immediately after the tribulation of the preceding verses, Jerusalem would fall. The sun, moon, and stars represent the Jewish nation, its laws, its rulers, and its influence as a nation. It is a matter of historical fact that Israel ceased to exist as a nation following the Roman victory over her. The Israeli nation of our modern time represents only a small portion of the Jewish race, and there is no certainty of its long existence as a nation. In 1948, when the Jews in Palestine, with the help of other nations, succeeded in establishing a foothold there, Premillennialists thought they saw in this evidence for the Lord's imminent return. Some went so far as to assert that a generation was about forty years, and that within forty years of the time Israel gained a foothold in Palestine, the second coming would occur; hence, some of them said that 1988 would be the year! All such date-setters are proved wrong.
6. Again, the parallel accounts are helpful:
- a. Mark 13:24-25: "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken."
 - b. Luke 21:25-26: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."
- C. Verse 30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."
1. If the preceding verse is to be taken as figurative, then this verse and the one following are also figurative. The statement in verse 34 is very clear, and thus limits that which goes before it in the chapter to events which are connected to the destruction of Judaism in 70 A.D. But is there any precedent of such language being used to describe a figurative coming of Deity? Is there a logical interpretation which permits this to be imagery?
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2. Matthew mentions the sign and the coming of the Son of man; Mark and Luke only speak of the coming of Christ. Mark and Luke's accounts do not give an interpretation of the meaning of the sign. Matthew speaks of the coming plus the sign of the Son of man in heaven.
 3. Concerning the sign, what is said in the text? The sign of the Son of man (Christ) would appear. Appear is from the Greek *phaino* which means "to be brought forth into light, to become evident...shown to be" (Vine, p.64). This sign was to be brought forth into the light *immediately* after the tribulation of verse 21 (vs. 30). It was to become evident before *this generation* should pass from earthly scenes (vs. 34). The Son of man has not come for the second time as yet (Heb. 9:28; 2 Th. 1:6-9; 1 Th. 4:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:10; John 5:28-29). Therefore, the sign must not be understood as the personal appearance of Christ in the sky. Notice that the location identified is heaven, not the "heavens" (the sky). Something (or someone) was to be in *heaven*. It is the Son of man who is to be in heaven. The sign would be of the Son of man in heaven. The sign would appear (become evident, be brought to light, shown) in connection with the sun being darkened, the moon not giving her light, the stars falling from heaven, and the powers of the heavens being shaken (the overthrow of corrupted Judaism). When this is done, THEN shall the sign be seen. The sign will be on earth; the sign is the destruction of Jerusalem; the sign would show that Christ is in heaven, and is behind all these frightful events, judging the nation which had rejected him as the Messiah. "The destruction of Jerusalem would be the SIGN of the coming of the Lord, and would be conclusive evidence that He was reigning IN HEAVEN" (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, Volume XI, June, 1977, p.27).
 - a. Matthew 23:36: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."
 - b. Matthew 23:38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."
 - c. Matthew 24:34-35: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - d. Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - e. Compare Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."
 4. All the tribes of the earth shall mourn. Luke's account gives this additional piece of information: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Luke 21:26). [In the Greek, "heaven" is in the plural, showing that God's abode is not the location where this shaking will take place]. The mourning would be the outgrowth of the terrible things included in this great tribulation. All the Jewish people, not only those who were present to face the terrible ordeal, but those who were living in many places throughout the Empire (Acts 2:5), would mourn over the evil which was befalling their nation. The consequences of this great tribulation would also have effects on other people and nations. The suffering and the resulting sorrow of such a tremendous tribulation, in which well over a million people died under the most horrible of circumstances during a 3-5 five month span, would certainly cause terrible mourning on the part of many. The word "earth" of this clause can be either earth or land, including the occupied earth in the former case, or the land of Palestine in the latter. Those mourning would include especially those who were enduring the suffering and death, and extend to all the others who were sympathetic to them, or who also had to endure the consequences of Israel's great plight.
 5. The coming of the Son of man in (on, ASV) the clouds of heaven. Can this be properly construed figuratively? The same terminology is used in Isaiah 19:1 in the prophetic picture of Egypt's punishment: "The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it." The Lord said he would come on a cloud against Egypt, but no one understands that coming as literal. Given the context in which the present statement was made, no one should understand the coming of Christ in this instance as a literal coming. In fact, as noted earlier in this
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study, there are only two literal comings of Christ (at his birth and at the end of time). But there are other representative, figurative comings.

- a. He came in a representative manner when he established his church (kingdom): Matthew 16:28 (Cf. Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). He did not come literally on that great occasion, but the power by which he set up his kingdom was present, working with his handpicked apostles (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:5,8; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14; Acts 2:1ff; 2:23, 33). He built his church (Matt. 16:18), but he was not literally present when he caused it to be built.
 - b. He promised to come in judgment against the saints at Ephesus unless they returned to their first love (Rev. 2:5), against the saints at Pergamos if they did not repent (Rev. 2:16), and into the lives of the penitent saints at Laodicea (Rev. 3:20). These were representative comings, and were not literal. He came into their experiences only in the judgments against, or in bringing blessings for, the people involved.
 - c. The context of the verse under consideration (Matt. 24:30) indicates that the coming on the clouds of heaven is another non-literal, symbolic, figurative coming. When the great destruction, suffering and loss of life are considered, the Lord's great power was brought to bear in the overthrow of Jerusalem. Indeed, the Roman general admitted that only with the assistance of God could the great walls of Jerusalem have been breached. Zechariah. 14:1ff speaks of this coming.
- D. Verse 31: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."
1. If the conclusions on verses 29-30 are correct, this verse is also figurative. Verse 34 limits the foregoing to events taking place while that generation was on the earth. Verse 33 also limits it to the lifetime of those addressed. Luke 21:31 says: "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." [The Lord is not saying that the kingdom would then be about ready to be established for it came on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2 (33 A.D.), not in 70 A.D. His meaning is that there would be no need for his people to fear, for the kingdom was with them, thus its protecting influence would be present]. Our conclusions on verses 29-30 fit Biblical usage; this verse must also be figurative, and thus descriptive of events which are long past, not future to our day.
 2. The Greek word "angelos" is translated "angels" and carries the definition of "messengers." The nature of the messenger must be determined by each context since the word is sometimes used in reference to men. In Mark 1:2, John is called an angel; the same word is used in Matthew 11:10 in reference to John. John's disciples who were sent to speak with Jesus are called "angelos" (Luke 7:18, 24). In Luke 9:52, certain disciples of Christ have this same word used to describe them. James 2:25 uses this same word to describe the two spies sent into Jericho to spy out the city.
 - a. The Greek word translated "evangelist" means "a messenger of good (*eu*, well, *angelos*, messenger)" (Vine, Vol. 1, p.44). *Angelos* is elsewhere translated "angel." An evangelist is therefore an *angel*, in the sense that he is a *messenger*.
 - b. It is in keeping with Biblical usage of the word to understand the present occurrence of the word as a reference to human messengers, preachers of the gospel who proclaim the message of Christ to the lost world. This fits the context and is in keeping with the use of the word elsewhere.
 3. These angels were assigned the mission of gathering the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Heaven is in the plural in the Greek text. The extent of this gathering was from all locations where the elect (the saints) were to be found. "Gathering the elect" is a beautiful way of depicting the great work of preaching the gospel. "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10; cf. Acts 13:45-46). God knows the hearts of individuals; he knows whether they will be responsive to the gospel; thus, prospectively, they can be called the elect or God's people. As God's messengers go about proclaiming and teaching the gospel, there are those who will listen, examine it and themselves, and believe and obey the message.
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4. The trumpet was used in ancient days to gather the people together. It was sounded when Israel was called together, especially at the start of Jubilee (Lev. 25:9; Num. 10:2; Judges 3:27). The trumpet of God will sound to announce the return of Christ at the end of time (I Th. 4:16; I Cor. 15:52). The sounding of the trumpet is used figuratively in the present text to describe the calling of many out of the world into the church of Christ.
 5. The four winds is a reference to the cardinal directions: north, south, east, and west. The statement itself is manifestly figurative, for the elect are not gathered out of the air! From the four winds and from one end of heaven (s) to the other is the two-fold description of the extent the messengers were to canvass in gathering those who obeyed the gospel.
 - a. Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."
 - b. Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"
 - c. Mark 16:15-16: "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."
 - d. Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - e. Romans 10:18: "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."
 - f. Colossians 1:6: "Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth."
 - g. Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."
 6. The fall of Judaism made it easier for the saints to carry out the Great Commission, since they were not confused with the Jews, and ceased to be persecuted by the Jews. "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (Acts 14:19).
- E. Similar descriptions are use in other settings to describe the second coming and the end of the world.
1. The sun and moon being darkened, the stars falling, and the powers of the heavens shaken.
 - a. Hebrews 1:12: "And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."
 - b. Hebrews 12:26-29: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
 - c. 2 Peter 3:4-12: "And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day
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of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

- d. Revelation 20:11: "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."
2. The people of the earth mourning: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7).
3. The Lord coming with the clouds of heaven:
 - a. Acts 1:11: "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
 - b. Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
4. The sounding of the trumpet:
 - a. 1 Corinthians 15:52: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."
5. The gathering of God's people to be with Christ.
 - a. Matthew 13:41: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - c. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels."

F. The interpretation given in the preceding discussion does no damage to any passage.

1. Is in keeping with Biblical usages of the same and similar terminology.
2. It fits the context of Matthew 24:4-35.

VIII. MATTHEW 24:32-35: THE NEARNESS OF THESE THINGS.

- A. Verse 32: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh."
 1. This discourse took place in the spring, at the Passover season, a time when the fig trees were beginning to put forth their leaves or were soon to do so. When these leaves began to appear, summer was near at hand.
 2. When robins begin to appear, we take that as a sign of the nearness of spring.
- B. Verse 33: "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors."
 1. In the same way that the appearance of the fig leaves signaled the closeness of summer, so the appearance of the preceding signs were to be taken to mean that Jerusalem was soon to be razed. The marginal note says that "it" could be understood as "he." The American Standard translates it as "he." If "he" is taken as the correct rendering, then the reference is to the nearness of Christ; if the KJV is correct, the "end" (the overthrow of Jerusalem) is soon to be come. In either case, the meaning is the same: Jesus was to be present (representatively) in bringing about the overthrow.

2. At least some of the disciples would "see all these things." Because they would see them, they would thereby know of the nearness of the city's destruction, and so could flee to safety. The Lord is getting to the heart of his answer to their questions of verse three.
- C. If Matthew 24:29-33 describes his second coming, notice how shallow and superfluous it would be:
1. "When you see the sun and moon darkened, and the stars crashing down, then know that my second coming is at hand! When you see me coming in the clouds, I'm on my way! When you see angels gathering the elect, look for my appearance!"
 2. Christ never engaged in such trite statements; he never uttered any mere truisms. If so, it would be like the silly truism we often hear: "It ain't over till it's over."
- D. Verse 34: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."
1. "All these things" is a statement made several times during the discourse and in the context. "Verily I say unto you, **All these things** shall come upon this generation" (23:36). See also 24:2, 3, 8, 33, 34; Luke 21:19-33. The meaning of Matthew 24:34 is so crystal clear that it seems very strange that many overlook its significance, or else try to explain away its obvious point. Mark 13:30 and Luke 21:32 are parallel verses and they express the same truth.
 - a. Mark 13:30: "Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done."
 - b. Luke 21:32: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."
 2. Premillennialists try to explain away the statement by twisting "generation" to mean the Jewish race. This would have the Lord saying that, "All these things will come upon this race, and this race will not pass away until all these things come upon it." But Christ was never redundant, never uttered a mere truism, and was never guilty of speaking such shallow nonsense.
 - a. "Generation" means here exactly what it meant in these other passages, where the same word is used:
 - 1) Matthew 1:17: "So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations."
 - 2) Matthew 11:16-19: "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children."
 - 3) Matthew 12:38-42: "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here."
 - 4) Matthew 16:4: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed."
 - 5) Matthew 23:36: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."
 - b. The same word that is used in these verses is the word used in Matthew 24:34. The reference is to the whole multitude of men who are living at the same time.
 3. "The true key to the interpretation of this much disputed passage is found in the expression 'all these things,' repeated from the preceding verse. It must here have the same meaning as there; for an
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identical expression repeated in consecutive sentences always has the same meaning, except when something is introduced in the new connection to force upon it a different meaning. There is certainly nothing of the kind here" (McGarvey, p.212).

4. All the things Jesus has discussed in the preceding verses (3-33) will have taken place by the time "this generation" passes from earthly scenes into eternity. These words were spoken in the spring of A.D. 33; Jerusalem fell in A.D. 70, well within the time factor of one generation. The majority of the people who were living when Christ spoke these words were still alive in 70 A.D., even though many had died and many others had been born during that time frame.
 5. Many people have trouble with verses 29-31, but the same figures had already been used in the Old Testament to describe the overthrow of other nations and cities. Old Testament prophecies used these descriptions, and first century history verifies that events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem fit their similar use in these verses. And in view of the plain statement of verse 34, it would be most difficult to be consistent with its truth and understand the awesome pictures of verses 29-31 as still future from our day. As noted in the discussion of those verses, there are other passages which use similar terms in reference to the end of time, but in this context, they are used to depict the great tragedy of Judaism's demise. To be sure, the Jewish race will remain as a separate people until the end of time (Jer. 30:11; Num. 23:9), but Matthew 24 is not discussing that subject.
 6. A passage is to be taken literally unless there is clear evidence it is figurative.
- E. Verse 35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
1. The statement here shows at least two things: the earth is not eternal and the Lord's words are unshakable. In nature, the universe and the earth seem to be the most stable and permanent of all. But the Lord affirmed that these would not always be (Cf. 2 Pet. 3:10; Heb. 12:25-29). Paul described material things as temporal and the things which cannot be seen as eternal (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Genesis 8:22 implies that the earth will have a limited history ("while the earth remaineth").
 2. Just as surely as his words will never have an end, just that certain will the end of Jerusalem come as he had explained. They could depend on his pronouncements regarding the overthrow of the city.
- F. Notice some historical details describing the end of the temple and Jerusalem.
1. Titus gave order that the temple was not to be destroyed, but allowed to stand as an "ornament to their government while it continued" (Josephus, p.580). The outer gate had been set on fire prior to the general's order, so he now commanded that the fire be quenched. But the Jews attacked the soldiers who were sent to put out the fire, and a battle raged until the Jewish fighters retired into the inner court of the temple. "At which time one of the soldiers, without staying for any orders, and without any concern or dread upon him at so great an undertaking, and being hurried on by a certain divine fury, snatched somewhat out of the materials that were on fire, and being lifted up by another soldier, he set fire to a golden window, through which there was a passage to the rooms that were round about the holy house, on the north side of it" (ibid.).
 2. Although Titus took desperate measures to make his men put out the fire, they refused his orders. Their intense hatred for the Jews and their lust for the money they expected to find in the temple caused them to plunder and destroy it. Josephus says that Titus entered the Holy Place and found it to be superior to any such place he had seen and that the Jews who boasted about it had not exaggerated (ibid., p.580f). Christ had promised that the temple would be leveled; his word was fulfilled completely despite the efforts of the powerful Roman general to the contrary!
 3. Josephus calculated that there were in Jerusalem when the Roman army arrived about two million, seven hundred thousand, and two hundred people that were pure and holy. He did not include those who were diseased or otherwise ceremonially unclean (p.588).
 4. The entire city was destroyed with the exceptions of the three greatest towers and a part of city's wall. The former were left to show the world how greatly fortified and strong the city had been but which the mighty Roman Legions had reduced to ruins. The west wall was left as shelter for the garrison Titus left on the site. "...But for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground
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by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind" (ibid., p.589).

IX. MATTHEW 24:36: THAT DAY AND HOUR.

- A. Verse 36: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."
1. This verse quite obviously marks a turning point in the Lord's discussion. Having said in verse 34 that all the things he had announced beginning in verse 4 to verse 34 would be fulfilled before that generation passed on into eternity, and having given assurance that his word would not fail, he now declares that there was a notable day and hour in earth's history when Christ would return. The contrasting word "but" shows a marked difference between the subject of the preceding section and the one beginning here.
 2. In the previous statements the Lord spoke of "days" and "these days." But now he speaks in the singular: "day and hour."
 3. The general and specific signs given in the earlier section pointed to and identified for the Christians in Judea the nearing end of Jerusalem. It was observable and recognizable to them in order for them to be able to escape the area without any harm coming to them. But in this section there are no signs given to identify the nearing end of the world at the Lord's second coming.
 4. Many could know when Jerusalem was about to be destroyed, but only the Father knew when the end of time would be. "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Mark 13:32-33).
- B. The phrase "that day and hour" connects with "heaven and earth shall pass away" (vs. 35).
1. While they could know by the signs the time to flee from Judea, no one can know when the time is when heaven and earth shall pass away, i.e., the time of the Lord's return. The great lesson of this section is "watch and pray." If the time had been specified then this great lesson would have been nullified.
 2. The Bible often speaks of THAT day.
 - a. Matthew 7:22: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"
 - b. Matthew 11:22: "But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you."
 - c. Matthew 11:24: "But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."
 - d. Matthew 12:36: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."
 - e. 2 Timothy 1:12: "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."
 - f. 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 3. The second coming of Christ is the time meant; it will occasion the destruction of the heavens and earth and all things material; it will include the resurrection of the dead and the changing of the living; it will result in the great Judgment scene, which will be followed by the eternal destinies of us all.
 4. The Bible never speaks of the second coming and end of the world in the plural, but uses the singular "day" or "hour." The term "last days" is used in reference to the last dispensation of time between the cross and the second coming. The *last days* are the Christian Age; the *last day* is the end of time.
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- a. Isaiah 2:2: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." [When was the Lord's house (the church—1 Tim. 3:15) established?].
 - b. Acts 2:16-17: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."
 - c. Hebrews 1:1-2: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."
 - d. 1 Peter 1:20: "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."
 - e. 1 John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
5. When this last day will be is still a mystery (Mark 13:32-33). Christ had perfect understanding of both the Old and New Testaments; since he did not know when that day will be, it follows that the Bible does not reveal when it will be. Therefore, no man on earth today can identify that day. Those who say they know it are false teachers of the first rank.
 6. Some claim that it is only the day and hour that is not revealed. But this implies that we can know the week, month, year, decade, century, and millennium when the Lord will return. Who is willing to be specific in identifying the exact week, or the exact month, or the exact year? It is inconclusive to announce the millennium or century since we would not be alive to see the end of either period. Every person who has announced a time for his return has met with failure! We cannot know the hour, day, week, decade, century, or millennium of his return. Mark 13:32 says we cannot know the day and hour, and verse 33 says we cannot know the time at all! "Day and hour" is used interchangeably with "time."
 7. The various passages which describe the Lord's return to be "as a thief in the night" show that the time of it is hidden in the inscrutable counsel of God. See 2 Peter 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6. While the Savior was on earth, he did not know when that time would be, but now that he has re-assumed the fullness of his Godhead, and is not limited by the flesh in any way, he may know (Col. 2:9; John 5:20).
- C. This verse (36) does not describe the same time or events of verses 4-35.
1. If verse 36 is the same event as that described in verses 4-35, how can we reconcile the fact that Christ knew the precise details of the one and did not know when the other is to be?
 2. I once knew a man who became an atheist because he could not see the truth on this chapter; after carefully teaching him this chapter, his faith was restored. The truth is plain: Christ is answering two questions. In verses 4-35 he responds to the apostles' question about when the temple would be destroyed. In verses 36-51 he answers their questions about the signs of his coming and of the end of the world. It appears that the Lord used the destruction of Jerusalem as a *type* of the end of the world.
- X. **MATTHEW 24:37-41: HIS RETURN WILL BE AS THE COMING OF NOAH'S FLOOD.**
- A. Verses 37-39: "But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
1. Here the Lord draws a parallel between the second coming and the great flood. The common affairs of life were being conducted as usual until suddenly the deluge came and "took them all away." Marriage ceremonies were being planned and executed; people were eating and drinking; all of the ordinary activities were being conducted; sin was still being practiced. This was not the case during the days preceding the overthrow of Jerusalem, for there were turmoils, tribulations, fighting, starvation, and confusion. It was truly "a time that tried men's souls."
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2. The generation that perished in the flood suffered that penalty despite the warnings issued to them by Noah. The great patriarch was a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5). He obviously spoke to his generation, giving them warning about the impending flood, but they rejected this message of righteousness (Cf. Ps. 119:172).
3. The comparisons between the coming of the flood and the Lord's return are clear:
 - a. The flood came suddenly, there were no outward signs in nature of its approach, and human activities were normal, giving no indications of an imminent flood.
 - b. Normal human affairs were being pursued right up to the last.
 - c. No other such event had ever occurred in human history.
 - d. The only warning given came through the preaching of God's word.
 - e. "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." There will be no outward sign in nature to warn of his coming; human affairs will be going on as usual; no other such event has ever occurred in human history before; the only warning given is that which is issued through God's word on the subject.

Comparison of the Flood and the Second Coming

No signs in nature of the coming flood	No signs in nature of the coming of Christ
Normal human conduct being followed	Normal human conduct being followed
No universal flood ever before	No coming of Christ with fire ever before
Only warning was from God's word	Only warning is from God's word

- B. Verses 40-41: "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *women shall be grinding at the mill*; the one shall be taken, and the other left."
1. Here the Lord pictures the affairs of life being pursued when he suddenly makes his appearance. Two people will be working in the field, two women will be grinding at the mill: one of each pair will be taken and the other left. Thus, farmers will be doing their regular work; wives will be tending to their chores; children will be playing, people will be working, sinful conduct will still be practiced—and suddenly Christ will appear! The ancient method for grinding flour usually required two people, one to turn the stone half-way around and the other to complete the cycle.
 2. One will be taken and another will be left. This fits the picture given in other passages describing the Lord's return. The dead will be raised, the living will be changed, the saints will be caught up with the risen saints to meet Christ in the air; the world will be burned up; we all will be taken into the Judgment, with the righteous in one assembly and the unrighteous in another—separated then and forever! The one taken is to be in the gathering of the righteous; the one left is destined for that other group.
 - a. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

d. See also Matthew 25:31-46.

3. Notice that nothing is said here about anyone fleeing. There will be no place to which one may run; and there will be no possibility of escaping from the Lord, even though many will desire to do so.

XI. MATTHEW 24:42-51: WARNINGS TO WATCH AND PRAY.

A. Verses 42-44: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

1. These plain words from the Lord for his disciples to be watchful, is undergirded with the affirmation that we do not know when his coming shall be. If another statement was needed from the Lord to show that we cannot know when his coming will be, this statement would be sufficient. "The exhortation to watchfulness is based on the uncertainty of the day as declared in the previous paragraph and here repeated for the sake of emphasis: 'for you know not what day your Lord doth come.' Unlike the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, there is no sign by which its near approach will be certainly known" (McGarvey, pp.213f).
2. "The comparison between the coming of Jesus and that of a thief is the more striking from the dissimilarity between the two characters. There is but one point of comparison—the uncertainty of the time of their coming. As the goodman of the house, had he known what hour the thief would come, would have watched and have prevented his house from being broken into, so we, by watching for the coming of the Son of man, may prevent it from finding us unprepared" (ibid., pp.214).
3. Roy Deaver gave the following outline of the statements of this passage (p.34):
 - a. The fact of his coming.
 - b. The importance of watching.
 - c. The unexpectedness of his coming.
 - d. The suddenness of his coming.
 - e. The fact that proper preparation can be made.
 - f. The necessity of being ready.

B. Verses 45-51: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

1. The warning of preparedness is given in the form of a picture of an unfaithful servant. A faithful and wise servant is one who, having been given responsibilities by his master, is found to have been trustworthy in discharging those duties. When the master returns from a journey, and finding the servant busy doing his work, will reward the servant richly. But the servant is evil who says in his heart, "My master is long in returning." Thus, thinking he can do what he wills, he begins to mistreat the other servants, and eats and drinks with the drunkards. That servant will be found by his master in that state of rebellion, for he will return unexpectedly and punish him properly.
2. "In stating the punishment, Jesus passes from the figure to the reality, and merges the parable in the description: cutting him asunder (51) terminates the parable which has been itself almost a description, and the description begins with appointing him his portion with the hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. At this point it may be well to remind the reader that all the warnings in reference to his second coming, given by Jesus in the preceding as well as in the following divisions of this discourse, are equally applicable to our departure to meet him. Whether he first comes to us, or we first go to him, the result will be the same, for as we are at death we will be at his coming, seeing that it is concerning the deeds done in the body that we will be judged. (2 Cor. 5:10)"

(McGarvey, pp.214f).

3. "The 'weeping and the gnashing of teeth' are expressions used by Jesus to convey some idea of the anguish and despair of the condemned who shall be cast into the outer darkness" (Coffman, p.397).

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Types and Analogies of the Tabernacle

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. The Old Testament's laws and commands are not binding on people today.

1. But there are many things in the Old Testament which are of great interest and importance to everyone who wishes to serve God in the Christian Age: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).
2. And there are many types and shadows given in the Old Testament which are fulfilled in the New Testament. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1).

B. There are many New Testament truths illustrated by the various aspects of the Tabernacle.

1. This study deals with the beautifully clear, pictorial outline of certain things in the Christian system illustrated by the tabernacle. "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb. 8:1-6).
2. The Lord gave the design for the Tabernacle, the materials to be used, and all the significant details pertaining to its construction and its services: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25:40).
3. The Tabernacle was to be a representative dwelling place for God.
 - a. Exodus 25:8-9: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*."
 - b. 1 Kings 8:27: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"
 - c. Acts 17:24: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."
4. God met with men in the tabernacle: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel"(Ex. 25:22).
5. The church of Christ is the place where God meets with men today, and he dwells in the church indirectly.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 6:16-18: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
 - b. Ephesians 2:21-22: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."
 - c. 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself

in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

II. DISCUSSION:

A. The Outer Court is representative of the world.

1. The Israelites could enter the court, but since the average Hebrew was not a priest, he was not allowed to enter the Tabernacle proper. One had to have certain definite qualifications before he was permitted to enter the Holy Place.
2. Those who would enter God's true tabernacle today (the church), must be converted from the world, and lose the stain of sin.
 - a. Isaiah 6:1-3: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
 - b. Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
 - c. Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
 - d. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - e. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
 - f. Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
 - g. Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
3. No one could enter the Holy Place without meeting the qualifications and receiving the purification of priestly appointment, so no one can enter the True Tabernacle without meeting the qualifications of gospel obedience (faith, repentance, confession), and receiving the purification provided by the blood of Christ in baptism (Revelation 1:5).

B. The Altar of Burnt Offerings is representative of the Sacrifice of Christ.

1. The Altar was used in offering up the many sacrifices which God commanded Israel to offer.
 - a. Leviticus 9:7: "And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded."
 - b. Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul."
2. The sacrifices included the offering of the blood of animals.
3. The Israelites provided the sacrifices, which were costly to the individuals.
4. Without the shedding of the blood of the animals offered, there was no means of their approaching God. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).
5. The Antitype is in the Lord's sacrifice of himself for the sins of all men.
 - a. Romans 5:8-9: "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."
 - b. Hebrews 2:9: "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."
- c. Hebrews 7:27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."
 - d. Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - e. Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
 - f. Hebrews 10:16-19: "This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."
 - g. Hebrews 10:22: "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."
- C. The Laver has its counterpart in the New Testament System.
1. The laver was a basin containing water: "And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations" (Ex. 30:18).
 2. The Type involves the following particulars.
 - a. God specified its location: Between the tabernacle and altar: "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein" (Exodus 30:18).
 - b. Those entering the tabernacle were to lay aside their old clothes before washing and putting on the priestly garments.
 - c. Those entering the tabernacle were to wash before entering lest they die.
 - 1) Exodus 29:4: "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water."
 - 2) Exodus 30:19-20: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD."
 - d. After washing and before entering, they were to put on their priestly garments prior to assuming their priestly duties (Exodus 29:4ff).
 - e. They had to be ceremonially pure before they could perform their priestly services acceptably: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Ex. 30:17-21).
 3. The Antitype holds true to the pattern.
 - a. God specified the location of baptism: between Christ's sacrifice and salvation.
 - 1) Acts 2:36-38: "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? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of
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you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

- 2) 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."
- b. We baptize rebellious children of the devil; they are rebelling against Satan and desire to obey God sincerely.
- c. We must lay aside our practices of sin (by repenting) before we can be washed.
 - 1) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
 - 4) Colossians 3:8-9: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds."
- d. The impurities (guilt) of sin are removed in baptism.
 - 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 2) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, 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."
- e. After this washing, we put on our spiritual garments.
 - 1) Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - 2) Colossians 3:15-20: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."
- f. We are now spiritually pure and our services can be offered acceptably: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:5,9).

D. The Holy Place typifies the church of Christ.

1. Bible statements:

- a. Acts 15:16-17: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

- b. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are."
 - c. 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 - d. Hebrews 9:7-11: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building."
2. There are several items of significance pertaining to the Type.
 - a. There was only one entrance.
 - b. Definite qualifications had to be met before one was authorized to enter the Holy Place: he had to be of the right lineage and age.
 - 1) Exodus 28:1: "And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."
 - 2) Numbers 3:10: "And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."
 - 3) Numbers 4:1-3: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation."
 - c. Only those who had been washed were permitted to enter.
 - d. Those who entered did not do so merely for their own pleasure and benefit; they entered to serve God according to his revealed will: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*" (Heb. 9:6).
 - e. Those qualified to enter the Holy Place were afforded the privilege of eating the showbread and burning incense upon the altar.
 - f. Those who were in the Holy Place had the benefits furnished by the candlestick.
 - g. The only entrance into the Most Holy Place was through the Holy Place.
 3. The church is the great antitype.
 - a. There is only one entrance: Obedience to the gospel which culminates in baptism at which point the Lord adds us to the church.
 - 1) Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - 2) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - b. The qualifications required before one can enter the Lord's church are: faith, repentance, confession of faith in Christ, and baptism for the remission of sins. Underlying this process is the fervent, loving commitment to serve the Lord.
 - c. One must be washed from his sins.
 - 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
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- 2) 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 3) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
- d. While there are immeasurable blessings and privileges of being in Christ, yet we are not in the church merely for our pleasure; we are here to serve.
- 1) Ephesians 2:8-10: "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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
 - 2) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
- e. Only those who are faithful members of the Lord's church have the privilege of eating the Lord's supper and praying.
- 1) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*."
 - 2) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
 - 3) Luke 22:16-20: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
 - 4) John 9:31: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine
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himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

- f. Faithful members of the Lord's church see by the light of God's word.
- 1) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 2) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 5) Hebrews 4:12: "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."
 - 6) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 7) 2 Peter 1:1-11: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - 8) 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
- g. Only by going through the church can any accountable person have hope of entering heaven.
- 1) Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - 3) Matthew 16:17-18: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:24: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

- 5) 2 Peter 3:5-11: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness."

E. The Candlestick depicts the Word of God.

1. The thick tenting material closed out all the natural light, dust, and rain. The candlestick of the Tabernacle was to burn continually, and furnished the only light for the Holy Place: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually" (Lev. 24:1-4).
2. The Word of God is the only light needed in the Antitype, the Lord's church.
 - a. All man-made precepts, commandments, and creeds are specifically excluded. We must insulate the church from all error!
 - 1) Mark 7:7-13: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."
 - 2) 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."
 - 3) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - b. God's word gives light.
 - 1) Psalms 119:105: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
 - 2) Psalms 119:130: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."
 - 3) Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 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."
 - 5) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine,

for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

3. While we draw light and strength from the word, we must also be proclaimers and defenders of the word.
 - a. Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - b. Romans 1:14-16: "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."
 - c. 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 - d. Jude 3: "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."
 4. Our lives, words, and attitudes are to be reflectors of the light of the word of God.
 - a. Matthew 5:14-16: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - b. Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
- F. The Altar of Incense has its counterpart in the Lord's Church.
1. Exodus 30:1-9: "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: *of* shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits *shall be* the height thereof: the horns thereof *shall be* of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the veil that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon."
 2. A morning and evening ceremony was held each day in obedience to God's decree that this should be done perpetually. As the priests were burning the incense in the Holy Place, the people would be outside the tabernacle praying.
 3. Prayer is the counterpart of this service in the gospel system.
 - a. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts 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 saints" (Rev. 5:8). In John's vision, the golden vials full of odors (incense) represented the prayers of the saints.
 - b. Prayer is a perpetual privilege and obligation for members of the Lord's church.
 - 1) Matthew 6:6-15: "But 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. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

- 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."
- 3) 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

G. The Table of Showbread has its counterpart in the Lord's Church.

1. This table contained twelve loaves of bread which were replaced every sabbath.
 - a. The priests were to eat the loaves that were replaced. "Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute" (Lev. 24:3-9).
 - b. Only the priests were authorized to eat this bread.
2. The Lord's Supper is the counterpart in the church of Christ.
 - a. Every first day of the week, the saints come together and eat this supper in remembrance of Christ. It is a perpetual command.
 - 1) Acts 20:7: "And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
 - b. Only Christians have the right to partake of it.
 - 1) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to

offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ...But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

- 2) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
- 3) Luke 22:16-20: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
- 4) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

H. The Veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place has its counterparts.

1. The Veil is described in Exodus 26:31-37 as a very costly and beautiful curtain: "And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim *wood* overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold, upon the four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy *place*. And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars *of* shittim *wood*, and overlay them with gold, *and* their hooks *shall be of* gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them."
 - a. It was made of fine twined linen of cunning work and dyed with the costly colors of blue, scarlet, and purple.
 - b. Only the High Priest could go beyond the veil, and that only on the Day of Atonement when he offered the blood of the atoning sacrifice for all: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7; cf. Lev. 16).
 - c. The Veil concealed the items in the Most Holy Place: the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat.
2. The Veil, and its being rent at the Lord's death, depicts several significant things.
 - a. It symbolizes the mysteries of God's eternal plan which were unrevealed until the New Testament

was given.

- 1) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
 - 3) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- b. It symbolizes for us death by which we leave this world and enter eternity. Its having been rent depicts the great truth that Christ, by his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, has won victory for us over death.
- 1) Isaiah 25:7-8: "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:20-22: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:55-57: "O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 4) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
- c. The rending of the veil at the death of Christ symbolizes the abrogation of the Old Covenant.
- 1) Matthew 27:50-51: "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
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- 3) Hebrews 9:7-10: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation."
- d. It symbolized the separation between God and men, and the need for a mediator which role the Levitical high priest filled. The rending of the veil proclaims that all men are on equal standing with God and need no human priest as mediator.
 - 1) Matthew 23:8: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - 3) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
 - 4) Revelation 1:6: "and he made us *to be* a kingdom, *to be* priests unto his God and Father; to him *be* the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (ASV).
- e. Its rending symbolizes the fact that Christ, our High Priest, is in heaven, and has offered the atoning sacrifice for us: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:6-17).
- f. The veil being rent pictures the fact that the way into heaven has now been opened.
 - 1) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
 - 2) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, 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."

I. The Most Holy Place represents Heaven.

1. The Ark of the Covenant rested there.
 - a. It contained the tables of the law, Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna; the golden censer of Hebrews 9:4 is likely the one from the Holy Place which was taken into the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement (Lev. 16:12-14).
 - 1) Leviticus 16:12-14: "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times."
 - 2) Hebrews 9:4: "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant."
 - b. It was covered by the Mercy Seat made of pure gold.
 - c. It was in this place, at the mercy seat, that God met with his people: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (Ex. 25:22).
 - d. No earthly light was in this place; the glory of God was sufficient light.
2. The Antitype is Heaven itself.
 - a. The ark of the covenant and the tables of the law suggest the New Covenant.
 - 1) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 2) Hebrews 8:7-13: "For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."
 - b. The manna suggests Christ who is the bread of life: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 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 6:47-51).

- c. The mercy seat suggests our Advocate and Mediator in Heaven—Christ: "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*" (1 John 2:1-2).
- d. The Most Holy Place itself is Heaven.
 - 1) Hebrews 6:19-20: "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
 - 2) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
 - 3) Hebrews 9:24: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."
3. There is no need for the sun, moon, or other light; the glory of God the Father and of the Son is sufficient: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23).

III. CONCLUSION:

A. God gave the details pertaining the building and services of the Tabernacle.

1. He commanded the placing of the furniture and the other arrangements thereof.
2. The showbread was eaten and the incense was burned inside, not outside, the Tabernacle.
 - a. Leviticus 24:1-9: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute."
 - b. God warned that all things were to be according to his plan.
 - 1) Exodus 25:40: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount."
 - 2) Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."

B. Those who are in Christ do not need baptism.

1. Some try to move baptism and put it in the church, and speak of it as "Christian" baptism. But it is not for a Christian, but in order to become a Christian.
2. The Laver was outside the Tabernacle; the priests had to wash there before they were allowed to enter the Holy Place. Baptism puts one into the church (into Christ).
 - a. 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."
 - b. Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - c. Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."

C. On entering the Holy Place (the church of Christ), one is prepared to serve.

1. We are not members of the body of Christ merely for our own pleasure and profit, but to serve God and our fellowman.
 - a. Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - c. Ephesians 2:8-10: "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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
 2. Our obligations are ordained by the God of heaven:
 - a. To worship of God: "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. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).
 - b. To live pure lives: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).
 - c. To spread the gospel: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).
 - d. To defend the faith: "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" (Jude 3; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7c; 2 Cor. 2:17).
 3. Thus do we prepare for Heaven!
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Zedekiah—The King Who Became A Blind Slave

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. To understand King Zedekiah, we need to see him in his historical setting.

1. God developed the nation of Israel by choosing Abraham, who begat Isaac, who begat Jacob, who begat twelve sons. From these few individuals, God was able, in a relatively short time, to develop the great nation of Israel. They grew into a populous progeny of Abraham while they were serving in the cruel slavery imposed on them by the Egyptians.
2. God used Moses to deliver the Israelites from their bondage; he led them through the forty long years in the wilderness. During the harsh circumstances in Egypt and in the wilderness, they were welded together with a bond that has withstood the ravages of thirty-five hundred years.

B. Joshua had the privilege and duty of leading Israel across the flooded Jordan River valley into Canaan.

1. In the years that followed, he guided them in the wars against the pagans of Canaan, and established them as a full-fledged nation in their own land, having their God-given Law.
2. For about three hundred years, Israel was guided politically and militarily by a succession of fifteen judges. This was a very treacherous time for Israel. At the first, they served God faithfully, but they allowed the next generation to grow up without proper instruction; the nation soon fell into apostasy. God sent punishment upon them by allowing an enemy to afflict them. They cried for deliverance; God gave them a judge to effect that result.
3. As the book of Judges progresses, this pattern continues—a period of faithfulness would be followed with apostasy, which resulted in affliction, which caused them to cry for help; God would send a deliverer.

C. Israel finally reached a point in their weakness that they demanded a king.

1. 1 Samuel 8:5-7: "And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."
2. After sternly warning them of the consequences of their demand, God permitted them to have a king. Saul was made king and reigned forty years. At the first he was humble and submissive to God's will, but later became arrogant, jealous, and murderous.
3. Following the death of Saul, at his own hand (1 Sam. 31), David ascended the throne, and ruled in Israel for the next forty years.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. Zedekiah Was The Last Earthly King In The Lineage Of King David.

1. The royal lineage of David flows through Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Of the nineteen rulers who reigned after Solomon, only six could be listed as good kings: Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah.
2. Zedekiah's Background.
 - a. The powerful and unrighteous influence of Manasseh [697-642 B.C.] stands in the background of Zedekiah. This wicked king filled Jerusalem with blood (2 Kings 21:16), worshiped the host of heaven (2 Kings 21:4), promoted idolatry (2 Kings 21:3-5), and caused his son to pass through the fire (2 Kings 21:6). Uninspired sources tell us that Manasseh had Isaiah sawn asunder (cf. Heb. 13:37). His sins were so intense and awful that the nation of Judah was contaminated beyond retrieve. He led them so deeply into sin that they were worse than the pagan Canaanites of Joshua's time (2 Chron. 33:9). Toward the end of Manasseh's reign, he was captured by the Assyrians, who carried him to Babylon (2 Chron. 33:11). In captivity, he was humbled by his

- affliction and made supplication to Jehovah, and was restored to his throne in Jerusalem. He removed the idols and altars, repaired the altar of the Lord, and offered the proper sacrifices (2 Chron. 33:15-16). But his good work at the end could not compensate for the evil of his previous activities—he could not change the corrupted hearts of his people (cf. 2 Chron. 33:17). His reign spanned fifty-five years—the longest of any of the kings of Israel and Judah.
- b. His son Amon [642-640 B.C.] followed him on the throne. Amon reversed his father's reforms, and did evil more and more. His servants conspired to assassinate him during his second year of rule (2 Chron. 33:21-25).
 - c. The powerful and righteous influence of Josiah [639-608 B.C.] stands in the background of Zedekiah. This youthful son of Amon, Josiah, mounted the throne when he was only eight years of age (2 Kings 22:1). His righteous reign extended over thirty-one years. The inspired historian reports that Josiah did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left in the sight of the Lord (2 Kings 22:2). During his rule, as repairs were being made to the temple, the Book of the Law of God was found. When Josiah learned how far the nation had departed from God's Law, he rent his clothes (2 Kings 22:10-11), and resolved to begin a great restoration. Josiah was slain during a battle with the Egyptian army (2 Kings 23:29-30); he was succeeded on the throne by his twenty-three-year old son Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:31). Jehoahaz did that which was evil in God's sight and lost his throne after a reign of only three months (2 Kings 23:32-33). Pharaoh-Necho removed Jehoahaz from power, and replaced him on the throne with his twenty-five-year-old brother Jehoiakim. Jehoahaz died in Egypt.
 - d. The evil influence of Jehoiakim [608-597 B.C.] stands in the background of Zedekiah. Jehoiakim was made king by Pharaoh-Necho, and was subjected to heavy tribute, which he exacted from the people of Judah (2 Kings 23:34-35). He is described by the historian as an evil-doer in the sight of Jehovah, and that he did according to his wicked predecessors; he did not follow the righteous practices of Josiah, his father; he was more like Manasseh (his great-grandfather) and Amon (his grandfather). Jehoiakim treated the prophets with malice. He was filled with wrath against Urijah, who prophesied against Jerusalem. He slew Urijah (Jer. 26:20-23). His most prominent outrage was his flagrant destruction of a copy of God's Word (Jer. 36:20-32). He died after a reign of eleven years, at the age of thirty-six (2 Kings 24:1-7). Some dire prophecies were given about Jehoiakim, which undoubtedly were fulfilled. "Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (Jer. 22:18-19; cf. 36:30). He was replaced on the throne by his son Jehoiachin.
3. The report of the short reign of Jehoiachin is given in 2 Kings 24:8-16. He was only 18 years old when he became king; his reign, which was characterized by the same kind of evil done by his father, lasted only three months and ten days. Jeremiah issued a prophecy against Jehoiachin, bluntly stating that he would remain childless, and that none of his seed would sit on the throne (Jer. 22:30).
 - a. Jehoiachin was also known as Jechoniah, or by the shortened form, Coniah (Jer. 22:24). He did not learn the positive lessons taught by Josiah; he did not learn from the mistakes of his father. His epitaph is simply that "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; Jehoiachin went out to him, taking his mother, his servants, his princes, and officers (2 Kings 24:10-12). Nebuchadnezzar had first taken Jerusalem in 606 B.C., early in the reign of Jehoiakim.
 - b. The time now was 597 B.C. Jehoiachin had occupied the throne for a mere three months, when Nebuchadnezzar came a second time against the city. Jehoiachin went out to the camp of the Babylonians, perhaps hoping that his surrender might lessen the penalty. He may have expected to be allowed to continue on the throne, a vassal to Nebuchadnezzar, but in keeping with the prophecy of Jeremiah (22:24-30), both Jehoiachin and his mother were carried to Babylon.
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- c. The same fate befell his servants, princes, and officers. Jehoiachin was not treated with any honor, but as a rebel. He was made a prisoner, and led away into captivity. References are made to his stay in Babylon elsewhere.
 - 1) 2 Kings 25:27-30: "And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon; And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance *was* a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."
 - 2) Ezekiel 1:1-2: "Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, as I *was* among the captives by the river of Chebar, *that* the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth *day* of the month, which *was* the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity."

B. Zedekiah Is Made King.

1. "And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah *was* twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon" (2 Kings 24:17-20).
2. Nebuchadnezzar placed Jehoiachin's uncle on the throne. Zedekiah was the brother of Jehoiakim (Jehoiachin's father). This son of Josiah was twenty-one years old at the time he began his eleven-year reign.
3. Zedekiah reigned over the remnant of the Jews who had been left in the land after the Babylonian assault of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. The tenor of his reign was in keeping with that of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, who had imitated the worst traits of Manasseh.
4. The leaders of other states in Palestine, who were also in servitude to Babylon, approached Zedekiah, seeking to influence him to join them in a rebellion against their overlords. With this alliance, and with the help of the great army of Egypt, they thought they could remove the Chaldean domination (Jer. 27:1-11)

C. Nebuchadnezzar Besieges Jerusalem.

1. "And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it: and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth *day* of the *fourth* month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land" (2 Kings 25:1-3; cf. Jer. 39:1; 52:4-6).
2. The reason for this assault was Zedekiah's rebellion against the rule of Babylon: "For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon" (2 Kings 24:20). This military operation by the Babylonians ended the monarchy in Judah, just as the conquest of Samaria in 722 B.C. ended that monarchy and kingdom.
3. The first time Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians was in 606 B.C., which is described in 2 Kings 24:1-2. The second assault of Jerusalem by Babylon was in 597 B.C., which is reported in 2 Kings 24:10-12.
 - a. 2 Kings 24:1-2: "In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD,

which he spake by his servants the prophets."

- b. 2 Kings 24:10-12: "At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign."

4. The year of the present invasion was 586 B.C. This siege of Jerusalem began during the 9th year of Zedekiah's reign, on the 10th day of the 10th month of that year (588 B.C.). The siege lasted until the eleventh year of Zedekiah, when the city was taken on the ninth day of the fourth month of his reign (cf. Jer. 39:2). During this 18-month period, the Egyptian army failed in an attempt to aid Judah (Jer. 37:5-12). The citizens resisted until they ran out of food and were no longer able to continue the struggle. The Babylonians gained entrance into city and captured or killed the people.

D. Jerusalem Falls and Zedekiah Is Captured.

1. "And the city was broken up, and all the men of war *fled* by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees *were* against the city round about:) and *the king* went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon" (2 Kings 25:4-7; cf. Jer. 39:3-5).
2. While part of the Babylonian army pursued Zedekiah, the rest of the invasion force began the destruction of Jerusalem. Zedekiah and his soldiers were overtaken in the valley of the Jordan, near Jericho. The king was captured and the remnants of his army were scattered. In the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar had set up an encampment at Riblah, in Syria. Zedekiah was brought to him there to receive judgment.
3. Nebuchadnezzar's verdict was that the sons of Zedekiah should be slain in his presence. When this harsh penalty had been executed, Zedekiah's eyes were put out, he was bound with brazen fetters, and carried to Babylon. The last sight he ever saw on earth was the execution of his sons! Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he ascended Judah's throne; he was in the eleventh year of his reign when the Babylonians captured him, being about thirty-two years of age at the time. His sons would only be teenagers at the most.
4. Ezekiel had predicted that he would go to Babylon, but would not see it, even though he would die there. "My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon *to* the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there" (Ezek. 12:13).
5. The harshness of the punishment is obvious. The Babylonians meant for the last thing that Zedekiah should see on earth was the death of his beloved sons. He was himself imprisoned in Babylon until his death: "Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death" (Jer. 52:11).
6. "The punishment pronounced upon Zedekiah was the merited reward of the breach of his oath, and his hardening himself against the counsel of the Lord which was announced to him by Jeremiah during the siege, that he should save not only his own life, but also Jerusalem from destruction, by a voluntary submission to the Chaldeans, whereas by obstinate resistance he would bring an ignominious destruction upon himself, his family, the city, and the whole people (Jer. 38:17ff; 32:5; 34:3ff)." [Keil, C.F. & Delitzsch, F., *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Kings*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1968, p.514.].

E. Jerusalem Is Ravaged And Spoiled.

1. "And in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, which *is* the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the

houses of Jerusalem, and every great *man's* house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that *were with* the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people *that were* left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land *to be* vinedressers and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brazen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the firepans, and the bowls, *and* such things as *were* of gold, *in* gold, and of silver, *in* silver, the captain of the guard took away" (2 Kings 25:8-15).

2. About a month later, following the fall of Judah, Nebuzaradan came to Jerusalem to oversee the destruction of the temple and the city, and the disposition of the people remaining. He ordered the burning of the temple, the king's palace, and the houses of every great man. Apparently all the major houses were destroyed. "On the site afterwards occupied by King Herod the Great's palace stood the royal residence of the kings of Judah, which was destroyed when the Jews were driven into captivity. His office as captain of the guard (Gen. 37:36; 39:1) called him to execute the awards of justice on criminals; and hence, although not engaged in the siege of Jerusalem (Jer. 39:13), Nebuzaradan was despatched to raze the city, to plunder the temple, to lay both in ruins, demolish the fortifications, and transport the inhabitants to Babylon." [Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical* Vol. 1, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1990, p.450].
3. The great walls of Jerusalem were broken down, leaving the ruins of the city exposed to anyone who wanted to intrude. Years later, Nehemiah would be moved to request permission from the Persian ruler, whom he served in captivity, to travel to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls.
4. The people who had been captured in Jerusalem, along with those who had surrendered to the Babylonians during the siege, were deported to Babylonia. The poor people of the land, who knew how to dress vines and tend to other crops, were left in the land to continue that work. The land was too productive to be left entirely vacant. While the city was under siege and being razed by the Babylonians, certain enemies of Israel were pictured prophetically as encouraging its destruction. "Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof" (Psm. 137:7). Jeremiah lamented, "*Is it* nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted *me* in the day of his fierce anger" (Lam. 1:12).
5. This was a dark day for the cause of God: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah *is* like unto all the heathen" (Ezek. 25:8). All of these tragedies could have been prevented: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye" (Ezek. 18:31-32).

F. Valuable Lessons From The Story Of Zedekiah.

1. We learn the importance of keeping our word. Zedekiah has sworn with an oath that he would serve the Babylonians. He did not live up to that promise. "And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel" (2 Chron. 36:13).
 - a. "Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these *things mean?* tell *them*, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon; And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land: That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up,

- but* that by keeping of his covenant it might stand. But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such *things*? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered? *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place *where* the king *dwelleth* that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, *even* with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Neither shall Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons: Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these *things*, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; *As* I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me. And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken *it*" (Ezek. 17:11-21).
- b. Consistently throughout the Bible, God's people are called on to keep their promises and pay their vows. Christians must be true to their promises; their word must be so inviolate that those who know them, know that anything they say can be trusted.
 - c. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better *is it* that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay" (Eccl. 5:4-5).
 - d. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25).
2. We learn that we ought to depend on God, not on the feeble arm of man.
 - a. Zedekiah was approached by some of his neighbors, all of whom were under the domination of Babylon, seeking his entrance into a conspiracy to throw off the yoke of the Chaldeans (Jer. 27:1-11). Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon, and sought an alliance with Egypt, depending on that southern neighbor to help deliver him from the Chaldeans. God warned him that the Egyptians could not help him: "Neither shall Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons" (Ezek. 17:17). The Babylonians invaded Palestine and set Jerusalem under a siege. Pharaoh came with his army, but was forced to return home, apparently without a fight. Israel was left alone.
 - b. When Judah showed their unwillingness to repent, God decreed their punishment—enslavement in Babylonia. No alliance with an earthly power could prevent this penalty. "Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire" (Jer. 37:7-8).
 - c. God is our only real help. "God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Psm. 46:1-3). "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). "...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).
 - d. Many today think that the mother of Jesus is able to help them. Mary, as good a woman as she was, needed the blood of Christ for her own salvation. She was included in the statement that, "all have sinned and come short" (cf. Rom. 3:23). Mary cannot help us; no departed saint can help us; there is only one Mediator between God and man—Christ Jesus!
 3. We may learn that humility is highly-valued in God's sight.
 - a. Zedekiah refused to humble himself before Jehovah: "And he did *that which* was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, *and* humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet *speaking* from the
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- mouth of the LORD" (2 Chron. 36:12). If he had submitted humbly to God's will, his future would have been much brighter. Humility on our part exalts us in God's sight.
- b. "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3).
 - c. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas. 4:10).
 - d. "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:5-6).
4. We learn that we reap what we sow.
- a. "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him" (Prov. 26:27).
 - b. "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him" (Eccl. 10:8).
 - c. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).
 - d. Ahab and Jezebel had wreaked spiritual havoc on ancient Israel. The tragic story of how they had to face the consequences of their sinful conduct is reported in 1 Kings 21-23 and 2 Kings 9.
 - e. Zedekiah followed the wicked practices of his brother Jehoiakim. God will not allow sin forever to go unpunished. In many cases, just punishment is meted out in this life, upon the guilty; in every case, the impenitent will face the due penalty of their sins in the next world.
 - f. Samson thought that his great strength was forever his; after telling Delilah that his strength depended on his maintaining his Nazaritic vows, which included the prohibition against cutting his hair, she cut his hair, thus depriving him of his strength. He awoke from sleep, shook himself, and went forth to fight the Philistines, *not knowing that the Lord had departed from him* (Judg. 16:20). He lost his sight, his freedom, and his life.
5. We learn that the influence of sin can be disastrous.
- a. Israel learned that lesson to their dismay in the sin of Achan (Josh. 6-7). Clear instructions were given that they were to take nothing for themselves from the spoils of Jericho. Achan disobeyed, taking certain desirable items from the city.
 - b. This sin led to Israel's defeat at Ai (Josh. 7). The reason for their defeat is specifically shown to be sin in the camp: "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put *it* even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you" (Josh. 7:11-12).
 - c. Zedekiah's sinful situation led to the persecution of Jeremiah, an innocent prophet of God.
 - 1) "And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people. And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah, *It is false*; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison. When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon, and into the cabins, and Jeremiah had remained there many days" (Jer. 37:11-16).
 - 2) "Then Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and Jucal the son of
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Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live. Thus saith the LORD, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it. Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt. Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he *is* in your hand: for the king *is* not *he that* can do *any* thing against you. Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire" (Jer. 38:1-6).

- d. Sin spreads. The leaven of sin affects others (cf. 1 Cor. 5:6). We reap what we sow; we can reap more than we sow; we reap for longer than we sow; and others reap from our sowing. David's sin affected not only himself and Bathsheba, but Uriah, the infant, his family, and the nation of Israel (2 Sam. 11-18). A young man lived an immoral life. He later married, and he and his good wife soon were blessed with a baby. But the baby had a terrible affliction. The doctor called the young man into the baby's hospital room, and asked him whether he had lived in immorality. The man admitted the charge. The doctor pointed to the baby's twisted spine, and predicted that it could not have a proper mind, and could never live a normal life, and told the young man that the little baby's condition was due to the father's immoral life. The AIDS epidemic is traceable to immoral conduct. The little babies born to drug-addicted mothers are in that condition due to the mothers' sinful conduct.
 - e. Godliness can also have far-reaching effects for good.
 - 1) Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) Philippians 2:14-16: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
 - 3) 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
6. We learn that God hates sin.
- a. "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" (Prov. 6:16-19).
 - b. Why did God drive out the original inhabitants of Canaan and give land to Israel? Because of their iniquity (Gen. 15:13-16). The Canaanites were to be dealt with harshly, when the time came, because they were sinful and impenitent.
 - c. Why did God allow the Babylonians to conquer Jerusalem, destroy the temple, devastate the city, kill many citizens, bring horrible conditions upon the population, and cause a large number of them to be carried into captivity? They had gone into sin, even to surpass the evil the Canaanites had done.
 - d. What if we turn against truth? What if we quit trying to do right? What if we turn inward on

- ourselves (as individuals or as a congregation)?
7. We learn that rebellion against duly constituted authority is wrong.
 - a. Zedekiah rebelled against the Babylonians, the agent of God's punishment upon sinful Israel.
 - b. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. 13:1-7).
 - c. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Pet. 2:13-15).
 8. God means what he says.
 - a. He warned Israel that He would punish them if they strayed from His Word; they strayed and paid the awesome penalty—tribute, invasion, siege, capture, destruction of their way of life, the loss of their national treasures, the slaughter of many of their people, and the enslavement in Babylon.
 - b. God means what he says to people today, in every command, instruction, truth, promise, and warning.
 9. God knows the future.
 - a. He is able to know the past and the future better than any man (or all men together) can know the present.
 - b. He knew precisely what would befall Judah; He warned that the Babylonians would come, that Egypt could offer them no help, that the city would fall, and that the people could be enslaved.
 - c. He also instructed Jeremiah to redeem a certain property, thus showing that the people would be able to return to their homeland at the proper time (Jer. 37).
 - d. God knew and related to Zedekiah that he would die in Babylon, but that he would not see that great city (Ezek. 12:13; cf. Jer. 32:4). This is tantamount to stating that he would lose his sight (cf. 2 Kings 25:7).
 10. Leaders have grave responsibilities.
 - a. Israel's leaders let them down: "And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe *be* to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: *but* ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up *that which was* broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because *there is* no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD" (Ezek. 34:1-7).
 - b. Elders have heavy responsibilities: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their*
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conversation....Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:7,17).

11. One can go so far into rebellion against God that it is virtually impossible for him to return.
 - a. "But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, **till there was no remedy**" (2 Chron. 36:16).
 - b. "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. 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. For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:44-46).
 - c. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:18-19).
 - d. "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; **having their conscience seared with a hot iron**" (1 Tim. 4:1-2).
 - e. "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).
 - f. "Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:23-31).
12. The innocent suffer evil consequences from the wrong-doing of the wicked. Jeremiah suffered greatly because of the wickedness of the Israelite hierarchy (Jer. 37:11-16; 38:1-6). The sufferings of the innocent can only be fully known by the infinite mind of the Almighty.

III. CONCLUSION.

A. God Permitted Israel To Have A King.

1. It was not in God's plan for Israel to have an earthly king, but when they demanded a regal ruler from among their own ranks, he permitted them to have Saul as their first king. After his forty-year reign, which ended in tragedy, God chose David to be his successor. Despite some serious blunders, David was a great king. His son Solomon followed him as king. Solomon's reign was characterized by great national success, although he fell victim to sin in his personal life.
2. After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam took the reins of government, and through foolishly heeding the unkempt counsel of his younger advisors, took some steps which led to a great division in the nation. While he ruled over the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, Jeroboam formed a separate nation (the Northern Kingdom of Israel), comprised of the other ten tribes.

B. Zedekiah's penalty was supreme.

1. He lost his sons. He lost his throne. He lost his nation. He lost his eyesight. He lost his freedom. He lost his comfort.
2. "Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death" (Jer. 52:11).
3. "And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon" (2 Kings 25:7). "The Assyrians' captives are usually represented as bound hand and foot—the two hands secured by one chain, the two feet by another. According to Jewish tradition Zedekiah was, like other slaves, forced to work in a mill at Babylon. Jeremiah tells us that he was kept in prison until he died (Jer 52:11)."⁴ He was condemned to die as a prisoner in a foreign land.

C. We have the privilege of learning from the mistakes of those who lived in the past.

1. If we ignore the errors of the past, or if we think we are so much stronger than they were that we could not fall into the same error, we are bound to stumble. This is true of individuals, of congregations, of societies, and of nations. In His wisdom, God placed in the Bible countless stories and examples, along with many positive commands and instructions, as well as warnings, to keep us from plunging into sin. Zedekiah's experiences offer an object lesson for us all. There are many other such examples.
2. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).
3. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted....Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:6,11).

D. We are living under a much better Covenant—the glorious Gospel of the Son of God!

1. Our benefits, blessings, advantages, and information vastly surpasses that possessed by anyone prior to the Gospel Age.
 2. "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).
 3. "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).
 4. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 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*." (Heb. 2:1-3).
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The Bible Doctrine of Church Discipline

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The title implies that church discipline is a Bible subject.

1. Our study shall establish this fact, as we investigate the subject.
2. If it is a Bible doctrine, it is the will of God expressed on the subject.
3. By church discipline, reference is to the Lord's church, not to some denomination.
4. By discipline, we mean that plan or process by which erring members of the Lord's church are corrected, especially because of misconduct.

B. By definition, discipline falls under two headings.

1. Preventive Discipline. This is done through teaching and training. It tends to prevent Christians from straying from the way of holiness by instilling God's will in their minds.
 - a. Matthew 28:20: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - b. Acts 20:20,26-27: "*And* how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house...Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."
 - c. 2 Timothy 4:2-3: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."
2. Corrective Discipline. This is the plan or process by which an erring Christian is shown his sins and encouraged to turn from them. If he will not repent, withdrawal of fellowship is invoked. This study deals with Corrective Discipline.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The need for discipline is obvious.

1. It is needed in every home. In the modern American home, there seems to be too little time for positive training or for corrective discipline. We are presently harvesting the consequences of permissiveness and lack of control on the part of many parents.
 - a. Children who are brought up without respect for parental authority are not apt to respect the authority of the nation, the school, or the Bible.
 - b. Adding to the problem is the abuse some parents and others inflict upon young people, which in turn causes laws to be passed restricting parental discipline.
2. It is needed in the school. No doubt school officials have abused some rebellious students in the past, but it is certain that the vast majority of students who were disciplined were made better people, and others learned from their discipline.
3. It is needed in the nation. In our time, we have seen many laws relaxed, which has resulted in an increase in crime. No one wants a repressive government, but neither does anyone want to live in a society where law and order is not enforced.
4. It is needed in the church. For twenty years or more across our great brotherhood, concerted efforts have been raised against the authority of elders in the local congregation. One purpose of this effort was to weaken opposition to innovations, modernism, and liberalism which some were seeking to impose on the many. Godly, strong elders had to be removed, or have their authority weakened or eliminated.
 - a. As long as the preacher and elders were sound in the faith, and were aware of the current movements within the church, the local congregation where they served was insulated against error. But when the preacher was scripturally weak (but have a good personality), he could influence the eldership and members; when there was an unsound elder, he could undermine the influence of the

- godly men in the leadership.
- b. When unsound men rule in a congregation, the apostasy of the majority of the members is assured. Unless preventive and corrective Bible discipline are exercised, the congregation will most assuredly fall away into sin and error. If sin is winked at, it will soon be embraced by others; where false teaching is allowed, false teaching will be embraced by the many; where the truth is not set forth with authority, both sin and error will be embraced.
 - c. Even where godly elders serve and sound preachers preach, there will be those in the church who will need to be disciplined. Friction between brethren often leads to sinful divisions; religious error finds its way into congregations; members are frequently enticed into committing sin. In every congregation, there are times when corrective discipline must be practiced.
 - d. Preventive discipline hinders sin and error because it promotes truth and holiness; corrective discipline removes the evils of sin and error that have entered the individual and the congregation.
 - e. 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 - f. Revelation 2:5: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."
 - g. 1 Corinthians 5:5-6: "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"
5. God exercised discipline in the Old Testament, and requires it under the gospel.
- a. Examples: He punished Adam and Eve, Cain, Noah's generation, the people of Sodom, and even the people of Israel. Hard, immediate punishment was often inflicted, but not because of hatred on God's part, but rather because of love for the innocent.
 - b. In cases of Private and Personal Offenses: Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."
 - c. In cases of Religious Error: Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." The word translated "avoid" is elsewhere translated "eschew" (1 Peter 3:11: "Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.")
 - d. In cases in Public Knowledge of Gospel Violations: 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us....And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother."
 - e. A Case History: 1 Corinthians 5:3-4,13: "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ....But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."
 - f. No one who believes the Bible will deny the rightness of discipline. God never did anything or commanded anything that was unimportant!

B. Why then is corrective discipline not being widely exercised in the church?

1. In many cases, its absence is due to ignorance of the Bible. How many sermons have you heard

devoted entirely to this subject? How many classes have you studied in which the subject was carefully examined? What we do not study, we cannot learn; and what we do not know, we are not apt to practice. But if we understand the serious nature of the subject, only then will we be apt to practice corrective discipline.

2. Friendship and kinship within a congregation often hinder discipline. If you were an elder, would you be willing to withdraw fellowship from your father or mother, or son or daughter, or some very close friend? A friend of mine would have no fellowship with his son-in-law; another withdrew from his own liberal brother. But another exploded in anger when a committee asked him if he would be willing to withdraw from his unfaithful father if he were appointed to the eldership. God's law cannot be ignored with impunity!
 3. Lack of love for God will cause us to ignore this great Biblical commandment. Our only means of expressing our love is by obedience: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:2-3).
 4. Lack of love for the offending member will cause us to ignore this Bible command. We can express our love for our children in no more effective way than by disciplining them when they err; we can show no greater love for a wayward saint than by trying to bring him to repentance. We show no love for him by ignoring his sin.
 5. Sin in the lives of those who are to lead in the discipline process keeps them from doing what they know ought to be done. While no one is entirely free from instances of sin, those taking part in discipline must be as holy as they can be; there must not be any continuing practice in their lives that is blameworthy. We must be as consistent as possible with our profession.
 - a. Matthew 7:1-5: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."
 - b. Romans 2:1: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."
 - c. Romans 2:19-22: "And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"
 6. Procrastination is probably the most common reason for the absence of discipline. We dislike to do unpleasant tasks, and the most unpleasant and painful thing you will ever do as a Christian is to apply the withdrawal process. Hebrews 12:9,11: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?...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." It is painful to both parties.
 7. Fear of legal repercussions discourages some from applying church discipline.
 - a. In the early 1980s, a congregation in Oklahoma withdrew from one of its members who had been guilty of adultery. Her guilt was established, the elders followed biblical procedures, and fellowship was withdrawn.
 - b. The woman sued the church, and won a large judgment. She appeared on the Phil Donohue television show, and received strong support from the host and most of the audience. Garland Elkins ably defended the truth in the program. The jury verdict was later overturned by the
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Oklahoma Supreme Court.

- c. The prospect of such an ordeal as this undoubtedly dampens the enthusiasm of some members and elders in exercising their God-given obligation to withdraw from wayward members.

C. What purposes are to be gained by corrective discipline?

1. The first and primary purpose is to obey God. This lies foremost in the reasons for corrective discipline. We are to do it because God says for us to do it! If we can recognize this vitally important element in the subject, we will be able to overcome our reservations to it.
2. The purpose, as far as the offender is concerned, is to restore him to faithfulness and save his soul. Hebrews 12:11: "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."
 - a. To restore our health, it is sometimes necessary to have an operation. Surgery is an unpleasant and painful process, but it is for our own good. We discipline our children for their good, even though it is unpleasant and painful.
 - b. Applying corrective discipline to an erring saint is unpleasant and painful, but it is the last means we have to save his soul.
 - c. 1 Timothy 1:19-20: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 5:5: "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."
 - e. 2 Thessalonians 3:14: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."
 - f. James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 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."
 - g. Hebrews 10:23-31: "Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
3. Church discipline is essential in order to maintain the purity of the church.
 - a. It is sometimes necessary to remove a diseased limb or organ from our physical body for the good of the whole body. An infected appendix can poison and kill.
 - b. Sin is like a cancer, or leaven, or a disease. It must be isolated and controlled to prevent its spread through-out the congregation.
 - c. The Lord used great wisdom in the organization of the church. He permitted no controlling body to govern the whole church; that would have made it easy for the church to be led into apostasy. He arranged it so that each local group has its own leaders, being guided by the Bible.
 - d. A large, single plate glass window can be destroyed by one brick, but if the same opening is covered by many panes, the brick will destroy only a part of the whole. It is more difficult for error to infect the entire church under the Lord's arrangement. The Communist governments of China and Russia looked with greater favor toward the churches of Christ than to the sectarian

churches because we have no central headquarters. They see no great threat from us, and the people like us because we do not carry the banner of a human authority.

4. Discipline is necessary in order for us to do our primary work of saving the world by preaching the gospel.
 - a. We can never teach the gospel to the lost if they can accurately accuse us of condoning sin in our own midst.
 - b. Philippians 2:14-16: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
 - c. Matthew 5:16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - d. Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - e. 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
 - f. Titus 2:1,8: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine....But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate."
 - g. 1 Peter 2:12: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."
 - h. Inconsistency between theory and practice is one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of the gospel.
5. Discipline is essential in order to uphold fear (reverence) for God in the church and before the world.
 - a. Acts 5:11,14: "And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things....And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."
 - b. Acts 13:10-12: "And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."
 - c. Acts 19:17: "And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified."
 - d. Romans 11:22: "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."
 - e. 1 Timothy 5:20: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."
6. Discipline is necessary in order for us to show our love for God and for the one in error.
 - a. Proverbs 13:24: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."
 - b. 1 John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - c. Hebrews 12:6: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

D. The Bible identifies those it is our duty to discipline.

1. Those who cause offenses and will not repent are to be disciplined.
 - a. Matthew 18:15-17: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not

- hear *thee*, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."
- b. This case covers a situation in which one brother does evil to another brother in Christ. Efforts are to be made privately by the offended party to rectify the situation by bringing the offender to repentance. If those efforts do not work, the church is to withdraw fellowship from him.
 - c. Some have misused this passage to assert that when a brother preaches error in a public assembly, that the only way he can be corrected is to go to him privately first, before going public with his crime. However, this passage covers private offenses; public offenses are to be handled publicly. If we allow a grievous error to go unopposed, we may be allowing precious souls to be destroyed.
2. Any saint who walks disorderly is to be disciplined. 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us....And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother."
 - a. *Disorderly* is a military term designating those who break ranks or desert their posts, so that they cannot perform their duty (MacKnight).
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 3:6 uses "disorderly" in contrast with walking after the inspired traditions: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 The. 2:13). "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 The. 2:15).
 - c. "Whatever one may be doing that is contrary to the teachings of the Apostles is disorderly conduct and sufficient grounds for withdrawal if the guilty brother will not repent" (Guy. N. Woods).
 - d. The usual offenders are those who are guilty of committing works of the flesh, of which about 100 are identified in the New Testament (Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:18-32; 2 Tim. 3:1-5, etc.).
 - e. *Disorderly* naturally includes those who forsake the assemblies (they are in direct violation of Hebrews 10:25-31).
 - f. Those who gossip, backbite, spread discord, or otherwise misuse the tongue are walking *disorderly* (James 3: 1-12).
 3. Those who teach or practice false doctrine are to be disciplined.
 - a. Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - b. Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."
 - c. 1 Timothy 6:3-5: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." The word translated "withdraw" here is *aphistemi*.
 - 1) The word is defined by Strong to mean: "usually to desist, desert, depart, draw (fall) away, refrain, with- draw self."
 - 2) The word is defined by Thayer: (intransitively) "to stand off, stand aloof...To keep one's self away from, absent one's self from anyone's society or fellowship."
 - 3) The word is used in 1 Timothy 4:1: "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."
 - d. Those who advocate modernism walk *disorderly* by rejecting the inspiration and authority of the
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Bible, by denying the Virgin Birth of Christ, or repudiate Bible miracles. Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."

- e. Those who advocate liberalism walk *disorderly* by denying the authority principle of the Scriptures, following practices that have no New Testament authority (e.g., instrumental music in worship), fellowshiping sectarianism, Bales' doctrine of marriage-divorce-remarriage, etc. 2 John 1:9-11 "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into *your* house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (ASV).
- f. What we believe and what we practice in religion is important; the salvation of our souls depends on our attachment to the truth.
 - 1) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 2) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - 3) Galatians 1:6-12 "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. 8 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. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - 6) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 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."
 - 7) Revelation 22:18-19: "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."

E. When and how should withdrawal of fellowship be done?

1. Not many details are furnished by the Scriptures, hence a large measure of wisdom must be employed. Rash or premature action can do more harm than good. In usual cases, the congregation has elders who oversee the flock, by the New Testament.
 - a. These men should have met the qualifications, and be capable of seeing to the discipline of the members who need it. 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.
 - b. They have been given responsibility and authority in the congregation, and are to be the ones who lead the church in all its work.

- 1) Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
- 2) 1 Peter 5:1-3: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."
- c. The members are to follow their leadership: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation...Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:7, 17).
2. The individual's guilt must be clearly established. Cf. Deuteronomy 17:2-7: "If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; And it be told thee, and thou hast heard *of it*, and inquired diligently, and, behold, *it be true, and* the thing certain, *that* such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, *even* that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you."
- a. Paul did not rebuke the Corinthians for their strife until he had clear evidence of their guilt: "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you" (1 Cor. 1:11).
- b. Both Testaments required witnesses.
 - 1) Matthew 18:16: "But if he will not hear *thee, then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."
 - 2) John 8:17: "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 13:1: "This *is* the third *time* I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."
3. The offending brother is to be amply warned and admonished.
 - a. 1 Thessalonians 5:14: "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are **unruly**, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*." [Note: *Unruly* is the same in the Greek as *disorderly* in 2 Thessalonians 3:6].
 - b. Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."
4. Sincere, concerted efforts are to be made to restore the fallen saint. Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Only after much effort, and only if he refuses to repent, should fellowship be withdrawn. This is the last step we can take; God's condemnation then rests upon him.
5. The procedure given by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 sheds some light on the process. Keep in mind, Christ is here giving a case of a private offense; however, the same procedure will fit other cases in which a sinful saint's salvation is being sought.
 - a. Talk with the individual face to face. In the case of a private offense, the innocent party is to initiate the action; in the case of a fallen saint, those who are spiritual can call on the erring brother and show concern over his sin. Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which

- are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."
- b. If the offending person remains unrepentant, take one or two others in order to reinforce your appeal to him, and to serve as witnesses.
 - c. If the individual stills remains unrepentant, report the matter to the church. This would require that the details be given, including his name, his offense, and the efforts that had been made to this point. The church is to exert its influence in the matter, seeking the offender's repentance.
 - d. If it is not forthcoming, and a reasonable amount of time and effort have been expended, step four is to follow. This final step is, in the Lord's terminology, "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." That is, have no fellowship with him henceforth, unless he repents.
6. Other New Testament passages give the following information on the nature of the withdrawal:
- a. Second Thessalonians 3:6,14,15: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us....And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother."
 - 1) *Have no company with him* is defined by Vincent to mean, "place one's self away from" the impenitent member (p.955).
 - 2) The purpose is to cause him to be ashamed of his evil conduct, and seek to be restored into the favor of the Lord and the saints.
 - b. First Corinthians 5 gives the case of the adulterous man in the Corinthian church: "It is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles; that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet *I* certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; not even to eat with such a person. For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person" (5:1-13, NKJV).
 - 1) They were to deliver him unto Satan. That is, to turn him from the communion with the saints back into the realm under the power of Satan, where he loses the esteem and association of the church.
 - 2) Paul describes the action as a purging out of the old leaven. The church is cleansed by the removal of the offending party and by avoiding further fellowship with him (until he repents).
 - 3) With this person, the saints were not to eat. If they had social fellowship with the man, their contact would encourage him in his evil, and would subject themselves to contamination, and would encourage other saints to have fellowship with him. Thus, the withdrawal of fellowship would be nullified.
 - 4) Put away the wicked man.
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- c. Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
- 1) The inspired apostle gave order that the brethren mark and turn away from false teachers within the brotherhood (and all others).
 - 2) They were to have no dealings with them; they were not permitted to fellowship them or in any way to encourage them in their evil deeds. 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 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."
- d. Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." One who has been found guilty of heresy (one who causes division in the church by a factious attitude or false teaching) is to be rejected after the first and second admonition. He is to be refused (ASV); he is to be avoided.
- e. Matthew 18:17: "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."
- 1) The Jewish people had no fellowship with publicans and Gentiles. Their only association with them was necessary business and official contact; there were no social dealings.
 - 2) One who is withdrawn from in the church is to be avoided, with no fellowship extended to him by any faithful member.
7. What if a faithful Christian lady to do if her unfaithful husband is withdrawn from by the church? What if the parent of a faithful member is disciplined? What if one's employer or employee is withdrawn from? In these cases, what is the faithful saint to do about the relationship?
- a. In the case of a marriage, God does not require that a Christian be married only to another faithful Christian in order for the marriage to be scriptural. Paul dealt with this in 1 Corinthians 7:12-14: "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For 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."
- 1) The marriage is still a relationship which God sanctions, even if one party is not a Christian or is an unfaithful Christian. The case at hand is one in which the Christian wife has two different relationships with her husband: in the marriage and in the spiritual realm. The spiritual bond can be broken and the marital bond still be in place.
 - 2) She can still be a good wife to her husband (who has been withdrawn from), but she is not to encourage him in his unfaithfulness to the Lord. She is to use whatever opportunities she may have to admonish him to return to faithfulness.
- b. This same rationale pertains to the workplace. If the employer falls away from the Lord, the faithful worker can maintain his work relationship; but he is not to encourage the employer in his infidelity; he may have opportunities to admonish him to return to the Lord.
- c. The same approach must be taken in the case of a parent or child who has been disciplined by the church.
- 1) If the child is still at home when the parent is disciplined, he has no choice but to remain in the home; if it is the offspring who is disciplined by the church, the faithful parent is still under obligation to the Lord to take care of the child until such time that the child leaves home. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8).
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- 2) In the case of a man whose parent (s) has been withdrawn from by the church, he retains his obligations to his parents to tend to their needs when they are unable to take care of themselves. "But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God" (1 Tim. 5:4).
8. What should be the faithful Christian's attitude and relationship toward an erring Christian who has not been withdrawn from by the church? If the church has not or will not withdraw from a sinful member, may individual Christians withdraw from the wayward member?
- Nothing should be done by any faithful Christian that would encourage the wayward saint in his rebellion. To encourage someone to continue in sin is to partake of his sin (cf. 2 John 9-11). This applies if the sinful Christian is a fleshly relative or a relative stranger to us.
 - An individual Christian should have no fellowship with an unfaithful Christian. Family or work contacts may be unavoidable (as noted above), but we must not give the backslider the idea that we support his unfaithful conduct.
 - What should we do in the case of a Christian (relative or non-relative) who deserts the Lord's church and joins a sectarian church? The individual may honestly believe that he is still faithful, but that does not change the fact that he has given up the truth and has taken up error.
 - To practice religious error is sinful (2 The. 2:10-12; 2:15; 3:6), and we are warned against encouraging anyone who promotes error (2 John 9-11; cf. Eph. 5:11).
 - 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 5:17: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death." Any violation of God's word is sin; a violation can be in the realm of morality or in the realm of doctrinal truth.
9. Each member of the church is to participate in the withdrawal of fellowship in order for it to be effective. But the one withdrawn from is not to be counted as an enemy. He is to be admonished as a brother. "Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:15).
- We cannot avoid all contact with the individual; we might work with him; he might be a neighbor; we might meet him on the street. Whenever such contact is had with him, as opportunity comes, we are to admonish him to return to the Lord.
 - The purpose of the withdrawal is not punishment; neither is it excommunication. It is designed to drive home to the erring saint what he has lost.
- F. There are some objections brethren raise against corrective discipline.
- There is the "wheat and tares" objection (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43). This position argues that only the Lord is able to separate the saints from the sinners, and that that separation will not occur until the end of time.
 - But in the parable, the field is the world. The seed was planted in the world, and the product was gathered out of "his kingdom." The kingdom here is the world. Christ simply teaches in the parable that until his second coming, his people will be in the world, scattered among the unbelievers. He will make the separation in the Judgment.
 - Thus, the parable of the tares does not even touch the subject of discipline.
 - "We are not to judge." Matthew 7:1-5 is misused to teach that we are not to practice discipline: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." The claim is that since all of us are imperfect, none is capable of passing such judgment.
 - But other passages require us to discipline disorderly members:
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- 1) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 5: "It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - 4) Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."
 - b. And other passages require that we pass judgment:
 - 1) Matthew 7:6: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."
 - 2) Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
 - 3) John 7:24: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 5:12-13: "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 6:5: "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"
 - c. Matthew 7 does not forbid the casting out of motes; it does demand that we remove the beams from our own eyes first. Matthew 7:5 demands that righteous judgments be made. What is forbidden are harsh, hypocritical, unfair judgments: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."
3. "We cannot withdraw from those with whom we have no fellowship." For example, a brother deserts the Lord's church, and joins a man-made denomination; he departs from our midst with bitterness, berating the brethren for supposed offenses. What is to be done? He has cut off his fellowship from
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- us. Are we still obligated to go through the mere motions of withdrawal?
- a. The Lord's commandments are still in the Bible, and they must be obeyed. Are our obligations removed if we presume that withdrawal will have no effect? If so, why should we ever practice corrective discipline, for one who is so hardened in his sin to reject our attempts to restore him, is not likely to repent after the withdrawal takes effect. With that reasoning, we could refuse to use corrective discipline in every case that develops! Or to preach to the lost.
 - b. In the case suggested, the withdrawal of our fellowship would likely have no effect on the sinful brother. But several things will have been accomplished:
 - 1) We will have been obedient to the express commandment of God: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Th. 3:6).
 - 2) He will know that the church does not countenance his behavior.
 - 3) The world will know that we do not condone his actions.
 - 4) Other weak members will know that the church as a whole is determined to do what the Savior requires, regardless of the consequences. Thus, they will be admonished to straighten up their lives.
4. "If we start corrective discipline, where will we end? We might not be able to meet our financial obligations."
- a. An elder where this preacher once labored raised this objection. A few years after I moved to another congregation, this elder was accused of homosexuality, and resigned from the eldership. It sounds on the surface that his objection was an attempt to cover up his own sinful conduct (assuming he was guilty).
 - b. The objection evidences a lack of faith. It is true that when we follow the Lord's will explicitly, many times some sacrifices will be required. In the case cited, it would be the preacher who would bear the brunt of the sacrifice (in losing part of his salary or by having to move). Would a congregation fare any better financially and spiritually if it refuses to do what the Lord plainly requires?
 - c. Where will it end? That is a good question. How much good is done if the result is the destruction of the congregation? Another good question. But another good question is, "What will become of a congregation which refuses to do what the Lord commanded? Will it not, by that very omission of duty, cease to be a part of the Lord's people?"
 - d. Where would discipline end once it is begun? Logically, the "worst" offenders are to be dealt with first. Hopefully, the "lesser" offenders will take heed!
 - e. The strength of a congregation is not measured by the size of its membership or amount of its contribution; its strength is determined by its faithful adherence to the word of God and its sincere devotion to his cause.
5. There may be many other objections raised against corrective church discipline, but they are all empty; anything that seeks to set aside what Christ has required in his gospel is without serious merit.

III. CONCLUSION.

A. We have considered several major aspects of this Bible subject.

1. We have shown that it is a Bible requirement which has application to our time.
2. We have seen the need for it, and identified some reasons why it is not practiced.
3. We have shown the purposes it is intended to accomplish.
4. We have identified the kinds of persons who are to be disciplined.
5. We have shown the procedures involved in the process of withdrawal.
6. We have answered the major objections against discipline today.

B. The questions Christians need to be concerned about are:

1. Does God mean what he has said in the Bible?
 2. Are his people today minded to do what he requires in this matter?
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